

The University of Edinburgh
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

**Meeting to be held on Thursday 9 February 2017
at 2pm in the Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House**

A G E N D A

1. **Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 8 December 2016** QAC 16/17 4A
2. **Matters Arising**
 - a) Convenor's Business

For Discussion
3. Annual College Quality Reports 2015-2016 QAC 16/17 4B
4. Enhancement-led Institutional Review Theme Lead Reports QAC 16/17 4C
5. Thematic Review of Student Support Services QAC 16/17 4D
6. External Examiners
 - a) Postgraduate Taught Reports: Thematic Analysis 2015/16 QAC 16/17 4E
 - b) Reporting System: Report Totals 2015/16 QAC 16/17 4F
 - c) Reporting Project: Feedback Survey Results QAC 16/17 4G
 - d) University Level Items – Update Verbal
7. Mid-year update on progress against QAC priorities QAC 16/17 4H
- For Information and Formal Business**
8. Deletion of the Central Register of Accreditations by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) and the Quality Assurance Reporting Process document QAC 16/17 4I
9. Collaborative Provision: Memoranda of Agreement – **Closed Paper** QAC 16/17 4J
10. Internal Review:
 - a) University Remit and Reflective Report template for Internal Periodic Review 2017/18 QAC 16/17 4K
 - b) Reports QAC 16/17 4L
11. **Any Other Business**
12. **Date of Next Meeting:**
Thursday 19 April 2017 at 2pm in Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House

The University of Edinburgh
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

**Minutes of the Senate Quality Assurance Committee
held at 2pm on Thursday 8 December 2016
in the Hodgson Room, Weir Building, King's Buildings**

Present:

Professor Tina Harrison	Assistant Principal, Academic Standards and Quality Assurance (Convener)
Professor Jeremy Bradshaw	Director of Quality Assurance, CMVM, Assistant Principal Researcher Development
Brian Connolly	Secretary to Senatus Quality Assurance Committee
Patrick Garratt	Vice President (Academic Affairs), Students' Association
Nichola Kett	Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Team, Academic Services
Dr Huw Lewis	Senior Lecturer School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures (Co-opted Member)
Dr Sheila Lodge	CMVM Head of Academic Administration (Co-opted Member)
Tanya Lubicz-Nawrocka	Students' Association Academic Engagement Co-ordinator
Dr Gordon McDougall	Dean (Quality Assurance), College of Science and Engineering
Dr Claire Phillips	School Representative (Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies), College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Dr Jon Turner	Director, Institute for Academic Development
Tom Ward	Director, Academic Services

Apologies:

Dr Robert Mason	Associate Dean (Quality Assurance) College of Humanities and Social Science
Barry Neilson	Director, Student Systems (Co-opted Member)
Dr Inger Seiferheld	School Representative (Business School), College of Humanities and Social Science

1. Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 20 October 2016

The Minutes of the previous meeting were approved with the following amendment:

- Item 4.1 The Convenor reported that the undergraduate External Examiner Themes Report had been postponed until the next meeting in December due to the volume of reports **and responses** still outstanding.

2. Matters Arising

- **Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR) Theme Lead Reports**
The Committee noted that the next set of theme lead reports, due at the next meeting in February, would form the basis of the University's ELIR year on response to Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Scotland due in March 2017.
- **Consultation on the next iteration of ELIR**
The Convenor reported that an institutional response had been made to the consultation and several points had been taken forward by QAA Scotland in the development of the review method.
- **Convenor's Business**
 - **Membership**
The Convenor reported that Professor John Sawkins had stepped down as external member of the Committee due to work commitments. The Committee thanked Professor Sawkins for his work during his tenure and noted that Mr Brian Green, Deputy Associate Principal (Learning & Teaching) University of Strathclyde, would join the Committee as the new external member from February 2017.

Action: Committee Secretary to arrange for a thank you card and gift for Professor Sawkins.
 - **Course Enhancement Questionnaires**
The Convenor provided the Committee with an update on recent developments with the questionnaires following feedback from some stakeholders. These included some concerns raised regarding equality and diversity issues.

For Discussion

3. External Examiner Themes

The Committee received and considered an analysis of data from the External Examiner Reporting System (EERS) covering undergraduate programmes for the academic year 2015/16. The report highlighted the high volume of commendations, and the scope to use the data systematically to assist with policy development and identifying good practices.

The Committee noted that in some Schools a high proportion of External Examiner reports were late and that Colleges had been working with the Schools concerned. In particular, the Committee noted that for the second year in succession the School of Law still had all 17 reports recoded as late.

Action: College Office to discuss External Examiner reports with the School of Law.

It was noted the report deadline, 6 week response deadline, and details of roles requirement were not in University policy. Members noted that there may be locally valid reasons why external examiner reports had not been responded to within 6 weeks. However the Committee was in agreement that the information contained in the reports must be acted upon promptly in order to maximise its use to schools and students.

Action: Academic Services to include reporting deadlines and key School and College roles in the External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy, following College discussion of the 6 week response deadline at the next Deans of Quality meeting.

The Committee noted that in 2015/16 four matters were flagged for escalation to institutional level by Academic Response Coordinators. Of those, two were commendations, one was an issue and one a suggestion (both of which were CAHSS).

Action: TW and NK to liaise with RM to discuss the response to the external examiner issue escalated to institutional level in 2015/16.

The Committee noted that the number of issues raised by EERS remained low. The Committee were advised that the feedback from external examiners on the most common issue raised, assessment process, related to the need for clarity and consistency of moderation processes and marking criteria. Committee members were encouraged to ensure that moderation processes and marking criteria are made clear to external examiners.

Action: College representatives to ensure that the outcomes of the Committee's discussions are made available to and considered by the relevant College committee(s).

4. Annual Report on Complaint Handling

The Committee considered the annual report on Complaint Handling. The Committee noted that there were no discernible trends in the complaint handling cases.

Action: Investigations Manager to include details of areas not sufficiently engaging with the complaints process in the next report.

5. Student Appeals Annual Report – **CLOSED PAPER**

The Committee considered the annual report on Academic Appeals. The Committee noted an increase in the volume of academic appeals, continuing a trend from the previous year (which is generally in line with increases seen across the Higher Education sector), and discussed the demographic characteristics of appellants. Members suggested that the rise in appeals may be linked to the growth of a more consumerist culture within the student body, itself linked to the expansion of student fees. The Committee also noted that approximately 20% of appellants had a declared disability, a rise from 12% the previous year. It was noted that the Review of Support for Students with Disabilities, convened by Vice Principal Professor Jane Norman, was exploring broader issues as part of its remit.

6. Student Discipline Annual Report – **CLOSED PAPER**

The Committee considered the annual report on Student Discipline. The Committee discussed the increase in the number of academic misconduct offences, which appears likely to be associated with an increased use of plagiarism detection software. Members suggested that data should be collected on the specific year of study that each disciplinary case related to in order to determine if there was a need for greater plagiarism support at particular points in the student life cycle.

Action: Academic Services to include data on the specific year of study to which the disciplinary case relates to in the equivalent report on 2016-17.

7. PT Oversight Group Update

The Committee received and discussed the report from the Group in relation to the operation of the Personal Tutor (PT) system. It was noted that the Group had considered the operation of the PT system in relation to the most recent National Student Survey (NSS), Edinburgh Student Experience Survey (ESES), and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) results. The Group noted the limitations of this data in relation to PT performance and suggested that more robust, granular internal benchmark data was required if meaningful conclusions were to be drawn and judgements made in regard to the relative performance of both Schools and individual PTs. However, in the context of PT performance data currently available, it was noted that the Group was satisfied that Schools had initiated actions where student survey results had dropped significantly compared to the previous year.

The Committee noted that good practice, drawn from the Student Association Teaching Awards, and PT system enhancement proposals were due to be considered by the Senior Tutor Network at the meeting to be held on Tuesday 13 December 2016.

8. MOOCs Report

The Committee received and discussed the annual report on the University's Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). It was noted that due to their non-credit bearing nature, the courses were not currently covered by the quality framework. However, the Committee was in agreement that MOOCs were an increasingly important and high profile element of the University's provision and as such it was important to ensure appropriate processes are in place to safeguard the quality of these courses.

Action: Committee Secretary to liaise with Melissa Highton, Director of the Learning, Teaching and Web Services Division, and with Colleges, to clarify the MOOCs quality assurance processes.

For information and formal business

9. Internal Review:

- **Teaching Programme Review (TPR) of Linguistics and English Language – Final Report**

The Committee approved the Final Report with the following amendment:

- The review team recommends that the dissertation (or project) should be compulsory ~~but~~ **and** with flexibility in the type of assessment.

- **Thematic Review of Mental Health Services – Initial Response**
The Committee approved the initial response.

10. Any Other Business

11. Date of Next Meeting:

Thursday 9 February 2017 at 2pm in Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House

Brian Connolly, Academic Services
December 2016

The University of Edinburgh
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

9 February 2017

Annual College Quality Assurance and Enhancement Reports 2015-2016

Executive Summary

This paper presents the College annual quality reports for 2015-16.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?

The paper is relevant to the Committee's remit to oversee the delivery of annual reporting from Schools and Colleges.

Action requested

The Committee is asked to discuss the reports, especially items noted in 'Themes for Senate Quality Assurance Committee' (section 3). The Committee is also asked to note that, using the new template, the reports have decreased in length from 133 last year to 11 pages this year and that the new shorter length of reports has removed the need for a separate readers process.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

College reports should be considered by the relevant College committee. Should the Committee agree any actions, consideration will be given to how to communicate these.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. Resource implications (including staffing)

Not applicable.

2. Risk assessment

No change to existing practice.

3. Equality and Diversity

No change to existing practice.

4. Freedom of information

Open

Key words

College, annual, quality, report

Originators of the paper

Professor Jeremy Bradshaw, Director of Quality Assurance, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine; **Dr Robert Mason**, Associate Dean Quality Assurance, College of Humanities and Social Science; **Dr Gordon McDougall**, Dean of Quality Assurance, College of Science and Engineering

College Annual Quality Report

College of Arts, Humanities and Social Science Academic Year: 2015/16

1. Reflection on progress with actions from the previous year

- **Implementation of the new University Quality Framework:** In cooperation with Schools, the College is currently working to implement the new quality framework. Overall, Schools have found the more streamlined approach to reporting beneficial and early feedback has been positive. The new processes will be monitored and any suggestions for further enhancement will be reported at the start of 2017/18.
- **Annual Programme Reviews:** The College has continued to aid the development of annual programme monitoring and has supported Schools to introduce this practice where it does not currently exist. It is also ensuring that mechanisms to monitor Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs), Student-led Individually Created Courses (SLICCs), and standalone courses are in place.
- **Online quality monitoring and reporting project:** The movement to annual programme monitoring has been paralleled by the development of an online reporting system, to facilitate programme monitoring and school reporting. This is expected to be in operation from June 2017.
- **Programme Pathways Project:** As of January, three schools (History, Classics and Archaeology [HCA], Edinburgh College of Art [ECA], and Business) have completed the restructuring of degree programmes as part of the project; College Undergraduate Learning and Teaching Committee (CUGLAT) has approved the changes. The College is compiling reports for the other schools, which outline recommendations and suggest changes, for further action during 2016/17.
- **Online Assessment and Feedback:** This has been rolled out across the College for all taught courses. Schools have reported some problems with the Turnitin system, involving anonymity arrangements during moderation and system timeouts. Overall, roll-out of the system was successful and feedback is currently being collated in order to improve future user experience.
- **Mid-semester feedback:** Initial responses from schools suggest that mid-semester feedback was a successful initiative. Schools have approached this in diverse ways and it is clear that it allowed some subject areas to implement changes during semester one, and offered an early opportunity for student involvement in this process. Further feedback on this initiative will be canvassed from schools during semester two and collated to identify good practice.

2. Overview of performance data across the college

Update on areas identified in 2014/15 as requiring action/monitoring:

Undergraduate (UG)

- **Course results:** At UG pre-honours the course fail rate decreased from 2.6% in 2014/15 to 1.98% in 2015/16. The fail rates have steadily decreased across most Schools including Divinity, which saw a decrease from 4.4% in 2014/15 to 3.5% in 2015/16, although this figure remains high against historic data and the overall College average of 1.77%.

- **Withdrawal rates:** UG programme withdrawal rates have decreased from 6% for 2011/2012 entrants to 5.2% for 2012/2013 entrants. All Schools saw decreases in their withdrawal rates except for Divinity which increased from 7.9% to 10.2% for the 2012/13 cohort. Business, HCA, and Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences (PPLS) also experienced increased withdrawal rates of between 0.5% and 1.3%. Moray House saw a reduction from 10% to 5%, bringing it back in line with the College average.
- **Degree classifications:** UG full-time First Class awards rose slightly from 21% to 24%. The School of Health returned to normal levels after a large decrease in 2014/15, rising from 9% to 35%. All other Schools saw an increase.
- **Student Satisfaction:** In National Student Survey (NSS) results, the College experienced an overall decline in student satisfaction from 82.9% in 2015 to 80.8% in 2016. This figure covers 10 schools as there are no figures available for Divinity. Overall satisfaction in Economics dropped by 10% to 72% in 2016, but slight increases were achieved in Health in Social Science and Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences. Analysis of NSS free text comments raises distinctive issues for each school, while highlighting overall that further work is required on certain key areas including assessment and feedback, the availability of academic support, and the lack of access to high-quality teaching space. In response, Schools are identifying a number of initiatives for enhancement across these areas.

Postgraduate (PG)

- **Course results:** the overall College PG course fail rate showed a slight reduction from 1.2% to 1.12%, while the withdrawal/absent rate remained constant. The School of Economics fail rate continued to increase, from 4.6% to 5.8% in 2015/16.
- **Withdrawal rates postgraduate taught (PGT):** Withdrawal rates for PGT full-time students reduced slightly to 2.3%. The School of History, Classics, and Archaeology withdrawal rate for full-time students decreased to 5% but was still above the College average. Both Divinity and Health had no withdrawals in this area.
- **Withdrawal rates postgraduate research (PGR):** Withdrawal rates for full-time PGR students reduced from 10.34% to 8.5% in 2015/16 on average for the College. Economics withdrawal rates remain low, while Health saw its withdrawal rates decrease to 12.5% (one student).
- **Degree classifications:** The overall PGT full-time distinction awards remained constant with both the School of Divinity and the School of History, Classics and Archaeology showing marked increases.
- **PhD submissions:** The College average for submitting in year 4 remained low (31.4%) for full-time students who entered in 2012/13. The trend continues to show submissions occurring in year 5 onwards across the majority of Schools.
- **Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES):** Overall satisfaction increased from 83% in 2015 to 84% in 2016. A marked increase in response rate (44.7% in 2015, to 52.8% in 2016) was noted and was paralleled by a 1-3% increase across all themes covered by the survey. Increases of 3% were noted in Assessment and Feedback, Dissertation or Major Project, and Resources and Services.

Widening Participation

- The College increased widening participation recruitment by 3% in 2015/16. The breakdown between Schools varies considerably but on the whole the majority see a positive increase. SPS had the largest percentage increase of 35% (105 students), whilst Divinity had the largest percentage reduction (11%) but this only equated to a reduction of 2 students.

External Examiner Report Themes

- Overall, external examiners have reflected positively on their experience of administrative arrangements and the running of the Boards of Examiners. The online reporting system continues to be received positively by schools. Although the system facilitates the monitoring of report submission, late submission of reports remains an issue in some schools, with a large number of outstanding reports yet to be received by Law.

International Experiences

- Data for 2015/16 will be considered when it becomes available.

3. Themes for SQAC forward planning

- **Estates and resourcing:** Schools have found the availability of high-quality teaching space and social spaces for students, as well as increasing class sizes, poses challenges. This has been a consistent theme in updates from Schools this session.
- **Personal Tutor system:** Opportunities remain to achieve enhancement of the Personal Tutor system. Further work will be required at University, College and School level in order to provide greater clarity and guidance about available academic support. Schools are continuing to assess the operation of the Personal Tutor system and are seeking to identify enhancements.
- **Data analysis:** Continued development of the student data dashboard and other data tools will be key to quality assurance (QA) reporting and monitoring. Support/training and user accessibility for staff will be a central component in the streamlining of the QA framework in relation to data analysis.

4. College action plan

The College Learning and Teaching plan is currently being drafted and specific objectives will be set out in a completed draft in the coming weeks. A number of key themes will form the core of the document:

- **Curricular reform:** Work will continue on the Programme Pathways Project with full implementation planned for the beginning of the 2017/18 session. This will be completed in tandem with the overall review and continued monitoring of all degree programmes in the College and the work of the Service Excellence Project. This will also involve the integration and development of online distance learning (ODL) programmes, SLICCs, and MOOCs, as well as the Centre for Open Learning's part-time access programme which will be relaunched in 2017/18.
- **Annual Programme Monitoring:** Grounded in the new University Quality Framework, the focus for QA monitoring within the College is moving from the course to the programme level, together with School reporting. This will be carried

out alongside the Programme Pathways Project and will also see the extension of the Leading Enhancement in Assessment and Feedback (LEAF) project that analyses and students' experiences of assessment and feedback. Related initiatives including a streamlined course approval process will also be developed in tandem.

- **Improving the Student Experience:** This will be an overarching theme of the College plan that has been highlighted by the most recent National Student Survey results. A recurring obstacle to student satisfaction is the poor availability of suitable teaching and social space. In addition to this, free-text survey comments frequently focus on the need for more contact time with teaching staff and more consistency in the level of academic support. Assessing the results systematically will form part of the overall College plan.
- **Widening Participation:** The College will continue to identify and develop widening participation opportunities.
- **Collaboration:** College committee members will continue to identify and discuss common themes and good practice at joint CUGLAT/College Quality Assurance Committee events. This ongoing collaboration will also parallel cross-College collaboration in order to enhance learning and teaching standards and practices. Student engagement events – particularly within the framework of the 'Meet the Deans' series – are also important.
- **Employability skills:** Employability and graduate skills will be an important focal point for the College in its future plan. An employability workshop is being organised for 28 February, and the School of History, Classics and Archaeology has been developing specific graduate skills events that correspond with their recent degree programme changes.
- **PG Research Experience:** PG tutoring provision, the annual review process, and the overall PG experience will also be an important theme in the College plan. Particular attention will also be given to PhD completion rates, streamlining processes (including Right to Work [RTW]) and other paperwork. Remote viva guidance and having viva dates set in good time will also remain a priority for the College.

CAHSS

January 2017

College Annual Quality Report

College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (MVM) Academic Year 2015-16

1. Reflection on progress with actions from the previous year

College:

- The College continues to embed its new structure and quality assurance arrangements. Quality Directors are being appointed for each School and Deanery and will sit on the College Quality Assurance and Enhancement (QAE) Committee.
- A QAE Officer will be appointed to the College in spring 2017.

