

H/02/27/02

**Meeting of the Senatus Curriculum and Progression Committee  
to be held at 2.00pm on Thursday 23 November 2017 in the Cuillin Room, Charles  
Stewart House**

1.30pm Pre-meeting presentation from Scott Rosie (Head of Timetabling and Examination Services) to summarise the timetabling modelling project. Sandwich lunch provided from 1.00pm.

**A G E N D A**

1. **Minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2017** Enclosed
2. **Matters Arising**
  - a) **Electronic Business 27 September 2017 - 4 October 2017 -  
CMVM: Articulation proposal between the BMV&S programme,  
University of Edinburgh, and selected North American pre-vet  
programmes**

**For discussion**
3. **Data Science, Technology, and Innovation Distance Learning  
Programme** CSPC 17/18 2A
4. **Dual award 4 year PhD degree programme in Integrative  
Biomedical Sciences with integrated study** CLOSED (B)
5. **Proposal for Dual Award at Doctoral Level between the University of  
Edinburgh and Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile** CLOSED (C)
6. **Service Excellence Programme - Student Administration and Support  
Update** CSPC 17/18 2D
7. **Service Excellence Programme - Special Circumstances, Extensions  
and Concessions Update** Verbal Update
8. **Acceptable Reasons for Coursework Extensions and Special  
Circumstances: Employment Commitments and Caring  
Responsibilities** CSPC 17/18 2E
9. **Academic Misconduct - An Overview and Future Planning** CSPC 17/18 2F
10. **Timing of Boards of Examiners for Semester 1 Courses** CSPC 17/18 2G
11. **Universities UK Degree Algorithm Report** CLOSED (H)
12. **CMVM: MSc Transplantation, Transfusion and Tissue Banking  
Programme Revision** CSPC 17/18 2I
- For information and formal business**
13. **Senate Committee Planning** CSPC 17/18 2J

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| <b>14. Academic Year Dates 2019/20 and Provisional Academic Year Dates 2020/21</b> | CSPC 17/18 2K |
| <b>15. Concessions Report 2016/17</b>  | CLOSED (L)    |
| <b>16. Any Other Business</b>  |               |

Academic Services 16 November 2017

H/02/27/02  
CSPC: 21.09.17

The University of Edinburgh

**Minutes of the Senatus Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CSPC)  
held on Thursday 21 September 2017 in the Edinburgh College of Art Main Building  
Boardroom (L05)**

**Present:**

Professor Alan Murray (Convener)	Assistant Principal, Academic Support
Professor Graeme Reid	Dean of Learning and Teaching (CSCE)
Dr Paul Norris	Associate Dean (Academic Progress), CAHSS
Dr Lisa Kendall	Head of Academic and Student Administration (CAHSS)
Dr Sheila Lodge	Head of Academic Administration (CMVM)
Professor Neil Turner	Dean of Undergraduate Learning and Teaching (CMVM)
Dr Jeremy Crang	Dean of Students (CAHSS)
Dr Antony Maciocia	Dean of Students (CSCE)
Ms Bobi Archer	Vice President Education Students' Association
Ms Ellie Tudhope	Senior Academic Adviser
Ms Claire Thomson	Academic Adviser, Students' Association
Dr Neil Lent	Institute for Academic Development
Dr Adam Bunni	Head of Governance and Regulatory Framework Team
Ms Anne-Marie Scott	IS Learning, Teaching and Web

**In attendance:**

Mr Scott Rosie	Head of Timetabling Services (for Paper A and B only)
Mr Neil McGillivray	Service Excellence Programme (for Service Excellence Programme update only)
Ms Ailsa Taylor (Secretary)	Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services
Mr Tom Ward	Director, Academic Services

**Apologies for absence:**

Ms Alexandra Laidlaw	Head of Academic Affairs (CSCE)
Dr Juliette MacDonald	Edinburgh College of Art
Professor Susan Rhind	Assistant Principal, Assessment and Feedback

**1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 1 June 2017 were approved as an accurate record.

**2. Matters Arising**

- a) Revisions to the Tier 4 Student Attendance and Engagement Policy were approved by the Committee by electronic business between 18<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> July 2017. This involved the removal of reference to the census points and exam attendance monitoring, in line with the recommendations from UKVI and Pennington audit reports.

### **3. Service Excellence Programme (Verbal Update)**

Mr Neil McGillivray presented a verbal update on this item.

