

**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 8 September 2016 at 2pm
in the Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House**

Present:	
Patrick Garratt	Vice President (Academic Affairs), Students' Association
Professor Tina Harrison (Convener)	Assistant Principal, Academic Standards and Quality Assurance
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)
Tanya Lubicz-Nawrocka	Students' Association Academic Engagement Co-ordinator
Dr Robert Mason	Associate Dean (Quality Assurance) College of Humanities and Social Science
Dr Gordon McDougall	Dean (Quality Assurance), College of Science and Engineering
Barry Neilson	Director, Student Systems (Co-opted Member)
Professor John Sawkins	Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching), Heriot-Watt University (External Representative)
Dr Inger Seiferheld	School Representative (Business School), College of Humanities and Social Science
Dr Jon Turner	Director, Institute for Academic Development
In attendance:	
Brian Connolly	Secretary to Senatus Quality Assurance Committee
Professor Charlie Jeffrey	Senior Vice-Principal (in attendance for item 5.1 only)
Apologies:	
Professor Jeremy Bradshaw	Director of Quality Assurance, CMVM, Assistant Principal Researcher Development
Dr Sheila Lodge	CMVM Head of Academic Administration (Co-opted Member)
Dr Claire Phillips	School Representative (Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies), College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Tom Ward	Director, Academic Services

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Convener welcomed new member Dr Huw Lewis, Senior Lecturer, Department of European Languages and Cultures

School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures. Dr Lewis would join the Committee as Co-opted Member with expertise in school quality processes (particularly important in the current year as the new annual monitoring, reporting and review processes are implemented) and would serve initially for one year, until the end of July 2017.

It was noted that Dr John Longley, School Director of Quality, School of Informatics would join the Committee as the School Representative for the College of Science and Engineering. Furthermore, an additional co-opted member with expertise in postgraduate research would also join the Committee this year.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

The Minutes of the previous meeting of Senate Quality Assurance Committee, conducted electronically from Tuesday 28 June 2016 to Friday 8 July 2016, were approved.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 There were no matters arising.

3.2 Terms of Reference and Committee Priorities 2016-17

The Committee received and noted the Terms of Reference and Committee Priorities 2016-17, approved by Senate in June 2016.

4. Convener's Business

4.1 Student Support Service Quality Assurance Framework

The Convenor reported that the reporting template and meeting format had changed to streamline the process and make it more enhancement focused.

4.2 Committee Wiki

The Convenor reported that a Committee wiki would be set-up in order to simplify and streamline the circulation of papers for meetings. The Committee would adopt a model similar to that used for Court papers. Enhanced coversheets would be circulated summarizing the key issues for the Committee's consideration which would link to the more detailed documents held on the wiki repository.

4.3 Postgraduate Research Experience Project (PREP)

The Convenor reported that the Convenor of the Researcher Experience Committee was working on a proposal to take forward aspects of PREP following the unsuccessful bid for project funding. The Committee will receive an update on progress in due course.

4.4 Programme External Examiners

The Convenor reported that current External Examiners would be asked by the Colleges to take on responsibility for oversight at a programme level which became a requirement from August 2016.

5. For Discussion

5.1 Mid-Semester Feedback

Senior Vice Principal Charlie Jeffrey updated the Committee on developments in relation to Mid-Semester Feedback. The aim of this initiative was to generate a dialogue and foster mutual understanding between students and staff via a short, sharp feedback device midway through the semester. Students would be asked to identify what was good and bad about their courses which would

then be discussed and may in turn lead to small or minor enhancements during the remainder of the course. Thus building a greater sense of learning and teaching as a partnership activity.

The Committee noted that the proposal would embrace and build upon current good practice from a number of areas across the institution (particularly in the Schools of Engineering and Maths). It was noted that all Heads of School had agreed to implement the proposal for honours courses during this academic year.

The Committee discussed formalising mid-semester feedback after this initial year. It was agreed that the Committee would receive an update in due course.

The Committee was **supportive** of the initiative.

5.2 Student Association Priorities 2016-17

The new Student Association Vice President Academic Affairs, Patrick Garratt, updated the Committee on the new sabbatical officers and outlined his priorities for 2016-17.

The VPAA Objectives for 2016-17 were noted as follows:

- breaking down student-teacher barriers;
- reducing the stress of studying and enhancing accessibility;
- prioritising postgraduate representation with the Students' Association, and putting particular weight on supporting postgraduate tutors;
- ensuring students are aware of the government policies affecting Higher Education, and working with the University to tackle these changes.

The Committee welcomed the priorities and noted that they were aligned with College and University priorities.

5.3 EvaSys Course Evaluation roll-out

The Committee received and noted the core course and staff question sets to be used for institution wide course evaluation from the 2016/17 academic year.