Deanery of Biomedical Sciences (BMS):

- New Director of Teaching appointed.
- New teaching management structure being set up, with embedded QAE.
- Ongoing investigation into proportion of 1sts and 2:1s awarded.

Deanery of Clinical Sciences (CS):

- Support for online distance learning (OLDL) students through the Personal Tutor system is being explored with the Assistant Principal Academic Support. Increasing numbers of staff engaging with training in writing learning outcomes and assessments.
- Moves towards improving staff morale through training opportunities and recognising teaching as an unambiguous priority are likely to take time to filter through.

School of Edinburgh Medical School (EdMed):

- Focus on preparations for the new, 6-year MBChB, which took its first intake into year 1 in 2016-17.
- PebblePad now used for all portfolio submissions.
- Replacement system for multiple choice questions (MCQs) has not yet been introduced but work continues: procurement in 2016-17.
- Scoping of replacement of MBChB's virtual Learning environment (VLE), EEMeC, by LEARN underway.
- Increased staffing has benefitted marketing of MSc Clinical Education.

Deanery of Molecular, Genetic & Population Health Sciences (MolGenPop):

- Number of staff involved in personal tutoring for the on-campus Masters in Public Health has been increased. Research staff / Fellows are involved in this now. Most staff are tutoring just 2 students.
- Developing part-time teaching appointments to address staffing shortages. These appointments are shared between OLDL programmes in the Deanery.

The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies (R(D)SVS):

- Feedback on School QA report for 2014-15 was positive and no recommendations were made by the College.
- Responses to the March 2016 teaching programme review include developing methods to ensure consistency in moderation, marking and feedback.
- Continuing progress on introducing the University timetabling system for 2017-18.

- First year PhD students were taken to Firbush Point Outdoor Centre at the beginning of the academic year. This allowed them to interact informally with PGR advisors and to get to know each other.

2. Overview of performance data across the college

- Undergraduate applications rose marginally (by 78) in 2015-16.
- Applications for entry to our postgraduate taught (PGT) programmes grew from 2818 for 2015 entry to 3747 for 2016 entry.
- Course results in MVM show a marginally higher proportion of grades A3 and B are awarded than the University (UoE) average (A3: 25.3% in MVM, 18.9% in UoE; B: 44.1% in MVM, 39.6% in UoE), with fewer grades C, D and F being given in MVM than elsewhere.
- 83% of students on our 4-year programmes successfully completed 2015-16, down from 86.9% the previous year.
- 55.7% of students on our 5-year programmes completed successfully, with 39.6% continuing study due to the intercalated year, which is now being replaced in MBChB with a mandatory BSc year: this accounts for 95.3% of the year cohort, compared to 87% for the University overall.
- National Student Survey (NSS) overall satisfaction scores were:
 - 84% for BMS (-8%)
Programmes in BMS scored 84% for overall satisfaction: this is the same as the University's institutional score, and parallels the overall decrease seen across the University, suggesting that a number of factors are at institutional level. The quality of the shared estate may be the most critical here. Scores dropped in BMS for all question areas, most steeply in Learning Resources and Personal Development, which both dropped by 6% (to 89% and 80% respectively).
It should be noted that these NSS results still reflect students who were recruited and managed through Biology with many of the new initiatives BMS/Biomedical Teaching Organisation have put in place (from recruitment to support) only starting to filter through over next 2 years.
It is difficult to compare the Deanery's performance as a whole with the rest of the sector because of the way in which the data is divided by subject: in 'Pharmacology, Toxicology and Pharmacy' BMS scored 100% Overall Satisfaction, for example, while 'Microbiology' saw a drop of 26% (from 96% to 70%). Free text comments from students across the Deanery suggest that concerns cluster around Assessment & Feedback, with students on all programmes asking for better organisation, more helpful feedback explaining where they could have improved their work, and reassurance about the fairness of the assessment process.
 - 79% for MBChB and Oral Health Sciences (OHS) (+3%)
This is 16% below the Universities UK (UUK) upper quartile score of 95%, and 15% below the Russell Group upper quartile's 94%.
MBChB scores improved from 2015 in three areas: Overall Satisfaction, Assessment & Feedback (up 6% to 45%) and Personal Development (up 1% to 89%). Scores fell for Academic Support (down 3% to 86%), Organisation & Management (down 10% to 49%) and Learning Resources (down 3% to 90%). Teaching remained the same at 85%.

Free text comments highlighted again a range of areas in which work to address student concerns has been ongoing for some time, including: timetabling issues; late cancellation of classes; poor quality feedback returned too late; difficulties with EEMeC; student support; staff not prioritising teaching; and a culture of inflexibility and lack of care for students amongst staff.

Free text comments from students on the OHS programme have not been made available, because these are not released when fewer than 10 responses are received: the programme is capped at 10 students per year.

- 96% for R(D)SVS (+5%)
Data is available for the 2 key BVM&S programmes (4 year and 5 year) with overall satisfaction of 98% and 95% respectively, significantly above the University's institutional score. In the 4 year programme, scores rose in all categories apart from learning resources (-3%). In the 5 year programme, scores fell in all categories except for personal development. Assessment and feedback was the lowest scoring category – 59% across both programmes reflecting a 2% increase for the Graduate Entry Programme and 2% decrease for the 5 year programme.
However, comparison to results for Veterinary Sciences across the sector shows that while R(D)SVS is securely within the UUK and Russell Group upper quartiles, it is down in all but 2 individual questions compared to UUK upper quartile institutions. In the Assessment & Feedback area, whilst marking and assessment fairness score well, there is a -10 to -20 disparity in the 3 questions on feedback. Tackling Problems scores 84% compared to the Russell Group upper quartile's 96%.
- Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey overall satisfaction for the College rose to 90% (+1):
 - BMS 87% (-2%)
 - CS 93% (+8%);
 - EdMed 95% (new configuration so no comparative data for 2015);
 - MolGenPop 90% (-6%)
 - R(D)SVS 90% (-2%)
- PGR completion data continues to be monitored across the College. For example:
 - The Deanery of Clinical Sciences had 58 new Full-Time PhD students (38 Female, 20 Male), 14 new Part-Time PhD students (8 Female, 6 Male), 1 new MSc by Research or MPhil student (female).
 - Of 2012/13 entrants who would be due to complete in 2015-16: 29/56 full-time PhD students have submitted their thesis for examination in 2015/16. Four students withdrew and the rest are continuing.
 - The average number of months taken to submit was 42, which is down from previous years: 45 (2011/12), 46 (2010/11), 46 (2009/10), 47 (2008/09) and 47 (2007/08). However, the report calculates the "average months to submit" and includes months of Interruption of Studies.
 - Of 2009/10 entrants due to complete in 2015-16: 5/7 part-time students have submitted their thesis for examination. One student withdrew and the other is continuing. The "average months to submit" was 49 months which is down from previous years: 73 (2008/09) and 68 (2007/08).

3. Themes for SQAC forward planning

- The pace of change continues to be challenging, especially for administrative staff, and developments arising from the Service Excellence Programme will need to be phased in carefully.
- The provision of good-quality teaching space and its allocation through the central timetabling system need to be improved. The impact of noise from redevelopment projects needs to be given due weight when planning building works, and arrangements made to protect both the student and staff experience.
- Concerns about the way in which the External Examiner Reporting System works have been raised by a number of Schools and Deaneries. A major flaw is the conflating of information provided by Examiners who are involved in multiple courses, and the systems is thought not to reflect the way in which data is collected and how responses are made. It would be helpful if course organisers could input information directly rather than through the response co-ordinator.
- Scoping work is being done in CMVM on the use of external tutors on our OLDL Masters programmes. There appear to be significant opportunities for improving training to deliver more consistent teaching and assessment.
- Special Circumstances regulations are currently difficult to apply to OLDL programmes, especially when students' professional commitments impinge on their ability to meet deadlines. These could be reviewed.
- The current Course Enhancement Report is very much geared to on campus UG students, and doesn't encourage engagement from PGT OLDL students.
- Further work needs to be done to improve feedback turnaround times and quality.
- R(D)SVS notes that this was the first year that student progression for PGR students was recorded on EUCLID. Although the importance of moving to an on-line system is appreciated, there was a large number of difficulties and the system does not sit well with the thesis committee structure currently in use. These issues have been logged with Student Systems.

4. College action plan

- New post of College Quality Officer proposed, and approved 16.1.17, for a 2 year fixed-term contract. The remit for this post includes developing our processes, procedures and systems for improving our QA and QE activities.
- The College will continue to encourage sharing of good practice through its annual Good Practice Conference, extending this from PGT to include UG programmes in 2017-18, and through the continuing work of the PG Administrators' and PGT Programme Directors' monthly fora.
- Initiatives to develop and enhance the sense of belonging to a community will be actively fostered by the College, especially for UG students in the Edinburgh Medical School.

- University timetabling system to be introduced in the R(D)SVS from 2017-18, and scoping work for using the system for the MBChB to be carried forward.
- The College will oversee the development of better communication with NHS staff who are involved in delivery of our UG and PGT programmes eg developing better relationships with module co-ordinators and leaders, providing better guidance on timely marking and feedback, ensuring information about postponed classes is transmitted timeously.
- Further work to be done on PGT marketing, fees and admissions to improve conversion from 'unconditional firm' offer holders to fully matriculated students; proposals to be taken to Fee Strategy Group in 2016-17.
- PGT programmes with bespoke VLEs now in actively-managed transition to LEARN: to be completed for 2017-18; and PGT programmes to be delivered in line with University calendar from 2017-18.
- A decision on fees for OLDL PhDs is eagerly awaited to let our 2 pilot programmes begin.

CMVM

17 January 2017

College Annual Quality Report

College of Science and Engineering Academic Year 2015/16

1. Reflection on progress with actions from the previous year

The College Office is taking the opportunity, provided by the move to programme QA reporting, to continue to enhance quality assurance processes in a number of areas related to student experience and academic standards in PGR and collaborations/CDTs.

To further progress College level enhancement of student support provision a two-year Student Support Plan has been developed, commencing from January 2017. This will focus on Personal Tutor and Senior Tutor support (Pastoral Adviser role for PGR) and on improving administration systems to support students who have declared a disability.

2. Overview of performance data across the college

College level analysis of performance data has been hampered by the delay in the release of the Dashboard. For School level review (taught programmes) the Schools utilised the QA Toolkit for the academic year 2015/16. Peer Programme reviews took place in December 2016 through the College QA committee meeting cycle. The CQA committee noted issues arising and agreed the QA themes for the College and agreed actions to be taken by the College at the January 2017 meeting.

The College carried out a systematic review of UGT External Examiner data. Both the number of commendations and issues raised has increased this session perhaps indicating a greater ease in the external examiners delivering comments as they become more familiar with the on-line system. The commendations overwhelmingly dominate the numbers of comments received and relate to aspects such as the smooth running of examiners meeting, the way special circumstances are covered at the meetings, the administrative support associated with production of papers for the meeting and the preparation of the examination papers, the quality of programmes /courses offered, the balance of theory, practice and training and the links to industry as a route to successful employment. Issues raised were predominantly for consideration by the individual schools but a certain clustering around moderation and feedback were noted. In moderation, there was the recurrent suggestion that an explicit audit trail should be available in recording moderation decisions and that this information should be available to external examiners. College has asked schools to review their processes for recording moderation decision to ensure greater transparency and also awaits the outcome from the Senatus working group on Moderation for any further suggestion. In feedback, markers have been encouraged to use the standard phrases in the performance descriptors for a piece of work to give greater clarity in the feedback and its relationship to a mark of the common marking scheme.

At time of writing it has not been possible to take an overview of the PGT external examiner reports due to an issue with the reporting tools. We are working with Student Systems to resolve the problem.

Work to establish College level Benchmarking Data for the reporting year 2016/17 (and 2015/16) will commence on the release of the live Dashboard. Draft benchmarking criteria will be presented

to the CAQC meeting and the CL&TC in March 2017 for discussion and sign-off at the CQAC meeting in June 2017.

The Peer Review for PGR will take place in March 2017 for School reporting in August 2017 when Schools are to report on performance for the two academic years (2015/16 and 2016/7).

3. Themes for SQAC forward planning

- Support further development of University Systems functionality for the administration and support of Postgraduate Research students.
- Review of the use of University supported media (LEARN, captured, Top Hat etc.) within teaching with a view to identifying examples of best practice.
- Development of analytical methods to optimise the use of data gathering student surveys in particular data from the 'decliner survey' and the 'pre-arrival' survey to support recruitment.

4. College action plan

- Several school QA reports highlighted serious issues with the delivery of courses over the last session. These included the lack of availability of suitably sized/equipped spaces for the planned teaching activities and a high turnover of staff in teaching offices. Such issues were considered to have a significant negative impact on the student experience. The problems were largely attributed to the demand on the teaching estate from increased student numbers, and stress on teaching administrative staff expected to deal with the increased numbers in parallel with the introduction of new systems/processes from the centre. Several Schools also indicated that they have now reached full capacity in terms of laboratory space either in "science" labs and for computer laboratories. Similar issues are being encountered in the organisation of Field Trips. These issues are considered an on-going risk to both the University's reputation as it follows its planned expansion in student numbers and to the appetite for change associated with initiatives such as 'Service Excellence'.
These concerns expressed through both the QA and L&T committees have led the College management to set 'teaching' as one of the main focuses of the 2017 planning round. A major initiative will be the conversion of a significant portion of Murchison House (the previous British Geological Survey building) to student study/teaching space in time for academic year 2018/19.
- College look forward to the appointment of the EUSA College Representative in April and will work with the appointee to develop their role and remit in leading student representation in the College. Engagement with the current school representatives at College level in preparation for the appointment of the College Representative will be through "Drop in" sessions with the Dean of Quality Assurance commencing February 2017.
- College will review the usage of Library resources for students looking at such issues as existing library collections, School and student expectations. This will also provide valuable, specific feedback to the planning of future study space provision in the KB Master plan.

- To support Schools in developing initiatives such as SharePoint platform for draft examination paper preparation. The School of Engineering has developed a comprehensive, secure new system which supports the administration of draft paper preparation and sign off. The College will encourage other Schools to adopt similar systems and believe that this could be of wider interest and use in the University.
- The School of Physics & Astronomy have developed a Moderation Package. The CQAC reviewed the system and agreed that this was potentially a valuable tool for Schools. Further development will take place once the University Sub-group looking at moderation has reported.

CSE

January 2017

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

9 February 2017

Enhancement-led Institutional Review Theme Lead Reports

Executive Summary

The paper presents reports from the theme leads responsible for taking forward the areas for development from the University's Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) in 2015/16. These reports provide the basis for the year on report which will be submitted to the Quality Assurance Agency for Scotland in March 2017.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?

The Committee has responsibility for monitoring progress against agreed actions.

Action requested

For Discussion.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

Theme leads will implement and communicate actions within their area. The Senate committees' newsletter will include an item on ELIR actions.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. Resource implications (including staffing)

The implementation of the plans have resource implications for support services as well as for Colleges and Schools, which need to be taken account of when setting the priorities for the Senate Committees.

2. Risk assessment

The ELIR has been managed within the University's risk management process.

3. Equality and Diversity

The paper does not require an Equality Impact Assessment. Equality and diversity considerations will be taken into account by the theme leads.

4. Freedom of information

Open.

Key words

Enhancement

Originator of the paper

Vice Principal Jane Norman, Assistant Principal Susan Rhind, Assistant Principal Alan Murray, Assistant Principal Jeremy Bradshaw, Tanya Lubizc-Nawrocka, Barry Neilson

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

9 February 2017

**Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR)
Theme Lead Report**

Theme: Assessment and Feedback

Theme lead: Professor Susan Rhind

Recommendation 59. Subject-level staff who met the ELIR team indicated that discussions have been held at school level about approaches to providing feedback, and that there continued to be frustration around the comparatively low scores in a number of schools. **The University is encouraged to progress with its plans to engage in further analyses of NSS free text answers at school level, in addition to working with students in the schools concerned to address the matters raised.** (Further background at ELIR Technical Report paragraphs 55, 56, 57, 58, 74)

Further Analysis of NSS Free Text Answers at School Level

The Feedback Quality group, comprising two part time Research Fellows with input from the Institute for Academic Development (IAD), have developed a methodology for thematic qualitative analysis of National Student Survey (NSS) data using three schools as pilots and aim to complete the analysis by the end of February 2017. In addition, IAD have been carrying out a project exploring student perceptions of the NSS question set. In relation to assessment and feedback, the team found *'that the PTES¹ questions gave them [students] greater space to explore their feelings around NSS, and that they encouraged them to think about a wider range of feedback methods and not simply the written feedback they received on their summatively assessed work.'* The Student Surveys Unit also published an analysis of free text comments in October 2016.

An analysis of external examiner reports shows that there are many more commendations relating to 'student feedback' and 'assessment methods' than there are issues.

- **Sub theme of student feedback (undergraduate and taught postgraduate)**
2014/15: 97 commendations, 62 suggestions and seven issues.
2015/16: 105 commendations, 66 suggestions and nine issues.
- **Sub theme of assessment methods (undergraduate and taught postgraduate)**
2014/15: 43 commendations, 42 suggestions and three issues.
2015/16: 59 commendations, 42 suggestions and one issue.

Text analysis highlights the constructive nature of much of the feedback and the clear efforts being made to improve. Issues often relate to inconsistency which is a recognised issue both in this context and others.

Working with Students in the Schools Concerned to Address Matters Raised

¹ Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey

Course Enhancement Questionnaires were implemented in 2016/17 and results are being reported on through the student data dashboard. The core question set includes the question 'Feedback so far has been helpful and informative'. It is hoped that a reasonably complete picture of semester 1 course performance in relation to this metric across Schools will be available by mid-semester 2. This will then inform further conversations with individual schools and AP assessment and feedback.

Recommendation 60. The University should ensure it is able to **implement feedback policy and practice in a clear and consistent manner across the University** to ensure that all students receive timely, relevant and high quality feedback at key points during their programmes. Particular attention should be paid to the **provision of formative feedback opportunities** that help students progress. There would be benefit in **working closely with students at school level to understand their specific issues and needs**, and to consider whether students in particular disciplines, locations or modes of study would benefit from **contextualised approaches**. In carrying out this work, there would be value in the University **reflecting on the positive experiences of assessment and feedback reported by ODL students**. (Further background at ELIR Technical Report paragraphs 55, 56, 57, 58, 74. ODL students: 49) Paragraph 74 repeats the recommendation to reflect on the positive experiences of assessment and feedback reported by ODL students, with the addition of **'with a view to replicating them across the student body'**.

Implement Feedback Policy and Practice in a Clear and Consistent Manner across the University

The Assessment and Feedback Enhancement Working Group has been formalised as sub group of the Senatus Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) and plans to review the Feedback Standards and Guiding Principles and associated information/resources. The University's draft Learning and Teaching Strategy prominently references assessment and feedback and the Assessment Regulations outline practices, therefore, the Group plan to turn the relevant content of the Principles into an interactive resource with case studies in order to support implementation of policy and practice.