Service Excellence Programme Project update, September 2017:

- Working and Study Away: Process and People workshops had been completed; project was currently undergoing validation; systems workshop was planned, with submission of a final business case planned for consideration at the 20 November 2017 Service Excellence Board.
- Special Circumstances: Process and People Workshops had been completed; business processes currently awaiting validation; systems workshops were planned for early/mid-October 2017. The Service Excellence Programme staff were committed to discussing further with Academic Services before wider stakeholder validation. Depending on the outcome, a final business case would be presented to the Service Excellence Board in November 2017, with CSPC approval required for any policy changes.
- Comprehensive Timetabling Analysis: good progress had been made, taking account of the rollout of new processes in CAHSS and a related pilot in Chemistry; full documentation was expected to be delivered to the 20 November 2017 Service Excellence Board.
- Exam Timetabling: good progress had been made; testing was scheduled for completion in December 2017, in preparation for full implementation ahead of the May 2018 exam diet.
- Student Portal pilot: project currently undergoing analysis, and validation of student and staff requirements, with first set of developments due to be implemented for the pilot schools in the coming month.
- Policy and Tier 4 projects: work was ongoing; policy timelines had been re-assessed, and workshops were scheduled for October 2017, alongside TOM (Target operating model) workshops.

Over the coming months, the Student Administration and Support strand of Service Excellence was going to be moving into a new implementation phase. During this phase, it would be important that Senate Committees continued to be fully involved. In addition, certain Committees, particularly CSPC, would have a role in approving policy changes relating to Service Excellence. There would therefore be routine update papers coming to all four Senate Committees over the coming months, and more targeted interventions for those Committees such as CPSC that needed to approve policy changes.

It was necessary to ensure that the relevant Senate Committees undertook the necessary scrutiny and approval of policy changes whilst minimising any delay in delivering the Service Excellence plans. It was therefore possible that the Committee would need to be flexible in terms of doing business by correspondence or even exceptional meetings, where there was too long a gap until the next Committee meeting.

### **4. CSPC Membership and Terms of Reference 2017/18 (CSPC 17/18 1 A)**

The Committee membership list and Terms of Reference 2017/18 were approved as presented.

### **5. Resits and Supplementary Assessments Guidance (CSPC 17/18 1 B)**

Dr Adam Bunni presented this item. The Resits and Supplementary Assessments Guidance had been introduced in August 2014, seeking to reduce the University's dependency on the

August resit diet. Evidence provided by Student Administration indicated that the number of August resit examinations had continued to rise since the introduction of the guidance. The Committee was now being asked to consider whether it wished to reaffirm its commitment to the principles set out in the guidance, revise the guidance, or remove it.

**a) Timing of resit assessment for Semester 1 courses**

The guidance had encouraged Schools to offer early resit assessment for failed semester 1 examinations during the main semester 2 examination diet. However, feedback from Schools indicated that they were not taking this approach; some Schools had trialled it, but had since moved away from it, as it had not been feasible in practice. Committee members agreed that the approach proposed in the guidance placed undue pressure in the semester 2 diet on students who were already struggling. The Committee therefore agreed that they no longer wished to reaffirm the commitment to the particular principle of offering early resit assessments for failed semester 2 examinations during the main semester 2 examination diet.

**b) Use of alternative methods of assessment for resits**

The guidance also explored the use of alternative assessment for resits e.g. the possibility of students being offered the opportunity to undertake repeat assessments which focused on any learning outcomes they had failed to achieve in the first attempt. It was agreed that Schools should continue to be encouraged to consider whether an alternative method of assessment could be used at reassessment. However, the guidance would not need to be retained for this specific purpose, because the Taught Assessment Regulations already stated (27.11 in 2017/18) that Boards of Examiners may use alternative methods of assessment for resits:

27.11 “Resit methods need not be the same as those used to assess the learning outcomes at the first attempt, but all relevant learning outcomes must be assessed.”

**c) Overseas Examination Service**

The guidance referred to the potential for students to undertake some written examinations offered during the August resit diet out-with the UK at a British Council Office, through the Overseas Examination Service, which was provided by Student Administration. Information was presented to the Committee regarding the usage of the service over the last three-year period. Members discussed the advantages and limitations of the service, noting that several Schools do not offer students the use of it. Members agreed that it was desirable where possible to avoid requiring overseas students to come to Edinburgh in August for resits. It was agreed that CSPC wished to reaffirm its commitment to offering the Overseas Examination Service, and seek to offer it as consistently as possible across the University.

Although it was recognised by the Committee that the status of the Resits and Supplementary Assessment document was guidance rather than policy, it was felt that some aspects were no longer relevant (see a) above). The guidance would therefore be archived, and retained for future reference if required. However, the Committee agreed that it should communicate to Schools an expectation to explore the use of alternative methods of assessment for resits, and to offer the Overseas Examination Service wherever possible.