It was noted that an extensive consultation had taken place across the University with the purpose of assessing the perceived suitability of proposed core course and staff question sets. 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.

The Committee **approved** the core course and staff question sets to be used for institution wide course evaluation from the 2016/17 academic year.

The Committee noted and thanked Josh Stapp, Student Surveys Coordinator, for his work developing the question sets.

5.4 Internal Review Themes 2015-16

The Committee received and noted the themes from Internal Review 2015-16.

The Committee noted the areas of good practice and key themes for development arising from internal subject reviews held in 2015/16, including proposed routes of appropriate responsibility for action in response. It was agreed that College Deans of Quality would communicate the themes and the outcome of the discussion to relevant College committees. Academic Services would communicate the themes and responsibility for further action at University level to Schools which have had provision reviewed during the academic year in question. It was also noted that a sharing good practice event

would be held and material would be identified for the Institute for Academic Development case study wiki.

Action: Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Team (Academic Services) to ask schools to identify contacts to provide information on the good practice identified within their review.

The Committee **approved** the proposals for routing of action.

5.5 **Proposals for the appeals, discipline and external examiners reports**

The Committee received and noted the proposal for changes to the academic appeals, student discipline and external examiners themes reports that are submitted annually to the Committee. It was noted that the changes would better help the Committee fulfil its Terms of Reference.

The Committee **approved** the changes.

5.6 **Personal Tutor (PT) System Oversight Group**

The Committee received and noted an update on the work of the PT System Oversight Group, in particular the approval of the School Personal Tutoring Statements 2016-17.

In preparation for the 2016-17 academic year, Senior Tutors were asked to review their School Personal Tutoring Statements to ensure alignment with the University standard template and to ensure information was current. This also served as a quality assurance review to ensure that the core requirements of the Personal Tutoring (PT) system were incorporated, as set out in the standard template, and to compare statements with outcomes, as recorded in school annual quality assurance and enhancement reports. The Group reviewed and approved the majority of the statements for 2016-17 at the meeting held on 22 June 2016. A further meeting was held electronically between 3-8 July 2016 to approve the late submissions.

The Group proposed that it should continue to oversee the mainstreaming of the PT system for at least a further year with the following meeting schedule for 2016-17:

- One meeting to consider most recent Edinburgh Student Experience Survey (ESES) and National Student Survey (NSS) results. It was suggested that this be held in October 2016 and report to the December 2016 meeting of the Committee.
- One meeting to consider the outcomes of the PT system student survey, to be held during 2016-17 academic session, and approve School PT Statements for 2017-18. It was suggested that this be held in late June/early July 2017 and report to the September meeting of the Committee.

The Committee **approved** the proposals to extend the lifespan of the Group by a further year and the meeting schedule for 2016-17.

6. **For Approval**

6.1 **Scottish Funding Council Annual Report**

The Committee received and noted the University's annual statement on institution-led review and enhancement activity to the Scottish Funding Council, as required by the Council's guidance to higher education institutions on quality from August 2012 (SFC/14/2012).

The Committee **approved** the Report.

6.2 **Annual Monitoring, Review and Reporting Policy**

The Committee received and noted the Annual Monitoring, Review and Reporting Policy. It was noted that the changes would clarify information such as report deadlines, the flow of information and outlines a minor change to the College role made as a result of stakeholder feedback.

The Committee **approved** the Policy, noting that once the EvaSys Policy had been finalised a reference to this would be added.

6.3 **Edinburgh University Students' Association and University Student Engagement Statement**

The Committee received and noted the Edinburgh University Students' Association and University Student Engagement Statement. It was noted that minor updates have been made to the statement to ensure that it reflects current initiatives and practices and to reflect the change of name and logo of the Students' Association.

The Committee **approved** the Statement.

6.4 **Internal Review Reports and Responses:**

The Committee received and noted the 14 week response for the Taught Programme Review (TPR) of Psychology 2015/16.

The Committee **approved** the following comments for feedback to the Subject Area:

- **Recommendation 1** – for the year on response it would be useful to have some examples of communications with students.
- **Recommendation 3** – Could College confirm if they will be involved in this external review and/or if any discussions have taken place with College in the first instance?
- **Recommendation 6** – in relation to the Psychology Exchanges student survey, it would be useful to hear about progress on this in the year on response.
- **Recommendation 11** – we look forward to hearing about progress with the initiatives in the year on response.

7. **For Information**

7.1 **Changes to Internal Review Processes for 2016/17**

The Committee noted an update on changes made to streamline periodic internal subject review processes for 2016/17 in response to the quality framework review.

7.2 **Changes to Committee Meeting Dates from 2017/18**

The Committee noted an update on changes to Committee meeting dates from 2017/18, which would result in one less meeting taking place.

8. **Date of Next Meeting**

8.1 Thursday 20 October 2016 at 2pm in Cullin Room, Charles Stewart House