The Directors of Teaching Network continues to meet to discuss aspects of assessment and feedback. In relation to Taught Assessment Regulation 16 and the 15 day feedback turnaround deadline, Senatus LTC will be considering a paper in late January that proposes from semester 2 that Schools no longer be required to report turnaround times centrally. Monitoring of turnaround time will remain, but with ownership at School level. In parallel, Schools will closely monitor data from the course enhancement questionnaire feedback question and target future monitoring to those courses falling below 60% in this metric and/or their poorest performing courses.

Provision of Formative Feedback Opportunities

A series of presentations at College and School level continue to highlight the importance of formative feedback experiences and provision of opportunities for students to gain skills in assessment literacy. The balance of formative and summative feedback is also explored through the Leading Enhancement in Assessment and Feedback project audits.

Working Closely with Schools to Understand Specific Issues and Needs (Contextualising Approaches)

The Leading Enhancement in Assessment and Feedback (LEAF) project continues to work closely with Schools to explore students' experiences of assessment and feedback. To date, 24 programmes across 20 Schools (spanning all three Colleges) have been audited. Follow up action continues with several Schools and key themes emerging from audits have been reported to the Senatus Learning and Teaching Committee.

The Edinburgh Learning Design Roadmap (ELDeR) is a learning design service which was launched in June 2016. ELDeR focusses on the design of student learning experiences, where student feedback and assessment literacies are given top priority. The Senatus Curriculum and Student Progression Committee will hear about ELDeR at their late January 2017 meeting as part of a presentation on collaborative learning design in practice. The Directors of Teaching Network will also hear a presentation on ELDeR at their February 2017 meeting.

The Assessment and Feedback Enhancement Group continues to receive updates on the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences electronic submission of assessment and return of feedback project.

Reflecting on the Positive Experience of Assessment and Feedback reported by Online Distance Learning Students (with a view to Replication)

Despite concerted efforts, it has not been possible to obtain details of the positive experiences reported to the ELIR panel by ODL students. Opportunities to share practice will continue through the Directors of Teaching Network and the Assessment and Feedback Enhancement Working Group.

Recommendation 94. There would be value in the University **reviewing the information provided to students about marking schemes**, building on good practice developed within some schools of expanding the descriptors of grade schemes and considering the possible benefit of developing grade descriptors at institutional level.

Recommendation 104. There would be benefit in the University **reviewing the information provided to students on the grade descriptors for the common marking schemes in use and to consider this as part of the wider area for development around implementing feedback policy in a clear and consistent manner across the University** (see paragraphs 61 and 75).

The University's Assessment and Feedback Enhancement Group has had an initial discussion regarding how to approach these recommendations, and an initial stage of action is underway to address them.

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

9 February 2017

**Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR)
Theme Lead Report**

Theme: Personal Tutor System

Theme lead: Professor Alan Murray

Recommendation 44. & 73. The ELIR team recognised the highly devolved nature of the University and the potential benefits of tailoring the Personal Tutor System to the needs of particular student groups and disciplines. Nonetheless, it was evident that the system was not working effectively for all student groups and there would be considerable benefit in the University **revisiting the way in which schools are implementing the system to ensure all students are able to benefit from the arrangements as intended.** There would be value in the University **providing additional clarification for students around the aims of the system, and signposting alternative avenues of student support, in order to align the expectations of students and staff undertaking the Personal Tutor role.** Paragraph 73 provides more directive text: 'The University should provide additional clarification for students around the aims of the system, and provide information about alternative avenues of student support' (See further background information at ELIR Technical Report paragraphs 40, 41, 42, 43, 73)

Revisiting the ways in which Schools are Implementing the System (to ensure all students benefit from arrangements as intended)

The Learning and Teaching Policy Group discussed academic support and the Personal Tutor (PT) System in October 2016 and agreed that the Personal Tutor Oversight Group (a sub-committee of the Senatus Quality Assurance Committee) should meet as planned to consider all available feedback. The Personal Tutor Oversight Group then met in November 2016. Key themes were noted and actions agreed in relation to:

- minimising and effectively managing the changing of PTs
- sharing good practice examples identified through the Teaching Award nomination analysis
- monitoring of free text comments relating to PT/tutee contact

Three proposed enhancements to the PT system were also discussed (see below). The Group concluded that more robust and granular internal survey data were required if meaningful conclusions were to be drawn and/or judgements made in regard to the relative performance of both Schools and individual PTs.

The three proposed enhancements were discussed at a Senior Tutor Network meeting in December 2016 where they received broad support:

Guidance on holding meaningful meetings

This has already been done in many Schools – offering guidance to PTs with respect to the topics that could/should be discussed at each stage of a student’s journey through University. We plan to offer a generic guidance document, supplemented by exemplars. Use of the guidance document and exemplars will not be mandatory. Work will be undertaken with the Institute for Academic Development (IAD) to provide some resources to assist Schools who wish to implement new practices.

Pre-arrival questionnaires

This has been trialled in a number of Schools including (Veterinary Medicine, Biomedical Sciences, Mathematics, and Chemistry) with results that would enhance the quality of initial PT-tutee conversations. For entrants at September 2016, the making transitions personal ‘personal reflection and review’ framework was used by nine Schools (mostly for undergraduate students, but also for some taught postgraduate students) and three units. The questions asked of new students are deliberately “soft”, to try to surface aspirations and concerns that can then inform the support given by the PT. This enhancement would not be mandatory, but has the potential to get the PT/tutee relationship off to a positive and personalised start. Discussions will now take place to explore how this facility could be made available for all new students.

PT “group practices”

This has been suggested for large Schools because it is largely unnecessary in small, tightly-knit Schools. By grouping PTs, the following gains can potentially be achieved:

- Robustness against the absence of an individual PT, as some information will be shared by the group of PTs involved
- Sharing of good practice between PTs in the group
- Discreet mentoring of new and “struggling” PTs

This will not be made mandatory, but work will be undertaken with IAD to provide some resources to assist Schools who wish to implement group practices.

Reward, Recruitment and Recognition

Further enhancements have been made to the University’s reward and recruitment processes, building upon the success of the “Exemplars of Excellence in Student Education” introduced in 2013. They aim to further increase the prominence of teaching and student support in staff management:

- The criteria for the award of a Readership now includes teaching and student support, sharing equal weight with research. This rectifies a long-standing anomaly and brings Readership into line with the criteria for a Personal Chair.
- Guidance notes on choice of reviewers and assessors for promotion cases have been enhanced to raise the prominence of teaching-oriented references in cases where that is appropriate (i.e. where teaching is part of the individual’s work commitments and case for promotion).
- All recruitment processes for staff who are likely to teach students at any time in their life with us will now include a “teaching exercise” as part of the selection process. Students will be involved in assessing candidates’ ability and commitment to student education as evidenced by that teaching exercise.

Training and Support

The Academic and Pastoral Support Policy contains information on briefing, training and development and notes: “All Schools will offer a training session for Personal Tutors and

Student Support Teams at the start of each academic session". Since the roll out of the Student Mental Health training programme this academic year, 127 staff have attended training. There are another eight sessions planned for this semester, and the programme will continue in 2017/18. There is no intention to make training for staff delivering the PT system mandatory.

The proposed enhancements outlined above will help to support staff in their role as Personal Tutors.

The Personal Tutor staff website was extensively redeveloped for September 2016. This website aims to support staff in their PT system roles and was redeveloped using staff feedback.

Online Distance Learning (ODL) Students

In response to consistent feedback from staff about the different needs of ODL students and the extensive existing support provided, the Personal Tutor Oversight Group approved a pilot approach in the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine for taught postgraduate students. The Senior Tutor Network were asked at their meeting in December 2016 to consider appropriate ways of supporting ODL students within the PT system framework. It was agreed at the Network meeting that the Assistant Principal Academic Support would consult further in order to establish the needs of ODL students in relation to the PT system to inform any developments and a meeting of key stakeholders is being organised

Providing additional clarification for students around the aims of the system, and signposting alternative avenues of student support, in order to align the expectations of students and staff undertaking the Personal Tutor role

The School Personal Tutoring Statement now includes a prominently placed standard paragraph on the aims of the Personal Tutor system. Students are provided with information on alternative avenues of student support through many different mechanisms, for example, the student website and programme and course handbooks.

A series of consultative meetings led by Assistant Principals and the Senior Vice Principal and supported by Deans of Learning and Teaching has been held in every School (during semester 1. These meetings have presented the measures that have been taken to encourage excellence in teaching and student support to all interested staff. The meetings have also invited and noted staff comments as to the next steps to be taken. The PT system was one of the less frequently raised issues by staff at these School meetings, staff noted that the University could do more to understand and manage students' expectations regarding the Personal Tutor system.

The Principal's consultation with students is ongoing and may shed further light on what our students understand by "academic support". In addition, Assistant Principals will be meeting separately with groups of students (with help from Edinburgh University Students' Association's) to gather a broad a range of views as possible on this vital topic. Initial consultations suggest that the PT system is not necessarily what students think of first under the heading of "academic support" which runs contrary to thinking to date.

At its November meeting, the Learning and Teaching Policy Group agreed two actions in relation to the PT system:

- 1) To consider how Schools/Colleges/University can communicate to students regarding what to expect from their Personal Tutor, and how the PT role relates to the broader academic and pastoral support arrangements (including student support teams, and student services such as Student Counselling).
- 2) To explore the models of student support teams operating in different Schools, and the way that they interact with the Personal Tutor systems in the Schools, and assess whether some models are more effective than others.

An agreed set of activities is planned in order to progress these actions, including a review of website information and consultation with a virtual student panel.

Recommendation 45. It was evident to the team that the University's promotion of peer-assisted schemes represents positive practice (see paragraph 76). The team would **encourage the University to continue supporting staff and students in the embedding of peer-assisted learning and to continue working with EUSA to deliver appropriate training for peers.** (See further background information in paragraph 45)

There is growing engagement with Peer Learning and Support activities:

	Academic year 2015/16	Academic year 2016/17 (semester 1)
Instances of student interaction	9871	5209
Students who have access to Peer Support	8500+	8600+
Student trained volunteers	459	487
Student-led scheme	45	40
Hours of student run events and activities	1107	1096
Hours of centralised training	200	272
Weekly hours (average across the academic year/semester)	45+	90+

The Spring 2017 meeting of the Senior Tutor Network will take the form of a “show and tell” half-day, highlighting the success and challenges with Peer Learning and Support systems across the University. Consideration will be given to ODL Peer Learning and Support.

The commitment to support and encourage the growing appreciation and appetite for Peer Learning and Support is outlined in the Edinburgh University Students’ Association and University Student Engagement Statement.

The University’s commitment to continue to develop peer support for learning is outlined in the draft Learning and Teaching Strategy.

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

9 February 2017

**Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR)
Theme Lead Report**

Theme: Postgraduate Research Student Experience

Theme lead: Professor Jeremy Bradshaw

Effective communication and consistent implementation of the Code of Practice

A reference to the Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students in handbooks is now a requirement of the Programme and Course Handbook Policy.

The Code is currently undergoing a review to ensure that its purpose is clear, that information is contained within the appropriate place and to minimise duplication of information, especially in light of the development of the Programme and Course Handbook Policy. Two focus groups with students and staff have been held to guide the development of the Code. Consideration will be given to communicating and implementing the updated version of the Code.

Review the effectiveness and regularity of research supervisor training

The University has recently embarked on a programme of work under the title Excellence in Doctoral Research and Career Development. One of the themes of this programme is Supervisor Training and Support, which aims to:

- Enhance the content of compulsory supervisor briefings by sharing practice across Colleges and ensuring updated database of resources.
- Identify, design and pilot optional training for supervisors, including facilitation guides for Schools to use.
- Consult with Schools and Colleges to design an online toolkit to support supervising at a distance.
- Explore ways in which to ensure accurate, central recording of supervision training.
- Identify ways to recognise and share practice of excellence in supervision.

Analyse the needs and experience of PGR students (School, College and University) to ensure effective support (particularly in the context of increasing numbers) and clarify where students go for further support

One of the themes of the Excellence in Doctoral Research and Career Development programme, Mentorship and Wellbeing, is working to:

- Explore the PGR mentor function across the University and identify a number of possible models. This involves benchmarking current practice, scoping and defining different models.
- Benchmark and carry out a gap analysis of support for PGR wellbeing across the University.

Training and support of PGR students who teach (including on assessment and feedback and are aware of career development resources through IAD)

The University's Senate Research Experience Committee has set up a task group to review the Code of Practice on Tutors and Demonstrators, which sets out the University's training and support arrangements for tutors and demonstrators. The group has produced a new draft document to replace the Code, on which it will be seeking views from stakeholders in February/March 2017.

PGR students who teach can consult the IAD webpages for Tutors and Demonstrators for information on workshops, routes to Higher Education Academy accreditation and relevant resources. <http://www.ed.ac.uk/institute-academic-development/learning-teaching/staff/tutors-demonstrators>

IAD also launched a new brochure for PGR students in 2016/17 which gives a comprehensive overview of professional and personal development opportunities available. The brochure is available here:

http://www.docs.hss.ed.ac.uk/iad/Postgraduate/PhD_researchers/PGR_Researcher_IAD_Brochure_onlinev201617.pdf

Recommendation 64. The majority of students who met the ELIR team had positive experiences with their supervisors, indicating that they felt supported and encouraged to engage with development and educational opportunities, including attendance at events and conferences. However, a small number of students did not feel that this was the case and they were not aware of what to do or where to go if they required further support. Not all of the students considered that the Code of Practice was implemented consistently. Heads of school outlined the roles of the co-supervisors in cases where students did not consider that their needs were being met, and acknowledged that further training for some research supervisors could be beneficial. The team encourages the University to review the effectiveness and regularity of research supervisor training. (Further background information at ELIR Technical Report paragraphs 61,62,63,65,78)

Recommendation 66. The University should continue to analyse the needs and experience of postgraduate research students at school, college and institutional level to ensure that they are effectively supported, particularly in the context of the University's plans to increase the research student numbers. The University should review the effectiveness and regularity of supervisor training and ensure that the University's Code of Practice is communicated and implemented effectively. The University should also make certain that postgraduate research students who teach are properly trained and supported for the role (including in the provision of assessment and feedback) and are made aware of the career development resources available through the IAD. [Para. 65 has background information to the recommendation on training for postgraduate research students who teach: "The training and development for tutors and demonstrators has developed since the 2011 ELIR with better oversight of tutors through guaranteed contracts and the appointment of a staff member in the IAD who works specifically with this group. Nonetheless, during the current ELIR, undergraduate students expressed a level of dissatisfaction with teaching delivered by postgraduate research students; the research students who taught indicated to the ELIR team that they did not always feel sufficiently trained or prepared to do so."]

Recommendation 78. In the context of the University's ambitions to increase the postgraduate research student population, there would be considerable benefit in the institution continuing to analyse the needs and experience of postgraduate research

students at school, college and institutional level to ensure that they are effectively supported. The University should review the effectiveness and regularity of supervisor training and ensure that the University's Code of Practice is communicated and implemented effectively. The University should also make certain that postgraduate research students who teach are properly trained and supported for the role (including in the provision of assessment and feedback) and are made aware of the career development resources available through the Institute for Academic Development.

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

9 February 2017

**Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR)
Theme Lead Report**

Theme: Staff engagement in Learning and Teaching (Workload Allocation Models)

Theme leads: Vice Principal Jane Norman

Recommendation 13. The ELIR team learned about plans the University has to develop existing staff **workload allocation models** to recognise in a consistent way contribution to priority areas such as personal tutoring, assessment and feedback, and contribution to other enhancement activity. This is likely to promote greater transparency, consistency and understanding of workload allocation among staff, as well as ensuring that academic staff are able to support the University's strategic priorities for learning and teaching. **The University is encouraged to progress this work.** (Further background information at ELIR Technical Report sections 1.2, 1.3)

Recommendation 14. Overall, the ELIR team formed the view that the University has a reflective and inclusive approach to developing strategy, and that communication and consultation with staff about strategic developments is effective. The University's approach to implementing strategies relating to learning and teaching is effective, with some challenges remaining around ensuring alignment between institutional priorities and operational structures, which the institution is open in recognising. In order to further support implementation of institutional strategies, **the University is encouraged to progress its plans to develop existing staff workload allocation models to recognise consistently staff contributions to key aspects of learning and teaching across the University.** (Further background information at ELIR technical report sections 1.2, 1.3.)

Development of Workload Allocation Models

The work allocation models with associated guidance have now been agreed with the Unions and are published at:

- <http://www.ed.ac.uk/human-resources/policies-guidance/a-to-z-policies>

Heads of College (HoC) were contacted in early January to alert them to publication of the new model and guidance. They were asked to encourage individual Heads of School (HoS) to take this forward, and were reminded of HoS responsibility for developing and maintaining appropriate models for their respective Schools which are in line with the principles set out in the document and reflect the work undertaken by the School. HoC were also asked to cascade to HoS a reminder of the need to consult with affected staff as part of the process of introducing a new work allocation model or revising an existing one.

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

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**Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR)
Theme Lead Report**

Theme: Student Representation – College and School Level

Theme leads: Tanya Lubicz-Nawrocka and College Deans

36. The University recognises that student representation at the college level could be strengthened further, for example the time and volume of committee meetings in one college were identified by students as barriers to engagement; a flexible model designed to allow a group of representatives to share the load of committee attendance had, to date, achieved mixed success. The devolved structure gives considerable decision-making power to the colleges making it all the more important to have effective student representation at that level. The University is, therefore, encouraged to **progress with work to promote and implement more effective representation at the college level.** (Further background at ELIR Technical Report paras 36, 37, 39)

Current work: Since January 2016, the Students' Association has worked with the three Colleges to clarify their committee structures and which College-level committees need student representation. The Students' Association effectively recruited student representatives for each of these College-level committees for the 2016-17 academic year, and produced a [College Committee Student Member Handbook](#) in partnership with the Colleges to prepare these student representatives for their role. A meeting has been scheduled for mid-February to check in with College committee student members to assess the effectiveness of these new processes and support mechanisms.

Future work: Additionally, the Students' Association and College Deans of Quality have been exploring new roles for one elected student 'College Rep' per College to be implemented in the future. The Students' Association has drafted a general role description for the position. In response to various communications with the Colleges, the Students' Association has revised the timetable for implementing the College Rep positions to allow time to be taken to ensure that all stakeholders have had an opportunity to consider how these new positions can be tailored to support the needs and expectations of the Colleges and Students' Association. Furthermore, the payment rate (which would be paid by the Students' Association) also needs to be confirmed. Therefore, the roles will not be included during the March 2017 Students' Association elections, but the aim is to iron out issues for subsequent years so that the new roles can be as effective as possible.