**ACTION – Ailsa Taylor to archive the Resits and Supplementary Assessment Guidance and remove from the website.**

**ACTION – Convener to send communication to Schools regarding alternative assessments and Overseas Examinations.**

## 6. Guidance on Moderation (CSPC 17/18 1 C)

Dr Neil Lent presented this draft guidance on moderation of taught assessment. The guidance was designed to complement the Taught Assessment Regulations, which had recently been revised following the 2016-17 review of moderation, and to replace the guidance provided within the Principles of Internal Moderation of Taught Assessment.

The Committee discussed and approved the moderation guidance, subject to some minor amendments which included:

- In relation to sampled second marking there was a reference to a minimum sample size of 10% of the total number of assignments (no less than ten assignments). This would be amended to make reference to small cohorts – in those instances then a minimum sample size of between five and ten assignments would be appropriate;
- In the section entitled 'Moderation where assignments are not physical products' it was agreed to remove the final sentence [e.g. remove 'Where this is not possible, the moderator should review the marker's record of having assessed the students' performance against the assessment criteria'].
- The paper for the Committee had included an annex that was used as an example, but this was not to form part of the published guidance.

It was noted that the status of this information was guidance rather than policy and therefore non-mandatory. The Institute for Academic Development (IAD) would publish the guidance on its webpages, and the final version when published would be circulated to members of the Committee and to School Directors of Teaching and Teaching Administrators. It would also be highlighted in the next edition of the Senate Committees' newsletter.

**ACTION – Ailsa Taylor to send a note to CSPC members with information contained in the Taught Assessment Regulations on moderation and standard setting.**

**ACTION – Tom Ward (Academic Services) and Neil Lent (IAD) and Susan Rhind (Assistant Principal, Assessment and Feedback) to finalise the guidance.**

**ACTION – IAD to publish the guidance on its webpages and inform Academic Services (Tom Ward) when this had been completed so that this information can be communicated more widely.**

## 7. Authorised Interruption of Study – Proposal for a University-wide Policy (CSPC 17/18 1 D)

Dr Adam Bunni introduced this item which outlined a proposal for University-wide policy and guidance in relation to Authorised Interruption of Study, following a recommendation from the recent Review of Support for Disabled Students. CSPC approved the formation of a short-life task group to develop University-wide policy and guidance which would cover both taught and research students. The task group would be asked to consider the following:

- a clear definition of Authorised Interruption of Study;
- acceptable grounds for requesting an interruption;
- the application process;
- the consideration and approval process;
- the status of students who are interrupted;

- categories for recording interruptions on the student record;
- the return to study process;
- when an interruption of studies can be offered e.g. can an interruption be offered during the examination period.

The group would also consider which aspects of new documentation should constitute mandatory policy, and which should be non-mandatory guidance.

Membership would be sought for the task group following the meeting. Representatives would be sought from each College and from the Students' Association, Student Systems, and the Student Counselling or Student Disability Service.

### **8. Postgraduate Taught Assessment and Progression (CSPC 17/18 1 E)**

Dr Adam Bunni introduced this item which outlined a proposal to create a Task Group to consider aspects of postgraduate taught assessment and progression. CSPC approved the formation of a task group to consider this matter further. The Task Group was remitted to consider the PGT programme structure, with specific focus on:

- progression, specifically progression to the dissertation element of a PGT Master's programme;
- whether all PGT Master's programmes were required to have a dissertation or research project element;
- whether the University should consider relaxing its current position in regards to resubmission of Master's dissertations; and
- the role of the dissertation/research project supervisor.

Membership would be sought for the task group following the meeting.

### **9. Collaborative Provision: use of our credits by other institutions (CLOSED F)**

This closed paper was received by the Committee. The Committee agreed that additional scrutiny would need to be given to proposed collaborations which involved double-counting of credit by either party, and that it would expect to have sight of individual proposals of this nature. In particular, the Committee agreed that collaborations which involved the potential for dissertations submitted at the University of Edinburgh for one award to be reused or repurposed at another institution for a different award would be unlikely to be approved.

### **10. CMVM: Articulation Agreements (Verbal Update)**

Dr Sheila Lodge provided a verbal update on this item. A collaboration had been proposed by the Royal Dick School of Veterinary Medicine (Vet School) – this contained articulation proposals between the BVM&S programme at the University of Edinburgh and selected North American pre-vet programmes.

These proposed articulation agreements did not constitute a dual award degree arrangement; the proposals were to formalise the link between two distinct programmes of student - students would obtain single-badged degrees from both institutions, but, for example, the credits obtained during the first year of the Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine and Surgery would be double-counted by Alberta/McGill for the award of its BSc Animal Science.

A collaboration of this sort already existed between the University and the College of Veterinary Medicine, China Agricultural University, and had the advantage of increasing the international intake by the School and of maintaining the University's hold in the international market, ensuring that diversity in the University's intake was maintained within a global platform.

The Committee would be considering a formal proposal from the Vet School by electronic business, and provided the College with some feedback on the information presented to assist with this proposal.

**ACTION: Ailsa Taylor to pass notes of this item to Sheila Lodge so that the School could be asked to consider the queries and prepare a paper for the Committee to be dealt with by correspondence.**

#### **11. CMVM: New Programme Proposal: DVet Med (CSPC 17/18 1 H)**

Dr Sheila Lodge presented this paper, which was formally approved by the Committee. It was recommended that the School provide more clarity in programme documentation going forward about progression requirements and resit opportunities.

#### **12. Curriculum Framework: Structure for Teaching and Assessment (CSPC 17/18 1 I)**

It was agreed that this policy would be archived as it contained historical information that was no longer relevant, or information that was already contained within other policies. An archived version of the policy would be retained for future reference if required.

**ACTION: Ailsa Taylor to archive this policy.**

#### **13. Student Discipline Committee Membership and Student Discipline Officers 2017/18 (CSPC 17/18 1 J)**

This item was received by the Committee for information, as the membership lists had already been approved by Professor Murray on behalf of the Committee by correspondence in August 2017.

**ACTION: Ailsa Taylor to ensure Student Discipline Committee and Student Discipline Officer membership lists up to date for 2017/18 at [www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/discipline-committee](http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/discipline-committee) [www.docs.sasq.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Discipline/StudentDisciplineOfficers.pdf](http://www.docs.sasq.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Discipline/StudentDisciplineOfficers.pdf)**

#### **14. Senate Committee Planning (CSPC 17/18 1 K)**

Mr Tom Ward presented this paper which summarised details of the operation of the 2018-21 planning round. Senate committees would be able to input into this, and views were also being sought on some initial priorities for student experience, learning and teaching for the planning round.

The following comments were made:

- The guidance should refer to developing high quality learning and teaching spaces for taught and research students;

- The item on enhancing 'academic support' should refer to 'pastoral' support as well;
- The item on developing new approaches to online learning should highlight the value of developing new innovative pedagogies using digital technologies.

#### **15. Students' Association Priorities 2017/18 (CSPC 17/18 1 L)**

This paper sought to provide an introduction to the Students' Association new sabbatical officers and their priorities for 2017/18. Ms Bobi Archer presented her objectives for 2017/18 which included:

- planned strategies to reduce the pressures of semester 1;
- a focus on developing support for students undertaking joint degrees, and;
- the establishment of more coherent class representation structures, with transparency in communications to amplify the student voice.

#### **16. Knowledge Strategy Committee Report (CSPC 17/18 1 M)**

This item was received by the Committee for information.

#### **17. Any Other Business**

There was no further business.

Ailsa Taylor, Academic Policy Officer, 28 September 2017

The University of Edinburgh

Senatus Curriculum and Student Progression Committee

23 November 2017

**Data Science, Technology and Innovation Distance Learning  
Programme: Structure and Governance at University Level**

**Executive Summary**

This paper explains that responsibility for managing a suite of Distance Learning Programmes in Data Science, Technology and Innovation has transferred from the Deanery for Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Sciences to the College of Science and Engineering. This paper explains how the College will manage these programmes, including explaining how it will fulfil programme management and support functions normally delivered at 'School' level while maintaining an appropriate separation with normal 'College' functions.

Since these arrangements are non-standard in some ways in terms of University regulations (for example, operating a Board of Studies at College rather than School level), the Committee is being asked to approve them.

While some other initiatives may also be exploring non-standard ways of managing courses and programmes, there is no suggestion that approving these arrangements for this suite of Data Science programmes will set a precedent for other possible developments.

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

Aligns with the strategic objective of Leadership in Learning.

**Action requested**

For approval

**How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?**

The College Office will take responsibility for implementing the arrangements. There is no need for communication activities.

**Resource/Risk/Compliance**

**1. Resource implications (including staffing)**

The arrangements have resource implementations for the College, since it will need to have the capacity to fulfil programme-management and support functions that are normally delivered within Schools. There may also be resource implications for

Student Systems and other departments in aligning systems and processes with these arrangements – these have not yet been fully assessed.