39. The University is encouraged to continue building on the existing constructive relationship with the Students' Association to **ensure there is more effective student representation at college and school level.** The University should **review the processes for appointing students to school committees and provide more effective**

training and preparation for the roles, ensuring that staff in schools understand the student roles and are able to support students to contribute effectively. There would also be benefit in the University considering the **best ways of providing feedback to the wider student body about the action that is taken** in response to matters raised through school and college-level committees. (Further background at ELIR Technical Report paragraphs 36, 37, 38)

75. The University has a positive and constructive relationship with the Students' Association and it is encouraged to continue working in partnership to ensure there is **more effective student representation at college and school level.** The University should **review the processes for appointing students to school committees and provide more effective training and preparation for the roles, ensuring that staff in schools understand the student roles and are able to support students to contribute effectively.** There would also be benefit in the University considering the **best ways of providing feedback to the wider student body about the action that is taken** in response to matters raised through school and college level committees.

Past work: In the 2015-16 academic year, the Students' Association received responses from Directors of Quality to establish which School-level committees include student representation, how they are chosen, and how they are supported by the School. The information gathered shows wide variation in the recruitment processes and committees which include student representation. In many cases, elected School Convenors or Class Reps become the student representatives on School-level committees. In the 2016-17 academic year, the Students' Association produced a [Student Representative Handbook](#) and provided training to student representatives. 100% of all elected School Convenors (a total of 55 individuals) participated in the Students' Association's in-person training for their role. 73% of Class Reps (a total of 1,306 individuals) successfully completed the Students' Association's online basic training for their role, an increase on last year's high engagement after the move to online training. This year, a record number of Class Reps and School Reps have also written a blog post (totalling over 600 thus far) to share their work as a student representative, and copies of these anonymised blog posts are shared with the wider student body via the Students' Association's [School pages](#) on the 'News' tab. In addition, the Students' Association has been working with administrative and support staff to hone and improve the processes of recruitment and registration for Class Reps and it has produced [guidance for support staff](#) and [guidance for academic staff](#) on these processes. The Students' Association held meetings in August 2016 and in January 2017 to work in partnership in support staff to share the new guidance and best practices.

Future work: The Students' Association will continue to work to train and support large numbers of student representatives to be effective in their role within each School. Feedback would be appreciated from the Senate Quality Assurance Committee on whether Schools should work to improve the consistency of student representation on School committees and how Schools can ensure that they effectively support and engage student representatives at these committee meetings.

The University of Edinburgh
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

9 February 2017

Thematic Review of Student Support Services 2017-18: Student Parents and Carers

Executive Summary

This paper seeks to establish a broad remit which the next Thematic Review of Student Support Services may explore, following recommendations and initiative already established by Edinburgh University Students' Association.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?

The paper is relevant to the University's Strategic Goal of 'excellence in education' and the Strategic Theme of 'Outstanding student experience'.

Action requested

For Discussion.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

- 1. Resource implications (including staffing)**
No change to existing practice.
- 2. Risk assessment**
No change to existing practice.
- 3. Equality and Diversity**
No change to existing practice.
- 4. Freedom of information**
Open

Key words

Thematic Review, Student Support Services

Originator of the paper

Patrick Garratt, EUSA Vice President Academic Affairs

Thematic Review of Student Support Services 2017-18: Student Parents and Carers

Edinburgh University Students' Association would recommend that the next thematic review of support services address the ways in which students parents and carers are supported on an academic and pastoral level. There have been a number of initiatives established by Students' Association staff and sabbatical officers over the past few years, however there has been relatively little strategic oversight of the University's support of this group. A thematic review focused on the assistance provided to student parents and carers would ensure that the framework and guidelines proposed by NUS Scotland, and the Students' Association, interface with the University's strategic overview of under-represented student groups. This is particularly important when the support given to this group is not currently centralised, but rather delegated to individual Schools and support services across the University.

This thematic review should consider the accessibility of particular University services from the perspective of a student parent whose child is present with them on campus. It would also be appropriate to explore how procedures for support staff can be amended to ensure there is not a disparity of treatment between this group, and students who are not responsible for their children on campus, in terms of the support given to student parents and carers in their academic progression.

The review panel may consider both academic staff and support staff's understanding of the specific demands and responsibilities placed upon both student parents and carers, and how Schools may improve the links between support services and academic areas. The review panel may also consider how student parents and carers views are communicated through representative structures that connect the Students' Association, student support officers in Schools and the University's senior management. It may be useful to interact with University Estates to assess the provision child-friendly areas, ensuring that children are welcome on campus. The effectiveness of information provision for student parents and carers should also be taken into account.

Patrick Garratt,
EUSA Vice President Academic Affairs
February 2017

The University of Edinburgh
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

9 February 2017

**Postgraduate Taught External Examiner Reports:
Thematic Analysis 2015/16**

Executive Summary

The paper comprises qualitative and quantitative analysis data from the External Examiner Reporting System (EERS). It covers postgraduate taught programmes for the academic year 2015/16 and provides comparison with 2014/15.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?

The paper aligns with the University's strategic objective of leadership in learning.

Action requested

Senatus Quality Assurance Committee is invited to discuss the report and identify any University-level actions to take as result.

College representatives are asked to ensure that the outcomes of the Committee's discussions are made available to and considered by the relevant College committee(s).

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

The committee is invited to consider how any agreed action will be implemented and communicated.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. Resource implications (including staffing)

The paper is a report on activity and no resource implications are identified

2. Risk assessment

The paper is a report on activity and no risk assessment is required.

3. Equality and Diversity

The paper is a report on activity and equality impact assessment is not required.

4. Freedom of information

The paper is open

Originator of the paper

Susan Hunter, Academic Services
1 February 2017

Postgraduate External Examiner Reports: Thematic Analysis 2015/16

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides a thematic analysis of External Examiner reports for postgraduate taught programmes. Analysis was conducted based on data available on 27 January 2017.
- 1.2 **Action requested:** Senatus Quality Assurance Committee is invited to discuss the report and identify any University-level actions to take as result.

2. Overview of the number of External Examiner Reports

- 2.1 Outlined in the figure and table below are the number of postgraduate taught (PGT) reports by College comparing the previous two academic years.

Table 1: Number of postgraduate taught reports by College

	2015/16	2014/15
College of Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS)	167	166
College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (CMVM)	47	34
College of Science and Engineering (CSE)	33	27
Total number of reports	247	227

- 2.2 Outlined in the figures below are the number and status of postgraduate taught reports in each College by School, for 2015/16 and 2014/15. There are a high number of “Due to Breach” reports compared with the previous year and with the undergraduate report (submitted to December 2016 QAC), and a significant number of “Late” reports.