## **2. Risk assessment**

The arrangements are intended to enable the College to have appropriate arrangements in place to manage risks associated with academic standards and the student experience.

## **3. Equality and Diversity**

The arrangements are unlikely to have an equality and diversity implications.

## **4. Freedom of information**

The paper is open.

### **Originator of the paper**

Professor Dave Robertson, Head of College of Science and Engineering  
Tom Ward, Director of Academic Services  
11 November 2017

# Data Science, Technology and Innovation Distance Learning Programme: Structure and Governance at University Level

The Data Science, Technology and Innovation programme (DTSI) was founded to run data science distance learning across our Colleges. It was founded in CMVM in 2015 and has recently moved to CSE. This paper summarizes the structure and governance of the program in CMVM and explains how these have been translated to CSE. Mostly the translation has been direct but there are a few adaptations to the new context. The committee is invited to comment upon these arrangements.

## Background and Motivation for the DSTI Programme

Data intensive research is pervasive across academia and industry. Its influence is felt in different ways and at different scales so there will be a sustained demand for education from introductory courses through to specialized courses (where specialization may be in technology/theory or in the application domain). This will lead to a complex and changing landscape for education involving data, one in which we will need to be agile in provision; and our prospective students will demand choice in the quantity, level and style of provision. This will vary widely across traditional disciplines and may promote strong interactions between domains as new research areas develop. These new areas are likely to be important drivers for research and education but their precise scope and nature is hard to predict. Our aim is to provide a simple, robust, adaptive framework within which to offer an academically cohesive range of courses drawn from across the University. We believe that a demonstration of excellence in data science across a wide range of fields will be of reputational and recruitment benefit to the UoE and our prospective students.

Against this background, the pace of development of the DSTI programme is likely to increase as a consequence of initiatives to increase the scale of our educational offerings in data science. One of the principal drivers currently is the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Deal initiative which commits the University to data science education at a large scale.

## The Origins of DSTI

In March 2015 CSPC supported the establishment of what became the 'Data Science, Technology & Innovation' suite of PGT programmes. Development of these educational offerings was pump-primed by an investment of £180k from the University's Distance Education Initiative. This award was made to Dave Robertson (at that time co-Director for one of three research centres within the Usher Institute, the Centre for Medical Informatics) as a consequence of an initial bid made by Austin Tate (in School of Informatics). The sequence of programme development was then:

- January 2016 – Soft launch of programme with PG Certificate and Postgraduate Professional Development (PPD) and an overall cohort of 8 students.
- September 2016 – Full launch of additional programmes which included: MSc, MSc with Specialism in Medical Informatics, PG Diploma and the continuation of the PG Certificate (with change in start date to September entry) and PPD (with six entry points throughout the year in-line with course start dates).
  - Cohort size of 42 (grew in-year with PPD where students often converted to MSc programme).
- September 2017 – Continuation of suite of programmes above with addition of new specialism in Anaesthesia and Critical Care.
  - Cohort size of 88 with continuing and new students (likely to grow with additional PPD student intake throughout the year).

## Modular Structure and Component Courses

Two founding principles of DSTI were:

- That programme ownership should be intentionally agnostic of course components, maximizing interdisciplinary potential.
- That there should be transparent programme *and* course ownership for QA purposes.

The DSTI programme was designed to be modular, with course content adopted into the programme suite. All courses are originated by individual Schools and standard approval procedures via relevant School Board of Studies apply. All courses within DSTI programmes are captured using consistent course catalogue descriptor templates. Retention of School 'ownership' of individual courses is consistent with current University practice and allows particular courses to exploit individual School brands as part of their marketing strategy.

At programme-level, the establishment of a Programme Oversight Committee (POC) was designed to foster cross-College communications relating to DSTI and to manage future programme expansion and development. Schools that elect to contribute courses to the data science framework are invited to nominate a senior academic for Data Science POC membership. Membership is reviewed annually to ensure continued alignment with course portfolio. Feedback from course organizers has been uniformly positive about POC; meetings are well-attended.

### **Governance and Operating Model in CMVM (2015-2017)**

The governance and operating model approved when DSTI was established inside CMVM was:

- Courses sourced from across the University. From its inception DSTI was unusual in that it required operation across all three Colleges.
- Programme Director was Professor Dave Robertson and the programme was hosted by the Usher Institute within the Deanery of Molecular Genetics & Population Health Sciences (MGPHS), CMVM.
- Consistent with the 'single offering' approach administrative aspects of programme coordination, marketing, and induction were delivered by dedicated administrative staff located in the Usher Institute and with support from College staff within CMVM. Admissions were at programme level but with same Usher Institute staff providing single port of call for all initial enquiries. Personal Tutors were assigned at the programme level (as normal).
- As planned, the programme Board of Studies function was initially provided via the Programme Oversight Committee but this was updated in 2016 with the establishment of the first Edinburgh Medical School Board of Studies.
- The Convener of the Programme level (Stage 2) Board of Examiners meetings was Professor David Weller.
- Dr Niall Anderson was the Programme level (Stage 2) Board of Examiners Regulations Expert for DSTI as he performed this role across all programmes within MGPHS (there was not a single Board of Examiners for the Deanery).

### **Governance and Operating Model in CSE (2017 onwards)**

Having moved to CSE, the operating model currently in effect is a modification of the one used when in CMVM:

- Courses continue to be sourced from across the University with course ownership retained within each School/Deanery. Responsibility for the dissertation 'course' will rest with the College and the Programme Director.
- The Programme Director is Dr Adam Carter, replacing Dave Robertson (since Dave now is Head of CSE). The Programme Director will be treated as having the responsibilities of a School Director of Teaching, for example having responsibility for being aware of any changes to University policy and regulation and for ensuring the programmes comply with them.
- Consistent with the 'single offering' approach administrative aspects of programme coordination, student support, marketing, and induction are delivered by dedicated administrative staff located in the CSE Online Learning Team with support from College staff within CSE College Office. Admissions remain at programme level but with same staff providing a single port of call for all initial enquiries.
- Personal Tutors continue to be assigned at the programme level and are sourced from all 3 participant Colleges, with the Programme Director acting as their Senior Tutor. A Personal Tutor statement has been developed that outlines responsibilities and escalation points for Personal Tutors on DSTI specifically.
- Director of Quality is Dr Adam Carter.

- For the dissertation stage of the programme, the Programme Director will act as School Academic Misconduct Officer (the implication of this arrangement is that the Programme Director would not be a marker for the dissertations).
- The Programme Oversight Committee Terms of Reference have been formally updated to include reference to its function as the Programme Board of Studies, with the College responsible for appointing its membership. Professor Jon Oberlander has been invited to chair the POC.
- When considering rigour and transparency in the formal DSTI quality model, concepts of separation between programme, College and University have been taken into account. In 2017-18, the DSTI programme was included in the Postgraduate Programme Review for the Deanery of Molecular, Genetics & Population Health Science. It will be necessary to agree with the Senate Quality Assurance Committee which PPR the programmes will be included in during the next cycle of reviews.
- The intention to establish the Bayes Institute as an entity within the College of Science & Engineering as School-level organizational entity may create new options for owning these programmes for QA and other purposes. Operation of the Programme, however, should remain with College, maintaining the broad, School-independent operation of the overall programme.
- The College is responsible for appointing the Programme level (Stage 2) Board of Examiners. Convener of the Programme level (Stage 2) Board of Examiners meetings is now Professor Graeme Reid.
- The nominated Regulations Expert is Teresa Ironside (with expertise in programme management in School of Informatics and in CMVM, employed at CSE College office).
- The College will agree with Student Administration and Support which School's graduation ceremony graduants of the programmes will attend.

Student Systems are in the process of assessing the extent to handling the programme and dissertation course in this way will require any developments to systems, student surveys and management information reporting.

11 November 2017

The University of Edinburgh

Senatus Curriculum and Student Progression Committee

23 November 2017

## **Service Excellence Programme - Student Administration & Support Update**

### **Executive Summary**

This paper provides a brief update of the work being undertaken by the Student Administration & Support strand of the Service Excellence Programme, as part of a commitment to ensure that the Senate Committees are appraised of progress across each of these projects.

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

The Service Excellence Programme has been identified as a strategic priority.

### **Action requested**

For discussion and for noting (no requested action at this stage).

### **How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?**

Future Service Excellence Programme recommendations will be communicated by the Board through existing committee structures. Future SA&S project proposals will be routed through Researcher Experience Committee, Learning & Teaching Committee, Quality Assurance Committee or Curriculum & Student Progression Committee as necessary.

### **Resource / Risk / Compliance**

#### **1. Resource implications (including staffing)**

N/A at this stage.

#### **2. Risk assessment**

SA&S aren't identifying risks for consideration at this stage.

#### **3. Equality and Diversity**

N/A at this stage.