Figure 1

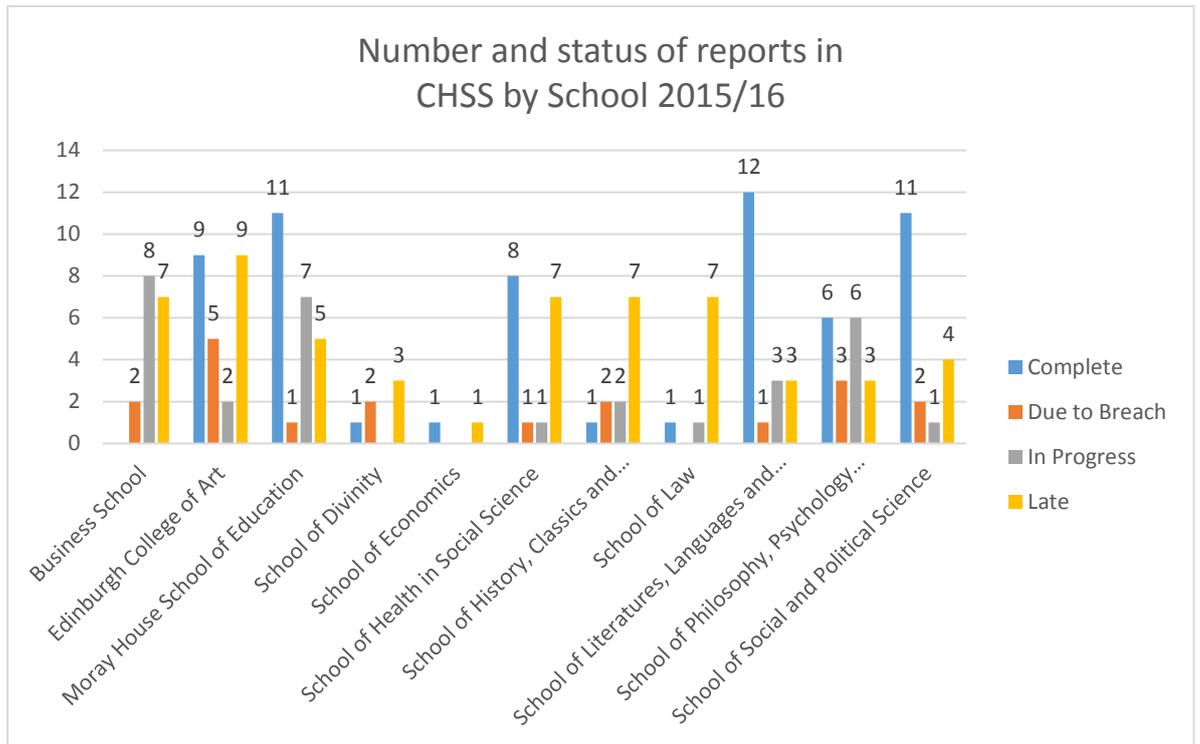


Figure 2

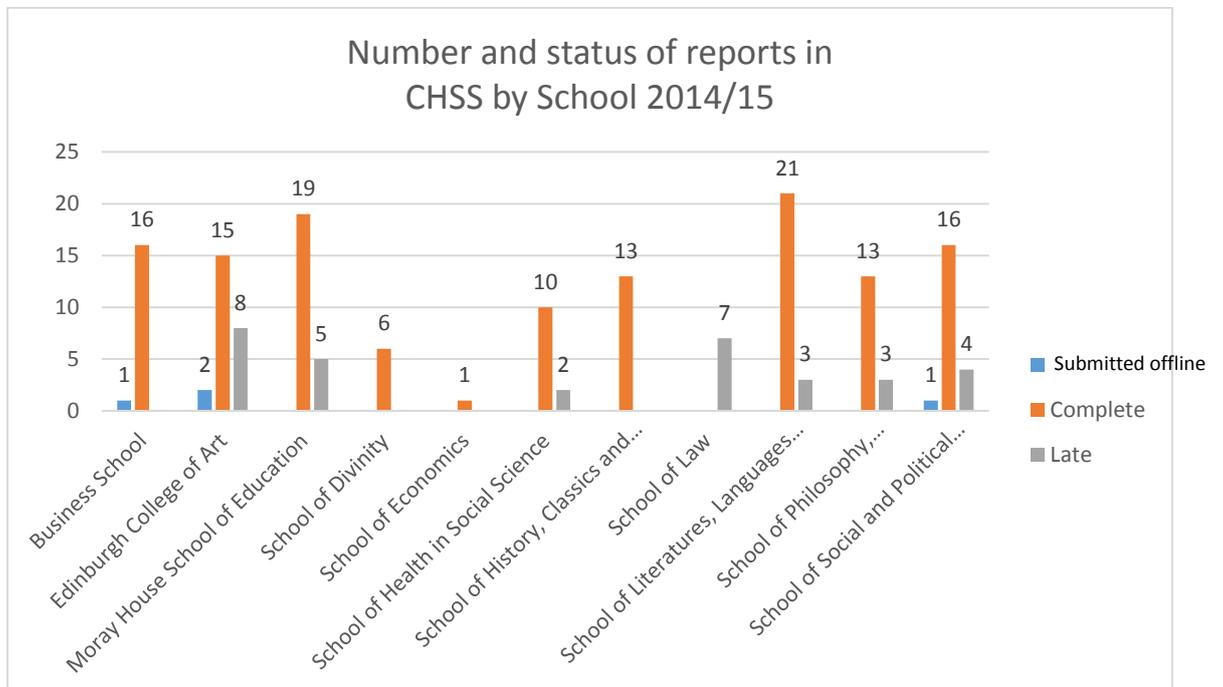


Figure 3

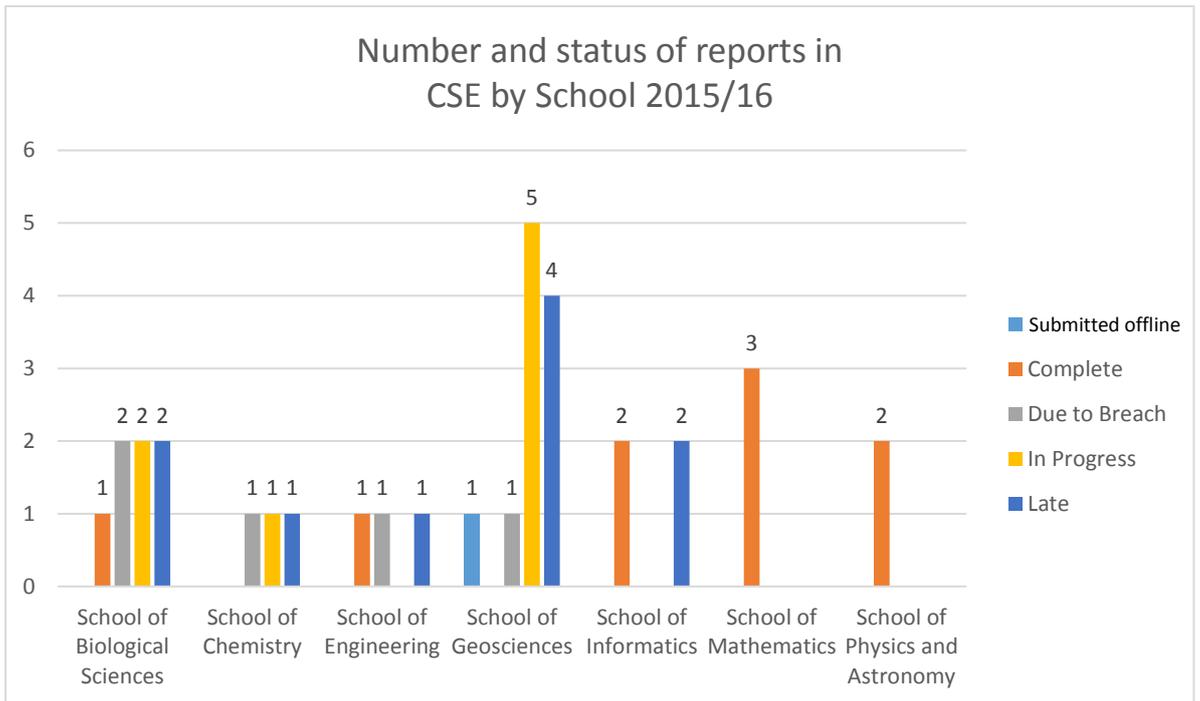


Figure 4

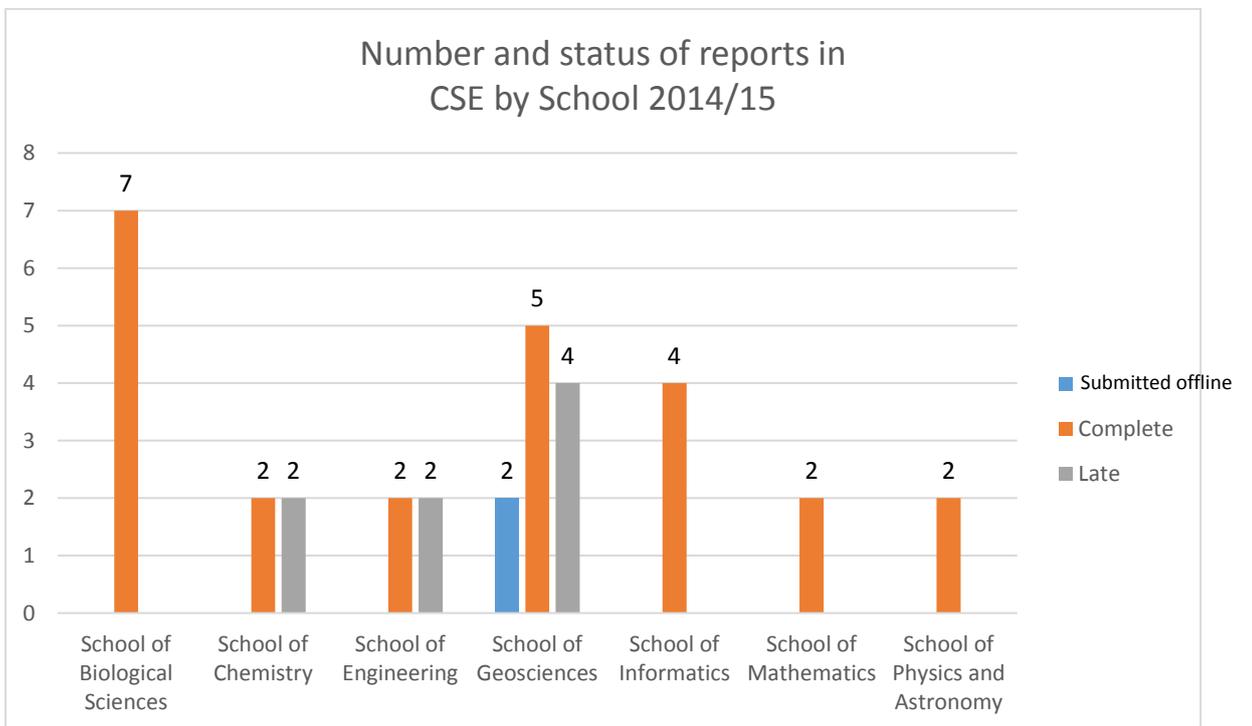


Figure 5

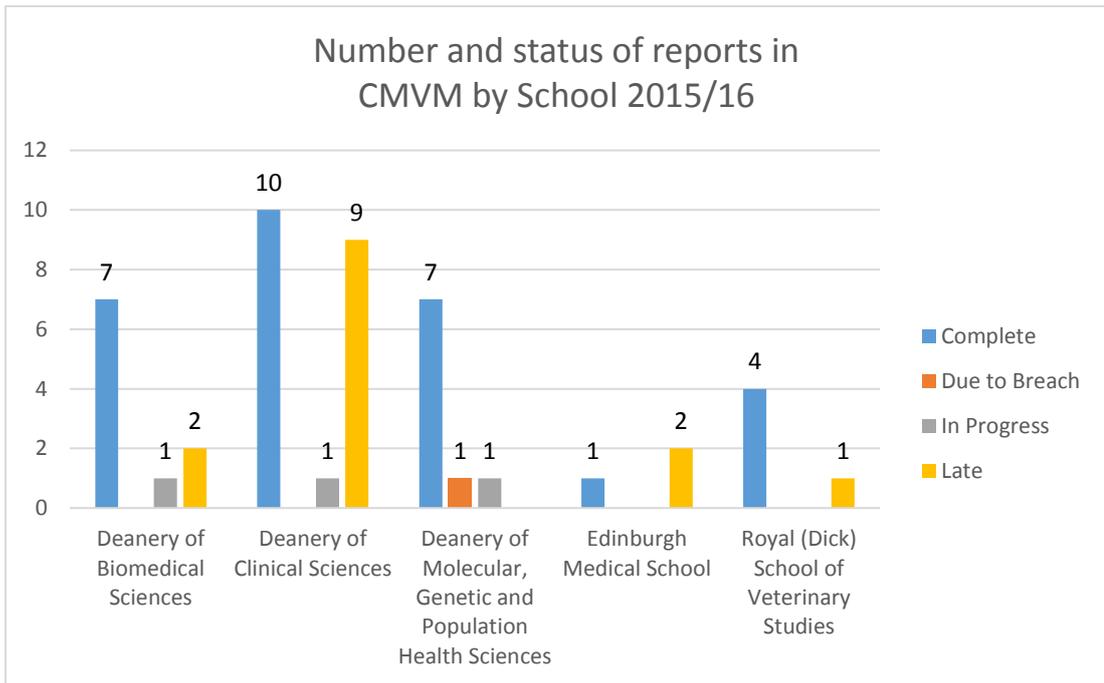
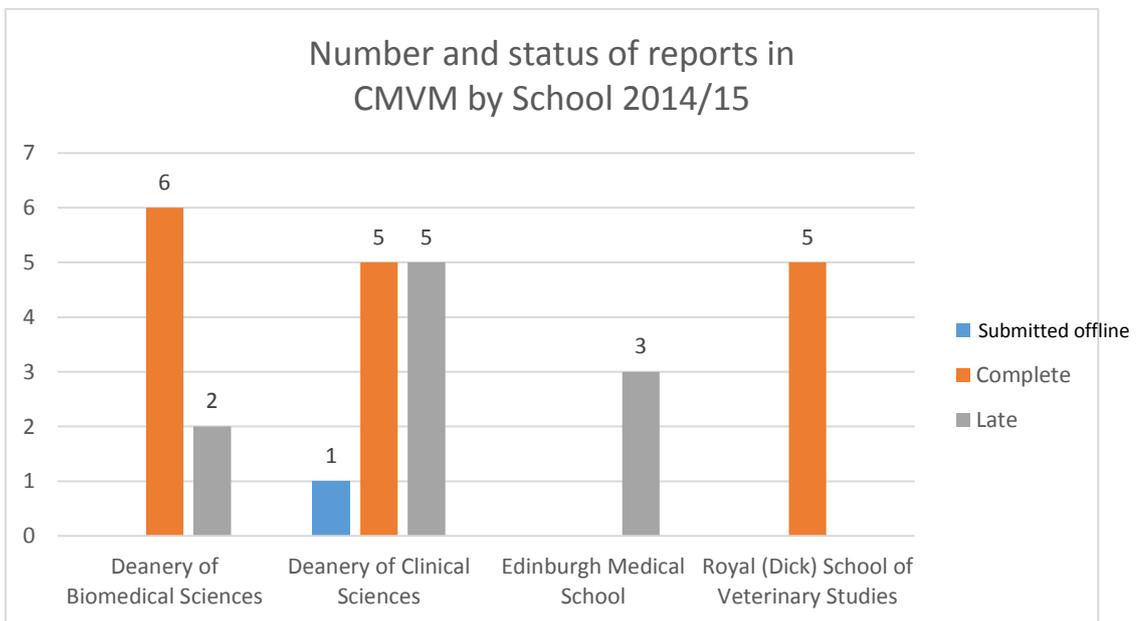


Figure 6



3. Overview of the Status of Reports

Table 2: Number and stage of reports by College and academic year

	Report Stage	2015/16	2014/15
HSS	Response Submitted	60	130
	Draft Response	68	17
	Draft Report	28	13
	Allocation	10	4
	Cancelled	1	0
MVM	Response Submitted	29	16
	Draft Response	5	6
	Draft Report	11	3
	Allocation	2	1
	Submitted Offline	0	1
SCE	Response Submitted	9	16
	Draft Response	14	4
	Draft Report	7	4
	Allocation	2	0
	Submitted Offline	1	2

- 3.1 Reports at the allocation stage relate to reports that have not been allocated to an Academic Response Coordinator and therefore have not been circulated to the External Examiner. This can happen for a variety of reasons, for example, due to the External Examiner no longer being utilised. In 2015/16, the number of reports submitted offline reduced to one from three in the previous academic year.

4. Analysis

4.1 Comparison: 2014/15 and 2015/16

- 4.1.1 The figures below set out a breakdown of the different categories that External Examiners report on.

Figure 7

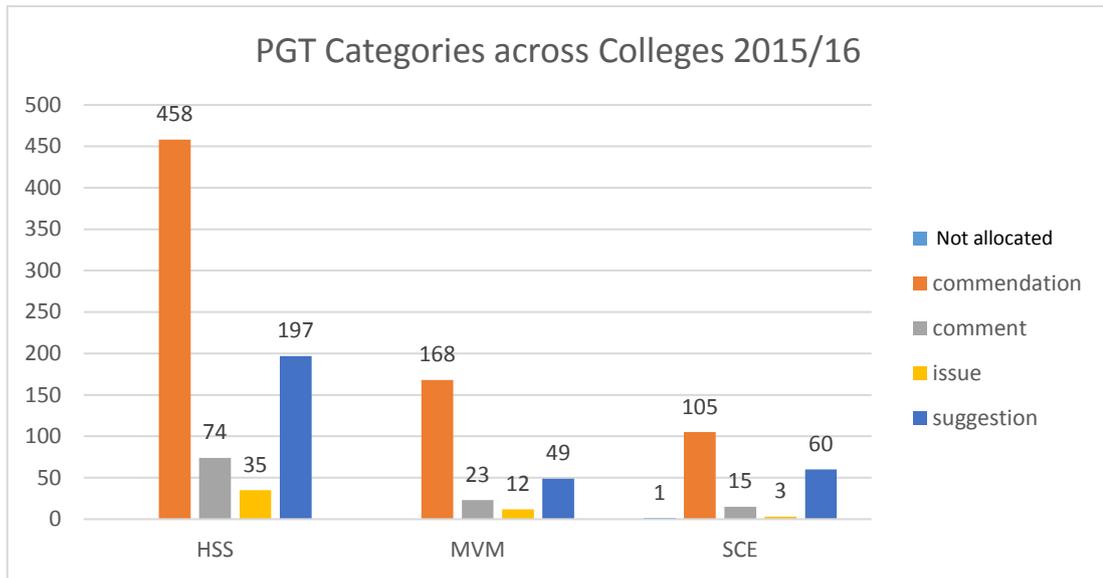
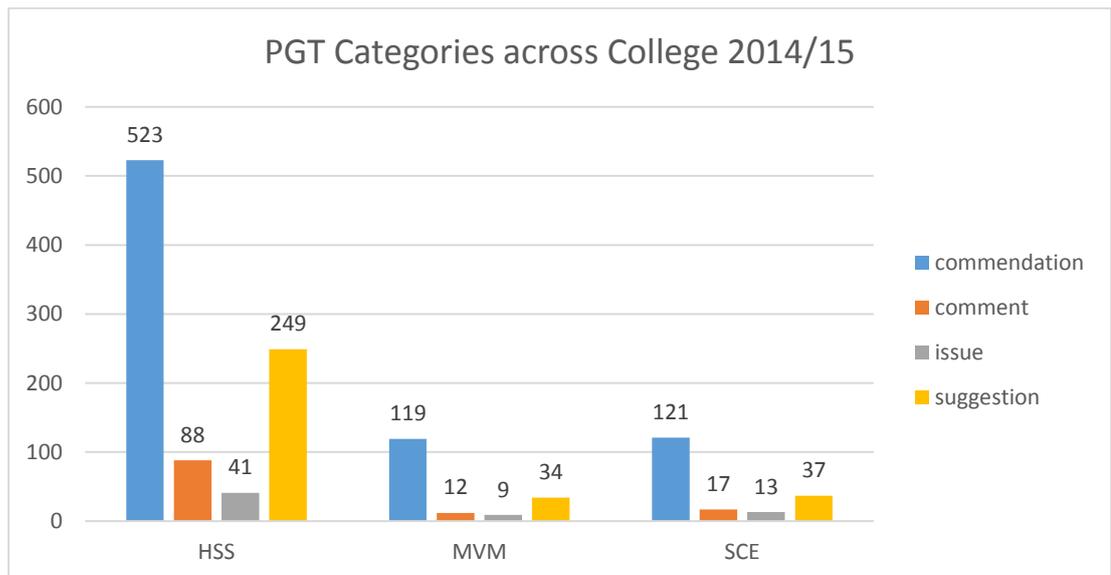


Figure 8



4.1.2 There are a low number of issues across the University and a high number of commendations. The total reporting across all categories has reduced slightly in 2015/16 compared with the previous year. Comments in 2015/16 are provided for questions answered in relation to the Theme “Term of Office” which covers two sub-themes “Induction” and “Term of Office Overview”.

Figure 9

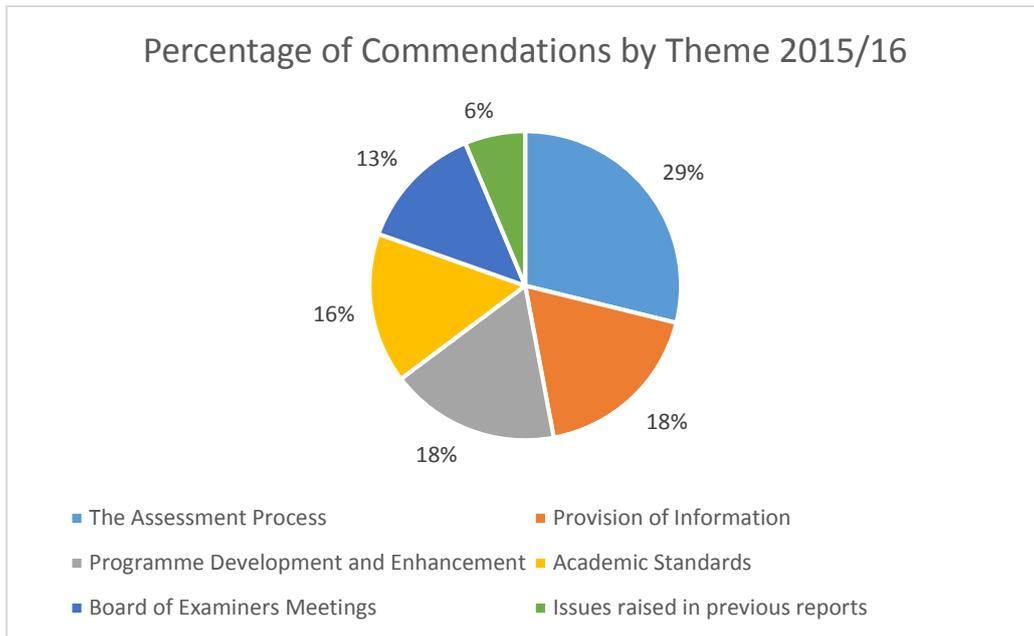
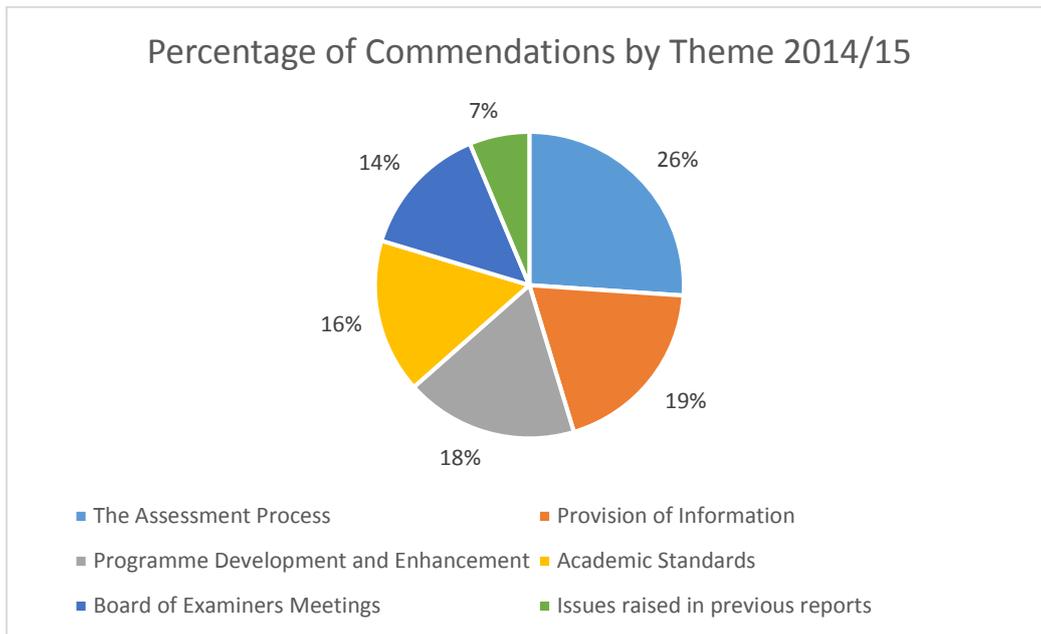


Figure 10



4.1.3 The sub-themes of “The Assessment Process” with most commendations were “Student Feedback”, “Internal Moderation” and “Assessment Methods”. Some examples of examiners commendations:

“Compared with other similar programmes in my experience, these courses offer feedback which is detailed, feeds forward and is always constructive.”

“Internal moderation procedures are excellent and it is evident that scripts are marked and moderated carefully and consistently.”

“An excellent variety of assessment methods was used – many of which were directly linked to the sorts of tasks likely to be carried out by professionals working in the field.”

4.1.4 The figures below set out the proportion of issues by theme:

Figure 11

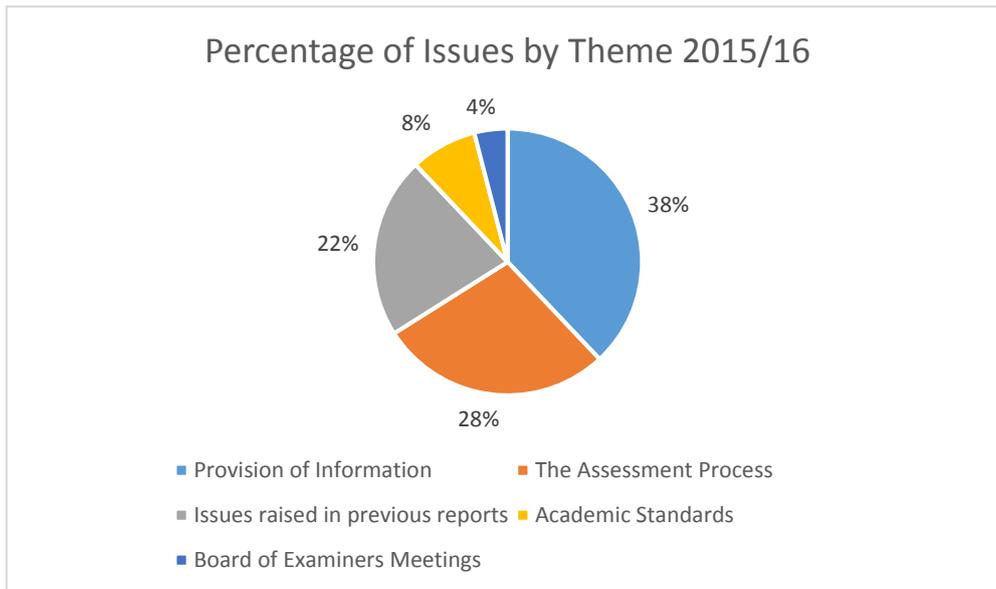
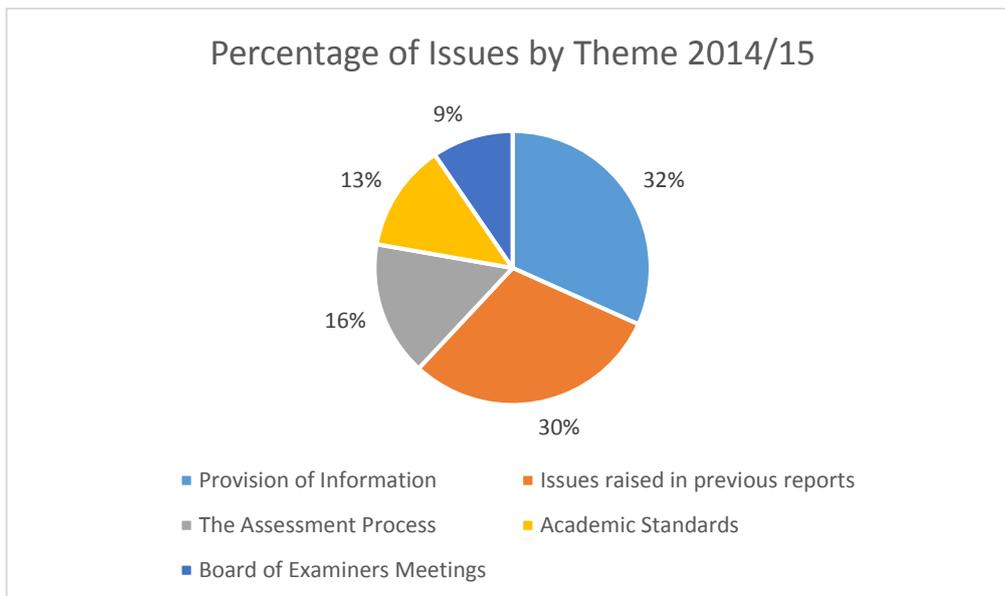


Figure 12



4.1.5 The “Provision of Information” theme accounted for the largest proportion of issues in the two previous years with a 6% increase in 2015/16. This reflects a decrease in the issues related to the other themes rather than an increase in the overall number of

issues raised. The overall number of issues raised fell by around 20% in 2015/16 compared with 2014/15.

4.1.6 In relation to Provision of Information, the sub-theme “Assessed work examples” accounted for the largest number of issues reported in 2015/16. Comments centred around access to examples being restricted and not receiving examples in good time.