#### **4. Freedom of information**

Open

### **Key words**

Service Excellence Programme / Student Administration & Support

### **Originator of the paper**

Neil McGillivray

Student Administration & Support Programme Lead

4<sup>th</sup> November 2017

## NOV 2017: UPDATE ON SERVICE EXCELLENCE (STUDENT ADMINISTRATION & SUPPORT)

The Student Administration & Support Programme's proposed programme of work (emerging from previous CSA and OBC phases) has been endorsed by the Service Excellence Board and the team are now working on a number of projects.

The Programme's vision encompasses a vision for professional services staff, academic staff, students and the University

- For students – from pre-arrival to graduation: Smooth. Seamless. Easy to navigate. "My way"
- For professional services staff: Fewer, better systems so less manual processing and fewer work arounds. Less duplicated effort. Better data. Clarity over who is responsible for what.
- For academic staff: Better admin support for you / your students. Less admin for you.
- For all staff and students: Clear, easy to understand policies
- For the University: Better Value for Money

The projects that are currently underway are the following:

- Special Circumstances, Extension and Concessions - to create a workflow system, application form, and data repository, as well as defining roles and responsibilities.
- Exam Timetabling - to provide students with personalised timetables of all of their centrally scheduled exams, published via their Office 365 calendars.
- Redesign of Working & Study Away Processes and Systems - a major project that includes the development of an online application form that is integrated into the Student Record. (Placements of all types are also within scope.)
- Student Centred Portal Pilot - to demonstrate the functional and technical requirements in order (ultimately) to deliver a single, personalised, point of access for all the information a student needs during their programme of study with us. Vision and consultation
- Comprehensive Timetabling Analysis - to define what we would need to do in order to deliver a comprehensive and personalised timetable to all students. Vision and student consultation
- Policy and Regulation Review - through a process of analytically reviewing the impact of current policies, to develop a set of principles for the development, implementation and review of policies and regulations, and to review business processes, roles and responsibilities.
- Tier 4 / Student Immigration Service - to reduce any risk associated with the University's Tier 4 Sponsor Licence through the strengthening of best practice in all areas of compliance, supported by a single Student Immigration Service unit.
- Timetabling Service - to develop a consistent cross institution approach to course scheduling and curriculum planning, delivered through reviewed business processes, roles and responsibilities.
- Student Finance - to develop a consistent cross institution approach to all aspects of student funding and finance (UG, PGT and PGR), reviewing business processes, roles and responsibilities, supported by the introduction of a single Student Finance unit.
- SA&S Target Operating Model - in common with other Service Excellence Programmes we will be undertaking some initial analysis and discussion on the current operating model in this area and looking to develop a Target Operating Model that represents a desired future state.

The SA&S Board will next meet on 20<sup>th</sup> November. It is anticipated that this Board will be asked to consider detailed process proposals from the following Project Teams:

- Special Circumstances, Extension and Concessions
- Working & Study Away
- Comprehensive Timetabling Analysis

Projects planned for the future (over the next 2-3 years) include work in the following areas:

- Creating systems, tools and processes to support the PGR lifecycle (including recording Annual Reviews and HEAR data)
- A major project to provide a single, golden-copy, data source for all Programme and course information, to clarify associated business processes for creation and update, and to provide tools by which the golden-copy data is used to publish key Programme and course information.
- Delivery of a transparent online matriculation process that guides a student through the steps they must complete (including a fee payment stage) in order to be fully matriculated.
- Create systems and tools to support the business processes involved in running Exam Boards.
- Redesign, simplify and standardise the processes for internal reporting through the creation of a single data warehouse and creating a user-centred interface to support day-to-day reporting requirements in Colleges and Schools.
- Completion of earlier work to support the Graduation process by introducing e-ticketing for Graduation (and eliminating inefficient manual processing).
- Various other investigations are planned, including into Online Course Selection, Course Assessment and Feedback tools, and the possibility of a digital document management system to support exam processes from setting questions to marking scripts.

Finally, it is likely that the work currently planned will result in further projects related to the new student interface and the ambition to deliver a comprehensive timetable to students.

The SA&S have developed a wiki, intended to provide detail on upcoming workshops and emerging project outputs. This will be maintained throughout the coming months, and into the next phase of the programme as detailed proposals are developed for future projects:

<https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=346121562>

The University of Edinburgh

Senatus Curriculum and Student Progression Committee

23 November 2017

**Acceptable reasons for coursework extensions and Special Circumstances: employment commitments and caring responsibilities**

**Executive Summary**

Since the implementation of a revised Special Circumstances policy and new regulation relating to coursework extensions in the 2016/17 session, Schools, Colleges, and the Students' Association have raised issues relating to the range of circumstances regarded as acceptable for consideration under these processes. Requests based on the impact of employment are not currently considered, while exceptional caring responsibilities are likely to be considered in most areas, but are not explicitly mentioned in relevant policy.