4.2 Analysis of issues, suggestions and commendations: 2015/16 and 2014/15

4.2.1 The top ten commendations by sub-theme were as follows:

Figure 13

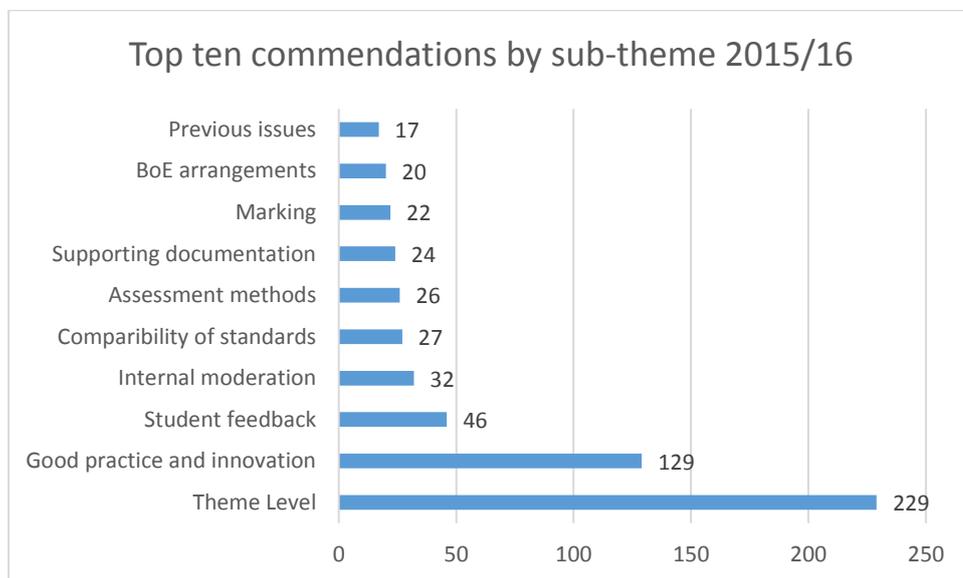
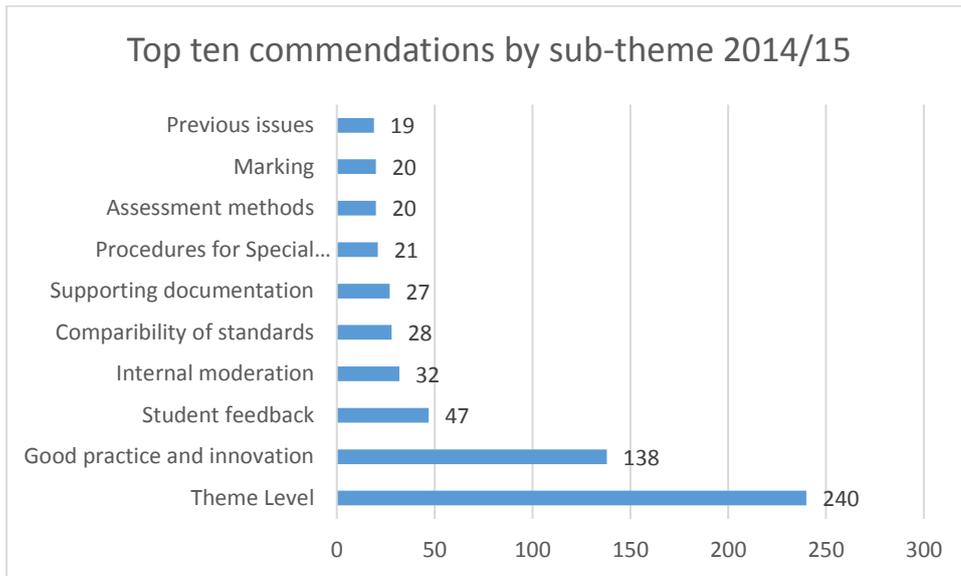


Figure 14



4.2.2 The sub-theme, "Theme Level" refers to commendations given by External Examiners at the end of each theme section.

4.2.3 The top ten suggestions by sub-theme were as follows:

Figure 15

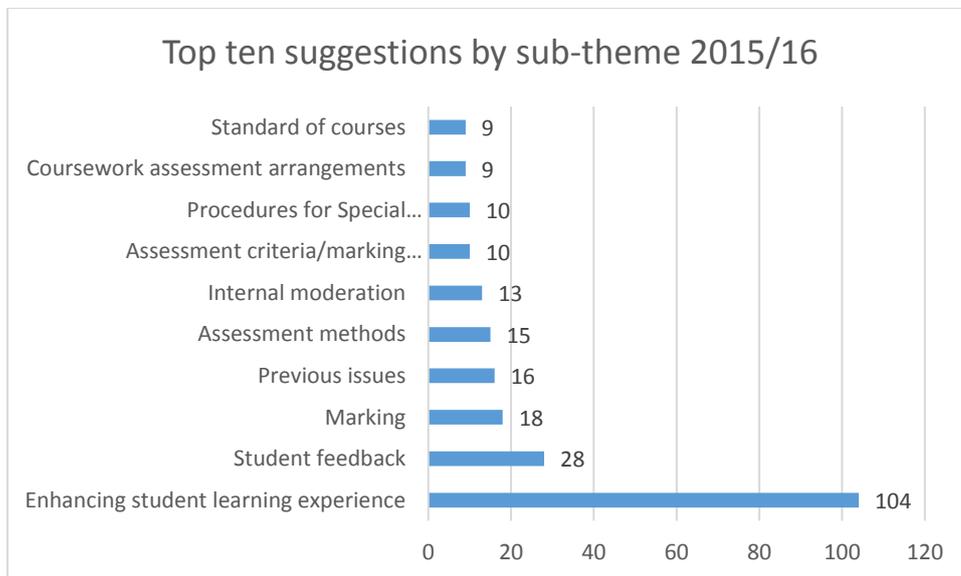
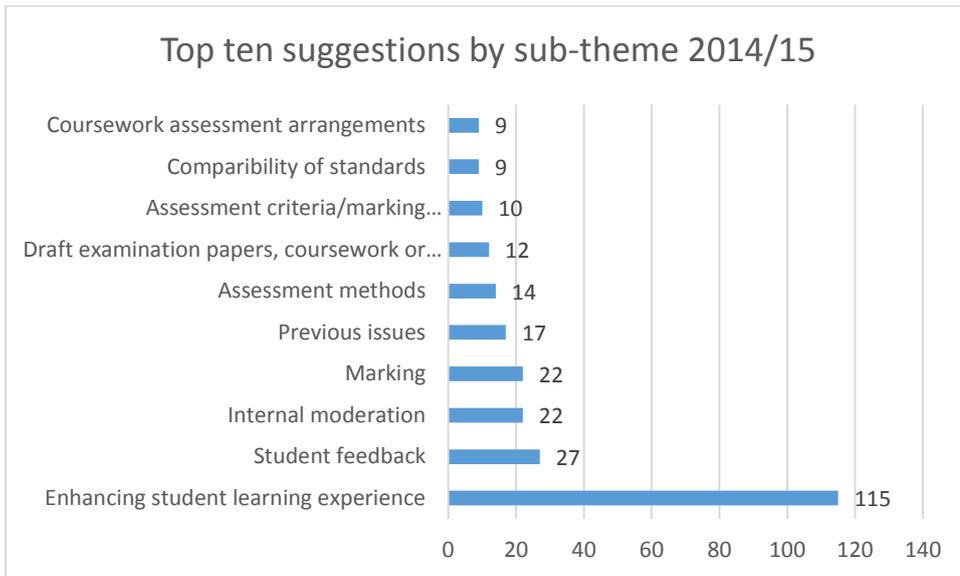


Figure 16



4.2.4 “Enhancing student learning experience” remains the largest sub-theme, however most suggestions are relevant to the specific programmes being reported on. “Comparability of standards” and “Draft examination papers, coursework or feedback” did not appear in the top ten suggestions for 2015/16. “Standards for courses” and “Procedures for Special Circumstances” have appeared.

4.2.5 The top ten issues by sub-theme were as follows:

Figure 17

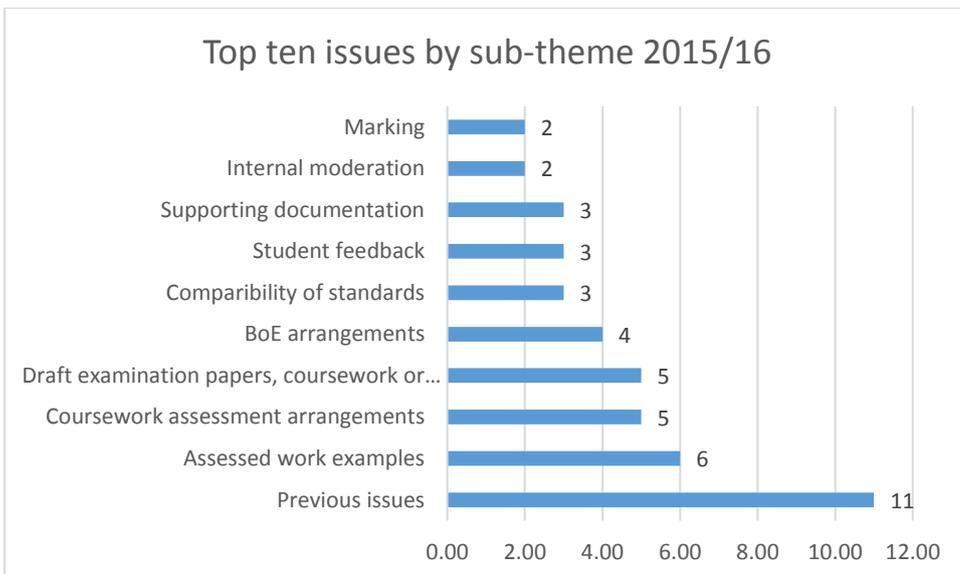
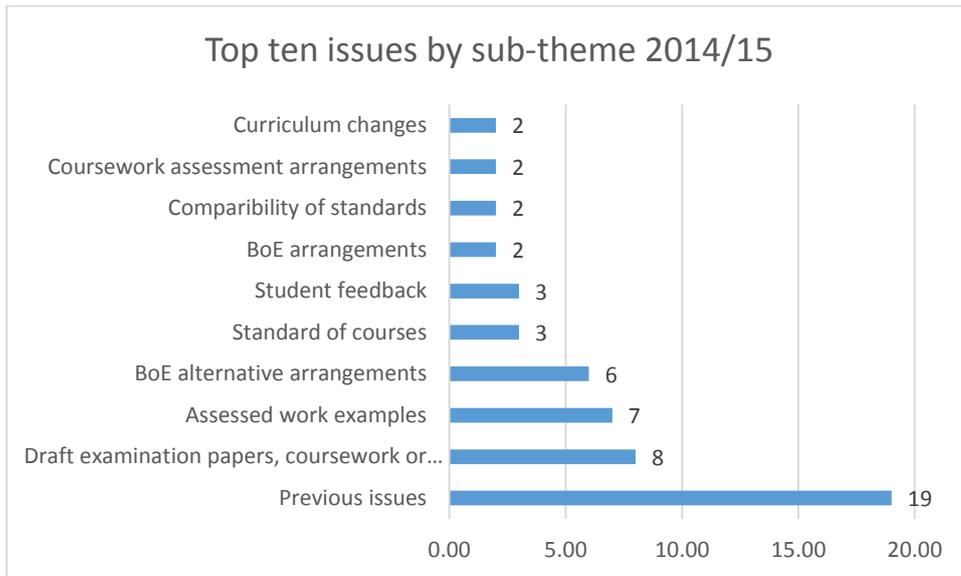


Figure 18



4.2.6 The increase in issues raised in relation to “Coursework assessment arrangements” appear to be in relation to the timing of receiving examples. Otherwise, no significant changes are noted.

4.2.7 Theme Level comments recorded for 2015/16 are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Theme	No. of Comments
Provision of Information	57
The Assessment Process	50
Academic Standards	47
Board of Examiners Meetings	46
Issues raised in previous reports	29

5. Comments identified by Academic Response Coordinators as Institutional matters

- 5.1 Academic Response Coordinators can identify whether an issue, suggestion or commendation is a School, College or Institutional matter. In 2015/16 only two matters were flagged for escalation to institutional level. One of these related to an **issue** raised in 2014/15 where the examiner suggested that students should be allowed to resubmit their dissertation. The other was a **suggestion** that students should still be eligible for distinction or merit when they have failed credit coursework elements.

Table 4: Institutional escalation themes 2015/16

Issues raised in previous reports (issue)	1
The Assessment Process (suggestion)	1

Table 5: Institutional escalation themes 2014/15

The Assessment Process	1
------------------------	---

Susan Hunter
Academic Services
1 February 2017

The University of Edinburgh
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

9 February 2017

**External Examiner Reporting System:
Report Totals 2015/16**

Executive Summary

The paper is provided for information and shows the total number of undergraduate and postgraduate taught reports submitted via the External Examiner Reporting System for academic year 2015/16. The status and stage of all reports are illustrated.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?

The paper aligns with the University's strategic objective of leadership in learning.

Action requested

Senatus Quality Assurance Committee is invited to note the paper.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

The paper is for information and no action is associated with it.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. Resource implications (including staffing)

The paper is for information and no resource implications are identified

2. Risk assessment

The paper is for information and no risk assessment is required.

3. Equality and Diversity

The paper is for information and equality impact assessment is not required.

4. Freedom of information

The paper is **open**

Originator of the paper

Susan Hunter, Academic Services
1 February 2017

External Examiner Reporting System: Report Totals 2015/16

In 2015/16 a total of 489 undergraduate and postgraduate taught external examiner reports were submitted via the system. This report draws on data from the system as at 27 January 2017.

Figure 1: Status of submitted reports by College

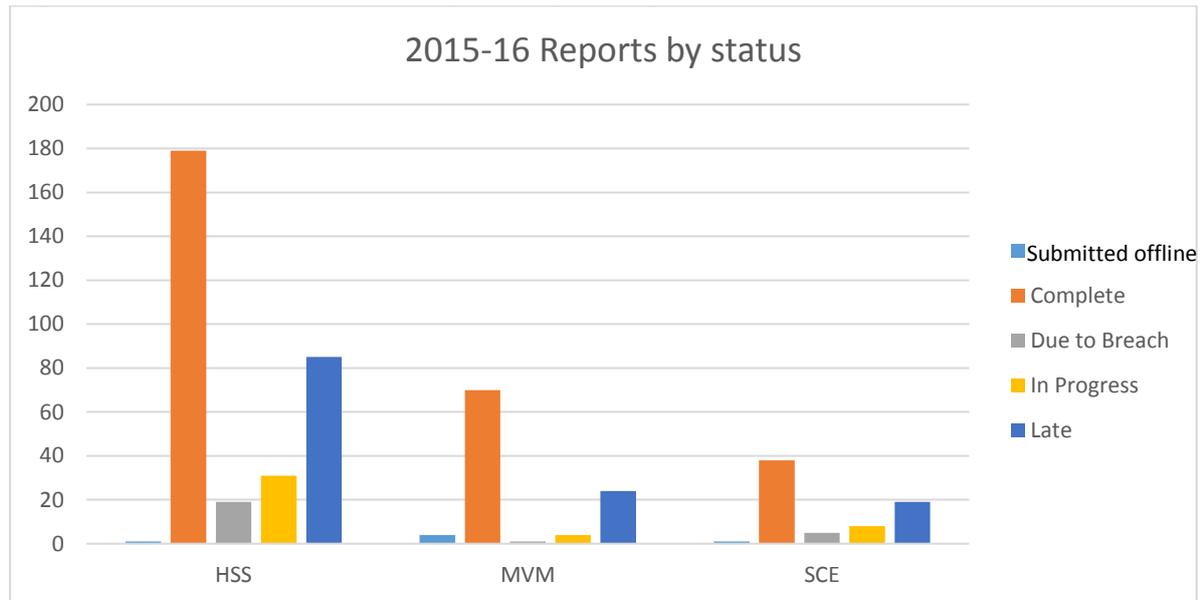
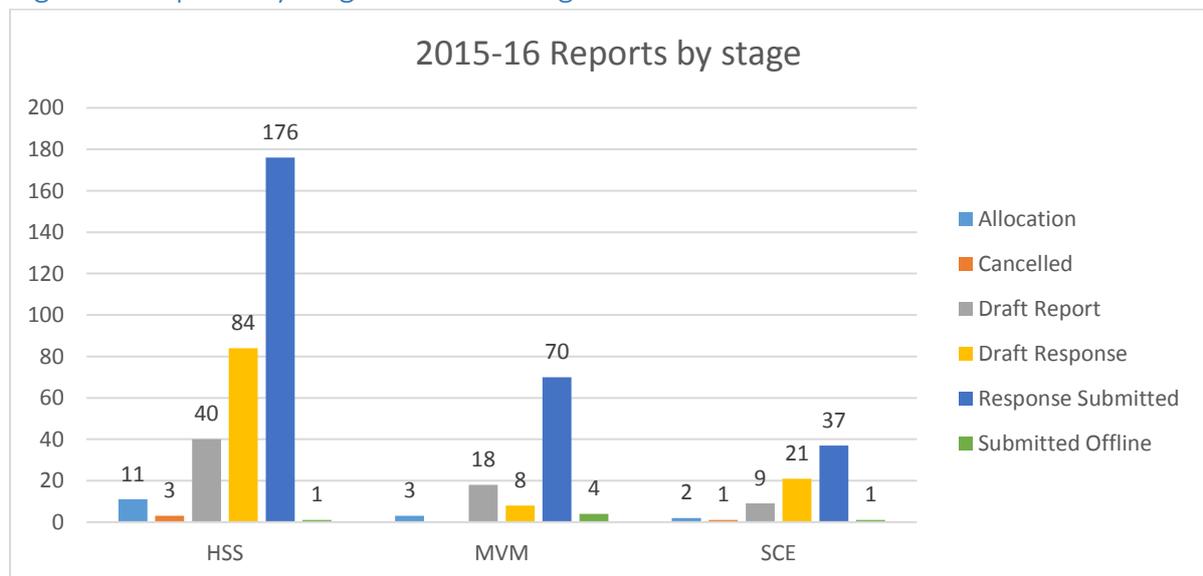


Figure 2: Reports by stage in each College.



Four reports in the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (MVM) and one each in the Colleges of Science and Engineering (SCE) and Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) were submitted offline. Three reports in HSS and one in SCE were cancelled.

Table 1: Breakdown of reports by stage in each College

College Code	Allocation	Cancelled	Draft Report	Draft Response	Response Submitted (complete)	Submitted Offline	Grand Total
HSS	11	3	40	84	176	1	315
MVM	3		18	8	70	4	103
SCE	2	1	9	21	37	1	71
Grand Total	16	4	67	113	283	6	489

Susan Hunter, Academic Services
1 February 2017

The University of Edinburgh
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

9 February 2017

**External Examiner Reporting Project:
Feedback Survey Results**

Executive Summary

The paper comprises an analysis of the post-project feedback survey to evaluate the project outputs, implementation and impact.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?

The paper aligns with the University's strategic objective of leadership in learning.

Action requested

Senatus Quality Assurance Committee is invited to consider the survey results.

College representatives are asked to ensure that the outcomes of the Committee's discussions are made available to and considered by the relevant College committee(s).

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

The committee is invited to consider how any agreed action will be implemented and communicated. Comments on the External Examiner Reporting System (EERS) will be passed to Student Systems for consideration and response.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. Resource implications (including staffing)

The paper is a report on activity and no resource implications are identified

2. Risk assessment

The paper is a report on activity and no risk assessment is required.

3. Equality and Diversity

The paper is a report on activity and equality impact assessment is not required.

4. Freedom of information

The paper is **open**

Originator of the paper

Susan Hunter, Academic Services
1 February 2017

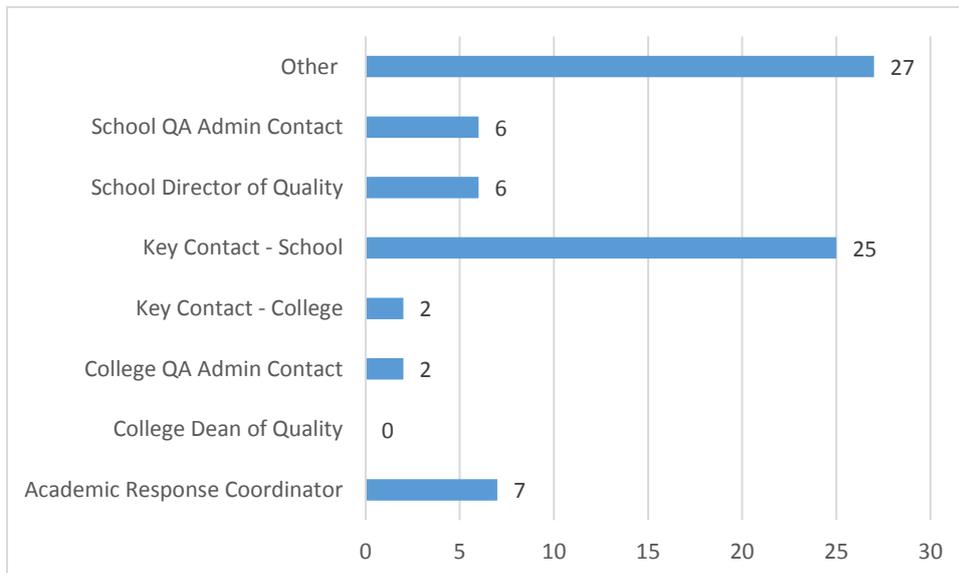
External Examiner Reporting Project: Feedback Survey Results

As part of the post-project activity, a survey to evaluate the project outputs, implementation and impact was run in January 2017. This paper provides an analysis of the survey results. Quality Assurance Committee is invited to consider the survey results. Comments on the External Examiner Reporting System (EERS) will be passed to Student Systems for consideration and response.

We surveyed College Deans of Quality, College Quality Assurance contacts, School Directors of Quality, School Quality Assurance contacts, Academic Response Coordinators, and College and School Key Contacts for the External Examining Reporting System. There was a 15% response rate to the survey which was open for two weeks in January 2017.

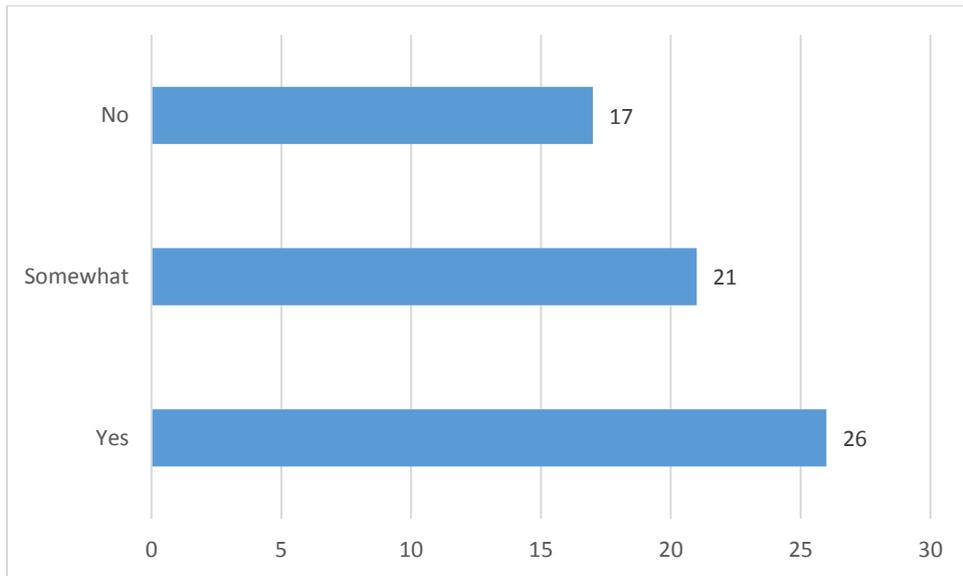
Q1. What is your role in relation to external examiner processes?

The majority of respondents did not identify themselves by one of the roles specified in the External Examiner Reporting System and chose the "Other" option. Those respondents mainly identified themselves as Programme or Course Directors.



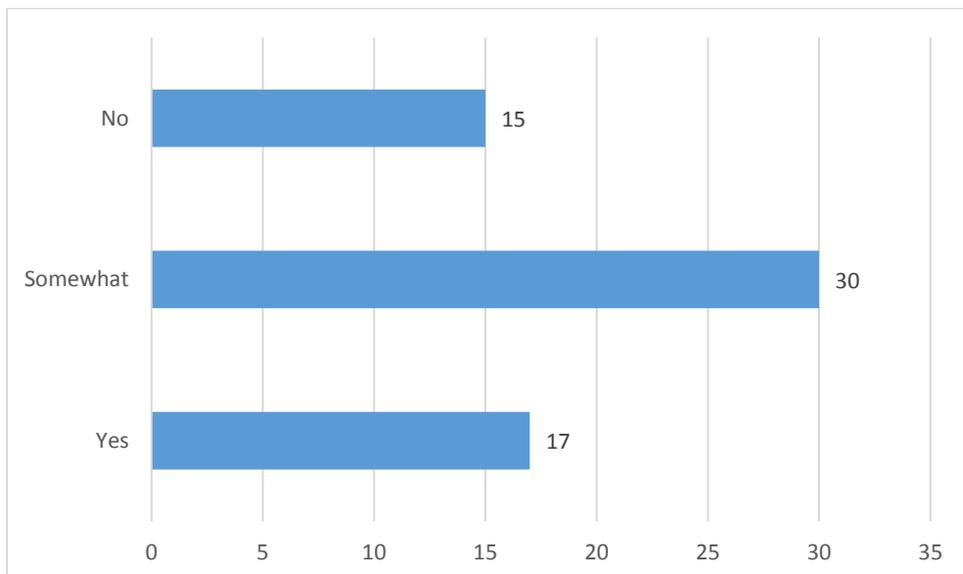
Q2. The External Examiner Project aimed to develop a revised External Examiner Policy, External Examiner Handbook, business process changes and IT tools. Are you aware of these?

74% of respondents were aware, or somewhat aware, of the documentation, business processes and tools delivered by the project.



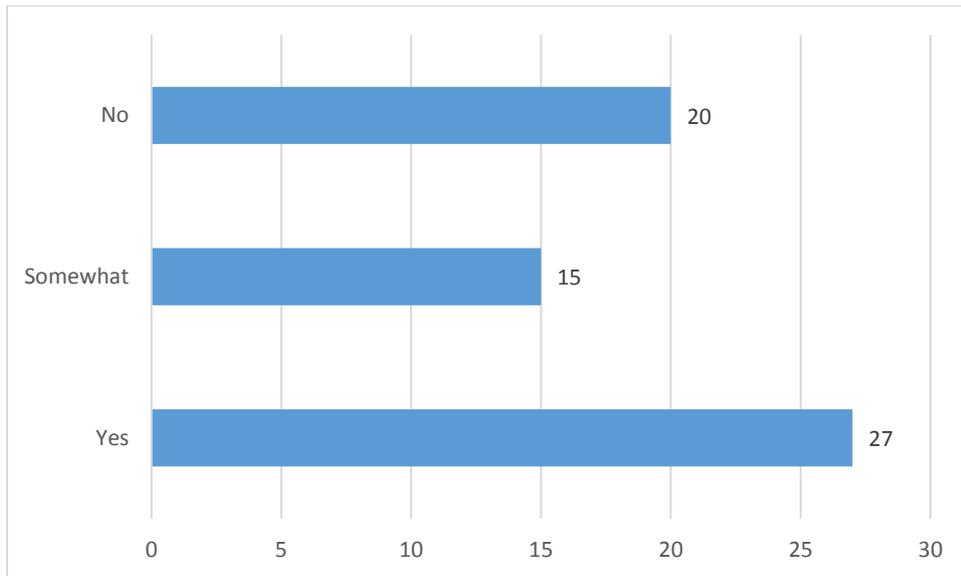
Q3. The External Examiner Reporting System (EERS) was designed to facilitate effective qualitative and quantitative analysis of external examiner reports to inform the University's strategic direction. Do you think this has been achieved?

75% of respondents thought that the system had achieved, or somewhat achieved, the effective qualitative and quantitative analysis of reports.



Q3a. Has the External Examiner Reporting System made it easier for you to process and analyse external examiner reports?

67% of respondents thought the system had made it easier or somewhat easier to process and analyse reports.



Respondents commented on the difficulty of identifying which course a report relates to when a single examiner is reporting on a range of courses or when multiple examiners are acting for the same courses.

Respondents also commented on the duplication of effort required when gathering comments and sharing draft responses with colleagues before responding to an External Examiner. Comments described drafts being shared and comments gathered outwith the system.

Timing of automatic reminders was also highlighted and respondents commented that timescales do not always match School schedules which they thought were set up on undergraduate timescales.

Other comments included, systems not interacting (EUCLID, EERS), the External Examiner Reporting System not capturing comments discussed at Board of Examiners meetings and not encouraging detailed comment from externals.

Q4. Please provide any comments you may wish to make on the implementation of the project (for example, communication, training and guidance, timescales).

Most comments centred on training and communication and were mainly positive.

“I would like to commend both (the Project Manager) and (the Student Systems Support Officer) for their guidance and patience.”

“(the Project Manager) and others related to the project came and talked to me about the system when I first started using it which was useful.”

“Found staff at Academic Services and Student Systems very helpful in giving guidance and support in setting up the system. (the Project Manager) came to several meetings in our School. Timescales were reasonable.”

Responders also commented that training for exam conveners and admin staff would be beneficial.

Responders highlighted confusion caused by the different administration processes for undergraduate, postgraduate taught and PhD, and that there is no “cradle to grave” process for External Examiners. Confusion around timing and introduction of Programme Level External

Examiners and continued ambiguity about scope and responsibilities of the role were also commented on, as was the perceived lack of any developments to take account of issues that were fed back once the system was being used.

Q 5. Please provide any comments you may wish to make on the impact of the project (for example, what have been the positive changes and what are the challenges)

Responders identified the following positive impacts:

- Provided an easily accessible, central repository.
- Less paperwork and chasing of reports.
- More efficient and streamlined process.
- Professional and of a standard expected of a top-tier university.
- More reports completed on time and ease of seeing status of ongoing reports.

Responders identified the following challenges:

- Difficulty of making changes and corrections to information on the system.
- No easy interaction with EUCLID, for example reporting course/programme allocation to External.
- Online reporting process is only a small part of External Examiners' interaction.
- Duplication of effort when sharing draft responses outside system.
- Externals responsible for multiple courses – difficult to identify which course individual reports refer to.

Susan Hunter,
Academic Services
1 February 2017

The University of Edinburgh
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

9 February 2017

Mid-year update on progress against QAC priorities

Executive Summary

The paper provides an update on progress towards QAC's priorities agreed at Senate in June 2016.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?

The paper is relevant to the University's aim to "provide the highest-quality research-led teaching and learning", and the strategic objective of 'Leadership in learning'.

Action requested

For Information.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

For Committee members to disseminate as appropriate.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. Resource implications (including staffing)

No.

2. Risk assessment

The paper is for information and risk assessment is not required.

3. Equality and Diversity

The paper is for information and equality impact assessment is not required.

4. Freedom of information

Yes.

Key words

ELIR, QA Framework, EvaSys, External Examiner

Originator of the paper

Brian Connolly, Academic Policy Officer

Mid-year update on progress against QAC priorities

1. Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) – develop and oversee implementation of plan of action in response to ELIR.

Progress:

The Committee received regular progress reports from the theme leads responsible for the implementation of the agreed actions in five key areas identified by the ELIR. Work across these six themes is progressing well and the Committee will continue to monitor progress on a regular basis. The reports due to be considered by the Committee at the February 2017 meeting will form the basis for the University's year-on report to the Quality Assurance Agency for Scotland in March 2017.

2. Implement and monitor effectiveness of those changes resulting from review of quality assurance framework introduced for 2016-17, and further develop and implement changes for 2017-18.

Progress:

The Committee has focused on streamlining processes while deriving maximum benefit from quality activity. Using the new College report template, the annual College Quality Reports have decreased in length from 133 pages last year to 11 pages this year and the new shorter length of reports has removed the need for a separate readers process.

3. Roll-out of Evasys course evaluation tool.

Progress:

The Committee received and approved the core course and staff question sets to be used for institution wide course evaluation from the 2016/17 academic year. It was acknowledged that the question sets do not have unanimous support however the themes covered by the question sets do encompass most, if not all, of the key areas identified by staff and students during the consultation process.

4. External Examiner Project – further monitoring of the implementation of the External Examiner Reporting system and the revised External Examiner Policy.

Progress:

The Committee received and considered an analysis of data from the External Examiner Reporting System (EERS) covering undergraduate programmes for the academic year 2015/16. The report highlighted the high volume of commendations, and the scope to use the data systematically to assist with policy development and identifying good practices. The Committee identified University-level actions and agreed that the reporting deadlines and key School and College roles should be included in the External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy following College discussion of the 6 week response deadline. College representatives agreed to ensure that the outcomes of the Committee's discussions were made available to and considered by the relevant College committee(s).

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

9 February 2017

Deletion of the Central Register of Accreditations by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) and the Quality Assurance Reporting Process document

Executive Summary

This paper advises the Committee of the deletion of the Central Register of Accreditations by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) and the Quality Assurance Reporting Process document.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?

The paper is relevant to the University's priority of simplification.

Action requested

For information.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

Any changes to other documents as result of this document being deleted will be communicated to relevant stakeholders in due course.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. Resource implications (including staffing)

No change to existing practice.

2. Risk assessment

No change to existing practice.

3. Equality and Diversity

No change to existing practice is proposed.

4. Freedom of information

Open

Key words

Accreditation, simplification

Originator of the paper

Nichola Kett, Academic Services

1 February 2017

Deletion of the Central Register of Accreditations by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) and the Quality Assurance Reporting Process document

The Central Register of Accreditations by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) and the Quality Assurance Reporting Process document currently available on the Academic Services website (<http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/qapsrb.pdf>) will be deleted because the information is superfluous.

Responsibility for managing accreditations remains with the School, subject area or student support service. In terms of interaction with quality framework processes, accreditations are integrated within:

- Periodic internal review (academic)
- Annual monitoring, review and reporting (academic)
- Student support service annual review
- Thematic review

Relevant content from the document will be incorporated into existing documentation on the above processes where it is not already. The remaining content is operational information (some of which is out of date).

Nichola Kett,
Academic Services
1 February 2017

The University of Edinburgh
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

9 February 2017

University Remit and Reflective Report template for Internal Periodic Review 2017/18

Executive Summary

The paper proposes revised versions of the University remit and Analytical report template for Internal Reviews following the recent University Quality Framework review.

It was agreed to streamline these documents to bring further clarity for Schools/subject areas. As part of the review of the process, the analytical report will now be referred to as the reflective report and the overall process to Internal Periodic Review.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?

The paper is relevant to the University's aim to "provide the highest-quality research-led teaching and learning", and the strategic objective of 'Leadership in learning'.

Action requested

For Approval.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

The Schools/subject areas being reviewed in 2017/18 and other relevant stakeholders will be advised of the revised remit and reflective report template. The documents will be published on the Academic Services website.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. Resource implications (including staffing)

No additional resource implications.

2. Risk assessment

No risk associated.

3. Equality and Diversity

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and can be viewed at the following link:

[http://www.docs.csg.ed.ac.uk/EqualityDiversity/EIA/Internal_Periodic_Review_Process\(Academic_Services\).pdf](http://www.docs.csg.ed.ac.uk/EqualityDiversity/EIA/Internal_Periodic_Review_Process(Academic_Services).pdf)

4. Freedom of information

Open.

Key words

Teaching Programme Review, TPR, Postgraduate Programme Review, PPR, University remit, reflective report, Internal Periodic Review

Originator of the paper

Gillian Mackintosh, Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services

The University of Edinburgh

Internal Periodic Review

University Remit

The University remit provides consistent coverage of key elements across all of the University's internal reviews (undergraduate and postgraduate). It covers all credit bearing provision within the scope of the review.

Under each of the headings, the Reflective Report should highlight areas of good practice as well as areas for further development and action planned.

1. Strategic overview

The strategic approach to the management and resourcing of learning and teaching experience, the forward direction and the structures in place to support this.

2. Enhancing the Student Experience

The approach to and effectiveness of:

- Supporting students in their learning
- Listening to and responding to the Student Voice
- Learning and Teaching
- Development of Employability and Graduate Attributes
- Accessibility, Inclusivity and Widening Participation
- Learning environment (physical and virtual)
- Assessment and Feedback
- Supporting and developing staff

3. Assurance and Enhancement of provision

The approach to and effectiveness of maintaining and enhancing academic standards and quality of provision in alignment with the University Quality Framework:

- Admissions and Recruitment
- Assessment, Progression and Achievement
- Programme and Course approval
- Annual Monitoring, Review and reporting
- Operation of Boards of Studies, Exam Boards, Special Circumstances
- External Examining, themes and actions taken
- Alignment with SCQF (Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework) level, relevant benchmark statements, UK Quality Code
- Accreditation and Collaborative activity and relationship with Professional/Accrediting bodies (if applicable)

Subject specific remit

Subject specific remit items are proposed by the School/subject area and are issues or areas of development that they wish the review team to consider and comment on.

In some cases these remit items may fit under the headings of the university remit but the School/subject area may wish the review to explore a particular aspect in further detail to support their learning and teaching strategy.

For each of the agreed remit items it would be helpful for the school/subject area to articulate these items further in the reflective report to provide the review team with a clear steer to enable them to consider and comment on the items.

The University of Edinburgh

Internal Periodic Review

DRAFT Reflective Report Guidance 2017/18

Report framework /context

The reflective report template is structured according to the headings of the University remit

It is a confidential, internal document produced specifically for the purpose of the review and is not circulated further as part of any committee reporting processes

Apart from the external members of the review team, it is unlikely that the members will have prior detailed knowledge of the subject area/School. While the report should take account of this factor, it is important that evaluation predominates over description

Report author

The responsibility lies with the Head of School to delegate the writing of the report to the appropriate member(s) of staff. The report should be signed off by the Head of School before submission

Dissemination of report

In preparation for the visit, the TPR/PPR liaison should circulate the report within the School/subject area to the relevant members of staff and students who will be meeting with the review team

Reflection on effectiveness of provision

To derive maximum benefit from the review, subject areas/Schools are encouraged to use the Reflective Report as an opportunity for candid reflection on the effectiveness of their provision. The spirit of the University's internal review process is intended to be collegial, constructive and supportive of enhancement across the University. The report can therefore be used as an opportunity to discuss aspects of concern or seek guidance from the expertise gathered in the review team

Engagement with students in the preparation and development of the report

Students should be consulted and involved in the preparation of the reflective report. Feedback should be obtained from students on whether the report is a fair reflection of the provision and of the student experience. Schools/subject areas will be asked by the review team to comment on how they have engaged students in the preparation of the report

Reflective summaries & dissemination of good practice

The reflective summaries at the end of each section provide an opportunity to reflect on how effective the School/ Subject area feels it is managing each of the areas in the section. Schools should highlight

areas that are working well, areas for further development and action planned.

Examples of good practice will also allow innovations to be disseminated across the University. Such examples are included in the annual report to the Scottish Funding Council and can be promoted by the Quality Assurance Agency to the Scottish HEI sector

Support with preparation of report

Schools can request a session with Academic Services on how to approach preparing the report and engaging students in the process. Reflective reports from previous reviews are available by contacting Academic Services. It should be noted that these reports are provided for reference purposes only and not for wider circulation.

Please delete all text in red in the actual report

The University of Edinburgh

Internal Periodic Review

Reflective Report **Template**

**Teaching Programme Review/Postgraduate Programme Review [delete as appropriate] of:
[insert name of review]**

Name of School/subject area	
Academic year of review	
Names and roles of those who prepared the report including a summary of the dissemination/consultation phase and student input	
Head of School sign off	

1. Strategic overview

This section should provide an overview of the nature of the programmes offered, the student profile and detail the strategic approach to the management and resourcing of the learning and teaching experience, the forward direction and the structures in place to support this. For example outline the key learning and teaching strategy in place or relevant plans.

Briefly outline and comment on the following, you may wish to summarise information in table format:

- Nature of programmes offered
- Student numbers
- Notable characteristics, composition and key trends in student population, including future discernible trends
- Teaching resources – number of full time equivalent staff
- Recruitment approaches
- Retention and progression rates
- Degree outcomes and reference to destination of leavers data and any other local sources of information.

Subject specific remit items:

Please list the subject specific remit items below. It is helpful to provide a brief commentary to support the inclusion of the items and to provide the review team with a clear steer to enable them to consider and comment on the items during the review visit.

2. Enhancing the student experience

Each section should briefly outline practice and reflect upon effectiveness. Comment on different categories of students where these are likely to be significant. Information should include:

2.1 Supporting students in their learning – all aspects of support relevant to students' learning including:

- Pastoral and academic support including the Personal Tutor system
- Support for key stages and transitions in the student journey : e.g. pre-arrival, induction, ongoing transition support, transition to and from study abroad.
- Provision of feedback to students on their learning
- Other student support provision relevant to context e.g international students.

2.2. Listening to and responding to the Student Voice

- How the School/subject area engages students in their learning, including building and supporting academic communities
- The mechanisms for listening to and responding to the student voice including student representative structures, Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs), other mechanisms for student feedback including surveys.
- The actions taken in response to student feedback

2.3 Learning and Teaching

- Overview of curriculum design and development
- Evaluation where relevant of placements, work based learning provision, study abroad, 2+2
- Engagement with current Enhancement Theme [insert theme]

2.4 Development of Employability and Graduate Attributes

- The School/subject area approach to development of graduate attributes
- Preparing students for their future career

2.5 Accessibility, Inclusivity and Widening Participation

- Implementation of the [Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy](#) [hyperlink to policy]
- Approach to making the curriculum accessible for all students
- Provision of an accessible curriculum in collaborative/placement provision
- Engagement with the University's Equality and Diversity Strategy [hyperlink to strategy]
- Approach to Diversity e.g opportunities to enrich the learning experience?
- Involvement in disability/equal opportunity committees
- Managing Widening Participation (WP) and involvement in specific WP projects e.g. Pathways to the Professions, Support for Care Leavers and Lothians Equal Access Programme for Schools (LEAPS)

2.6 Learning environment (physical and virtual)

- Managing the physical and virtual learning environment – e.g facilities for small group teaching and peer learning, opportunities to foster academic communities through use of social or blended social/academic space

2.7 Assessment and Feedback

- Overview of assessment methods
- Approach to and effectiveness of feedback to students
- Commentary on feedback turnaround times: Feedback on formative and summative in-course assessed work will be provided within 15 working days of submission, or in a time to be of use in subsequent assessment, within the course, whichever is sooner, Regulation 16 Taught Assessment Regulations 2016-17

2.8 Supporting and developing staff

- The School's approach to Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to enhance Learning and Teaching e.g Higher Education Academy (HEA), Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PgCAP), The Edinburgh Teaching Award (EdTA).
- Early career staff
- Ongoing development and support throughout academic career
- Support and training for tutors and demonstrators
- Support and training for External/Associate staff

2.9 Reflective summary

Provide a brief reflective summary highlighting areas that are working well, areas for further development and actions planned.

3. Assurance and Enhancement of provision

3.1 Setting and maintaining academic standards

This section should provide an overview of the School Quality Assurance Model by briefly outlining the approach to the following processes in setting and maintaining academic standards:

- Admissions and Recruitment
- Assessment, Progression and Achievement
- Programme and Course Approval
- Annual Monitoring, review and reporting
- Operation of Boards of Studies, Exam Boards, Special Circumstances
- External Examiner Reporting system
- Alignment with SCQF, relevant subject benchmarks, UK Quality Code
- Accreditation and Collaborative activity and relationship with Professional/Accrediting bodies (if applicable)

3.2 Key themes and actions taken

Briefly outline and comment on how key themes and actions taken are considered and acted upon to enhance the student experience in the following areas:

- External Examiners reports and responses
- Annual monitoring, review and reporting
- Accreditation and Collaborative activity and relationship with Professional/Accrediting bodies (if applicable)

3.3 Reflective summary

Provide a brief reflective summary highlighting areas that are working well, areas for further development and actions planned.

Appendix 1 Status of recommendations from previous review

Provide a brief recap of the recommendations made by the previous review and their status i.e. completed/not completed. An explanation should be given for any uncompleted recommendations.

The University of Edinburgh
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

9 February 2017

Internal Review Reports 2016/17

Executive Summary

The paper contains an extract of the commendations and recommendations from the following final reports:

- TPR of Art
- PPR of Business
- PPR of History, Classics and Archaeology
- PPR of Physics and Astronomy

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?

The paper is relevant to the University's Strategic Goal of 'excellence in education' and the Strategic Theme of 'Outstanding student experience'.

Action requested

For approval. The Committee is asked to note the following commendations and recommendations. The full report is published on the wiki:

<https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/SQAC/4.+Thursday+9th+February+2017>

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

The report will be circulated to the appropriate School and subject area to action the recommendations and to the College for information. The report will be published on the Academic Services website.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

- 1. Resource implications (including staffing)**
No additional resource implications.
- 2. Risk assessment**
No risk associated.
- 3. Equality and Diversity**
An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out on the internal review process.
- 4. Freedom of information**
Open.

Key words

Postgraduate Programme Review, Teaching Programme Review, PPR, TPR

Originator of the paper

Gillian Mackintosh,
Academic Policy Officer,
Academic Services,
2 February 2017

Internal Review reports 2016/17

PPR/TPR	No	Commendations	Recommendations	Responsibility
TPR Art	1	The Review Team commends the way in which Art has responded to change resulting from merger with the University and discussions around the importance of disciplinaryity.	<u>Strategic Vision</u> It is strongly recommended that Art devotes time and space to generating a clear forward vision for Fine Art and its teaching at the University of Edinburgh.	Art
	2	Art is commended for its commitment to student support.	<u>Disciplinaryity</u> In order to move conversations around disciplinaryity forwards, it is recommended that Art: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • undertakes sector benchmarking. • facilitates fresh opportunities for all opinions around the debate to be articulated. 	Art Art
	3	The Review Team commends the strong sense of academic community that exists within Art.	<u>Quality</u> It is recommended that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the School and College work together to ensure that the School Director of Quality position is filled as a matter of urgency. • Art works towards having clear distinction between the roles and memberships of its Learning and Teaching and Quality Assurance Committees. 	ECA, College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Associate Dean (Quality Assurance & Enhancement) Art
	4	Art is commended for adopting a more research-led approach to its teaching.	<u>Management</u> It is recommended that the Subject Area considers whether the tension and interaction between specialism and interdisciplinaryity is best managed through the existing Programme Director role.	Art
	5	Art is commended for the work that has been done to integrate with University central timetabling and the College's Programme Pathways Project.	<u>Student Support</u> It is recommended that Art: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if possible, introduces some simplification of roles and, as a minimum, ensures that greater definition is brought to the roles of Personal Tutor, Student Support Officer and Studio Tutor and that these are well communicated. 	Art

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides Personal Tutors with additional training on and support around course choice. • considers whether there is scope to enhance the employability-related aspects of the Personal Tutor role. • provides students with more essay-writing support. 	Art Art Art
	6	Art is commended for the range and content of the optional courses it offers.	<u>Assessment</u> It is recommended that Art: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflects on whether the current balance of written and non-written assessments is appropriate. • raises awareness of Learning Outcomes and Grade-Related Criteria. 	Art Art
	7	The Review Team commends Art's Third Year, external research projects.	<u>Optional Courses</u> It is recommended that Art: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • considers ways in which further intellectual curiosity might be encouraged amongst its students. • considers the sustainability of offering some of its more specialized optional courses at First and Second Year levels, and the potential benefit of focussing in Years One and Two on those courses that are of broadest relevance to students and can accommodate larger numbers. • considers introducing more optionality into Years Three and Four. 	Art Art Art
	8	Art is commended for its strategic investment in its workshops.	<u>Staff Development and Support</u> It is recommended that Art considers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ways in which academic staff might be better developed in their roles. • ways in which administrative and 'Learn'-related support for academic staff might be enhanced. 	Art Art
	9	The Review Team commends the quality of Art's feedback on assessment.	<u>UG / PG Relationship</u> It is recommended that Art considers ways in which greater interaction between undergraduate and postgraduate students might be facilitated.	Art

	10	Art is commended for introducing a Workload Allocation Model.	<u>Social Learning Space</u> It is recommended that high-quality social learning space is provided for ECA's students and staff.	Art, ECA, College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Estates Office, Edinburgh University Students' Association
	11	Art is commended for permitting all staff, including those on smaller contracts, to develop and run optional courses that reflect their research interests.	<u>Widening Participation</u> It is recommended that Art works closely with Student Recruitment and Admissions to identify ways in which access to its Programmes might be widened.	Art, Student Recruitment and Admissions
	12	Administrative staff at both Subject Area and School-levels are commended for the outstanding service they provide.		
	13	Art is commended for establishing a Subject-Area level Quality Assurance Committee.		
	14	Art is commended for taking full advantage of the opportunities for collaboration that have arisen.		
PPR/TPR		Commendations	Recommendations	Responsibility
PPR of Business	1	The panel commends the School's triple accreditation, its efforts to maintain it, and its constructive use of the feedback and recommendations it receives from the accrediting bodies, which it has approached holistically and strategically rather than prescriptively.	The panel recommends that the School take action to improve PhD completion times to within the maximum four year period.	The Business School
	2	The panel commends the successful development of its postgraduate taught programmes in a very competitive environment.	The panel acknowledges the perceived need to have a four-year PhD programme in order to develop adequately the attributes which students need to enter the competitive business environment, and it recommends that the School seek, within the University's regulations, to establish a PhD programme with a four-year prescribed period for completion. It is suggested that this may be analogous to the "PhD with integrated studies," for which there is a four-year prescribed period and a five-year maximum period.	The Business School
	3	The panel commends the school on its pre-arrival support of students, including the effective ambassador programme.	The panel recommends that the first year of the PhD programme have a taught element common for all students in the first semester, to include qualitative and quantitative analysis, epistemology and research methodologies, followed by specialist options in the second semester.	The Business School

	4	The panel commends the overlapping network of support provided to postgraduate taught students by all members of staff engaged in the programme.	The panel recommends that some PhD scholarship funding be allocated using a project-led funding model, for which supervisors are given the opportunity to bid for funds for specific projects. This will enable supervisors to use their research reputations to attract high-calibre students.	The Business School
	5	The panel commends the School for the efforts of its PhD supervisors to create a positive research culture which is generally viewed as being supportive and enabling.	The panel recommends that the School develop internal agreement regarding the appropriate number of teaching hours for teaching assistants in conjunction with ongoing developments within the University.	The Business School
	6	The panel commends the generous funding by the School for the development and support of PhD students and its general commitment to investing in its PhD students.	The panel recommends that the School establish a position of Postgraduate Advisor to be a first point of contact for PhD students to discuss any problems they would not wish to raise with their supervisor.	The Business School
	7	The panel commends the efforts by the School to integrate PhD students into the faculty and the facilities which are available to them.	The panel recommends that the School consider spreading Welcome Week events over a longer period of time, to avoid overloading students, and to improve coordination with the University, Students' Association and International Office when preparing Welcome Week literature, showing clearly which events are mandatory and which are optional.	The Business School
	8	The panel commends the use of online feedback-on-feedback in giving a rapid initial response which encourages students to participate in feedback.	The panel recommends that the School and College take urgent steps to provide additional study and interaction space to MSc students to enhance the student experience.	The Business School; College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Estates Office
	9	The panel commends innovative efforts to develop postgraduate skills and attributes, such as the skills matrix, Edinburgh award and Welcome Week passport	The panel recommends that the School consider benchmarking its approach to assessment with other institutions with a view to achieving consistency across the different MSc programmes.	The Business School
	10	The panel commends the commitment by the School to developing and engaging its internationally diverse postgraduate taught student community.	The panel recommends that consideration be given to raising its English language requirement for MSc programmes or including mandatory courses to improve language ability while on course.	The Business School
	11	The panel commends the improvements made in the training of teaching assistants.	The panel recommends that the School take action to ensure that all supervisors attend mandatory 5-yearly training.	The Business School
PPR/TPR		Commendations	Recommendations	Responsibility
PPR of History, Classics & Archaeology	1	The review team commends the Schools lead and support provided by the Postgraduate Director and the Postgraduate Officers around enhancement of the postgraduate student experience.	The review team recommends a strategic approach across the School to support resilience and expansion in ODL provision, including a business plan, resources and space.	School

	2	The review team commends the efforts to develop and support a school wide research culture within the newly formed HCA; such as the crosscutting themes found within the newly created research clusters.	The review team recommends that the School further develop the equality and diversity agenda within the school with support and guidance from Professor Jane Norman (Vice Principal, People and Culture).	School/ Professor Jane Norman (Vice Principal, People and Culture)
	3	The review team commends the advances made with support for PG, regulation and quality of academic standards (including administrative and IT support)	The review team recommends that the School continues to develop the Postgraduate (both PGR and PGT) research culture within the School. Closer in-School communications should be developed.	School
	4	The review team commends the work around rationalisations of programmes while still maintaining high student satisfaction and diversity of offering.	The review team recommends the School review the PG staff workload model (academic, IT, admin and support staff) to support resilience, sustainability and retention of staff (especially early career staff).	School
	5	The review team commends the development of the ODL MSc programme. Both the Programme Director and the eLearning team should be commended for the contribution to and development of the programme	The review team recommends that the School review allocation of teaching and supervisory responsibilities on early career academics to support both student and staff experience.	School
	6	The review team commends the School for actively responding and engaging with PGR teachers in order to develop clearer and streamlined processes around support for teaching.	The review recommends that the School looks at processes to ensure all PhD students undergo the 1 st year PhD review process.	School
	7	The review team commends the HCA staff (academic, support, admin and IT) for the support provided to PGT. Students felt supported by all members of staff.		
	8	The review team commends the efforts around enhancing the equality and diversity developments across the school (Athena Swan Bronze).		
	9	The review team commends the marked improvements in PTES scores around assessment feedback. Since the last PPR there has been upward trajectory in PTES scores from 50 to 81%.		
PPR/TPR		Commendations	Recommendations	Responsibility
PPR Physics & Astronomy	1	The Review Team commends the School on the strength of its postgraduate research community.	The Review Team recommends that the School systematically monitor the destinations of its postgraduate research alumni, including the gender of alumni, in order to gauge the success of its programme in meeting their future career requirements.	School

	2	The Review Team commends the School on the continuity of support provided by the PGR Selector role.	The Review Team recommends that the School undertakes a systematic analysis of its gender statistics, including the split in relation to applications/offers, and progression and degree outcomes. The School should also benchmark this data with peer institutions across the sector to compare and gauge its relative performance on gender equality.	School
	3	The Review Team commends the School on its student focused, professional team and highly effective administrative staff.	The Review Team recommends that the School undertakes a benchmarking exercise to compare its provision with peer institutions across the sector.	School
	4	The Review Team commends the School on the online graduate student handbook.	The Review Team recommends that the School pay due attention to PRES by ensuring highest possible completion rates and taking into consideration changes which are already highlighted through PRES results to inform its developmental thinking.	School
	5	The Review Team commends the CM-CDT students on their good outreach work.	The Review Team recommends that the School make more specific use of statistical and other evidence in its strategic planning and decision making processes.	School
	6	The Review Team commends the School on the introduction of its one year MSc.	The Review Team recommends that the School works with SUPA, the CDTs, and student representatives to review the training provision to ensure that the needs of all students are met and that there is appropriate flexibility.	School
	7	The Review Team commends the School on its strong, formal postgraduate research monitoring and progression review mechanisms.	The Review Team recommends that the School develop and implement an allocation policy for PhD office space	School
	8	The Review Team commends the School on its use of Research Training Support Grant (RTSG) support.	The Review Team recommends that the School formally commits to a 4 year maximum submission schedule.	School
	9	The Review Team commends the School for its high standard of postgraduate research, evidenced by its successes in securing funding and publication record of its PhD students.	The Review Team recommends that the School ensure that its PhD programme specifications be devised in such a way that a single framework apply to all students irrespective of their source of funding.	School

	10		The Review Team recommends that the School review the governance structure of the Graduate School with a view to enhancing its capacity for strategic development.	School
	11		The Review Team recommends that the School raise the profile of the PGR Selector role by considering a change in nomenclature and further embedding the role in strategic decision making processes.	School
	12		The Review Team recommends that the College consider developing a pool of business development expertise in order to support schools to develop better linkages to industry.	College Registrar, College of Science and Engineering