This paper discusses findings from a survey of University staff relating to the potential to consider the impact of exceptional employment commitments and caring responsibilities via the coursework extensions and Special Circumstances processes.

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

The strategic objective of Leadership in Learning commits the University to creating opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds and under-represented groups.

**Action requested**

The Committee is asked to **discuss** the recommendations in the paper and determine whether to amend the existing policy and regulations.

**How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?**

Any changes to policy and regulation will be incorporated into a communications plan relating to the wider changes in this area being proposed by the Service Excellence programme.

**Resource / Risk / Compliance**

**1. Resource implications (including staffing)**

Adding exceptional employment commitments as a valid reason for requesting a coursework extension is likely to lead to an increase in requests for coursework extensions. However, the Service Excellence Special Circumstances, Extensions and Concessions project is currently developing a more streamlined process for handling coursework extension requests, including self-certification by students, which should equip staff to handle requests more efficiently.

With regard to exceptional caring responsibilities, survey responses indicate that Schools are already considering these through the coursework extensions and

Special Circumstances processes. Adding explicit reference to exceptional caring responsibilities in the grounds for requests should not therefore impact significantly on the volume of requests, although it may encourage more students to come forward with requests.

## **2. Risk assessment**

Any significant increase in the volume of coursework extensions issued may pose a risk to feedback turnaround times, and the operation of appropriate marking and moderation processes. Where significant numbers of students are submitting work later than the expected deadline, markers may wish to wait until all work has been received before starting the marking process, thus placing themselves under greater pressure to meet feedback deadlines. Alternatively, marking work in staggered batches may require moderation processes to take account not only of work marked by different markers, but also work marked by the same markers at different times.

## **3. Equality and Diversity**

Expanding the range of circumstances considered acceptable reasons for coursework extensions and Special Circumstances is likely to benefit all students, including those with protected characteristics. It is possible that students with some protected characteristics may be more likely to experience the impact of caring responsibilities or employment commitments upon their studies, and may therefore particularly benefit from the proposed changes. There are no grounds for expecting any negative equality and diversity impacts as a result of these proposed changes.

## **4. Freedom of information**

Open.

### **Key words**

Coursework extensions; special circumstances; employment; carers

### **Originator of the paper**

Adam Bunni, Head of Governance and Regulatory Team, Academic Services, 13<sup>th</sup> November 2017.

## **Acceptable reasons for coursework extensions and Special Circumstances: employment commitments and caring responsibilities**

### **1. Background**

Following the introduction of a new Special Circumstances policy and regulation governing coursework extensions in the 2016/17 session, Curriculum and Student Progression Committee agreed to review their implementation in the current session. Due to the initiation of a major Service Excellence project (SCEC) to develop a uniform process for handling Special Circumstances and coursework extensions, this work has largely been subsumed into that project, which has involved sustained and significant consultation with Schools and Colleges. However, the initial period of implementation of the new policy and regulation highlighted two issues of policy which do not relate to the process of handling requests, and would therefore not otherwise be addressed by the SCEC project. These relate to the question of whether exceptional change in employment commitments, or caring responsibilities may be considered valid reasons for requesting a coursework extension or Special Circumstances.

Currently, employment commitments are explicitly regarded as not providing a valid reason for requests in any circumstances. Colleagues in the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine in particular have requested a reconsideration of the University's position on this issue, citing large numbers of students on their online programmes who are full-time professionals.

Although the impact of exceptional caring responsibilities would currently be regarded by many staff as an acceptable reason for requesting a coursework extension or Special Circumstances, there is no explicit reference to this in the relevant policy and regulation.

CSPC is asked to consider the recommendations in section 3 of this paper, taking account of the findings from a survey of University academic and professional staff.

### **2. Survey**

On behalf of Academic Services, colleagues in Service Excellence circulated a survey to key staff contacts in each School and Deanery who have been involved in the SCEC project; responses were also provided by the Students' Association. Respondents were encouraged to forward the survey to colleagues who may be interested in the issues raised.

Respondents to the survey were not asked to provide a definitive position for their School or Deanery, and the response rate was dramatically higher in some areas than others. As such, the results of the survey should be considered only as an indication of the wider mood on these issues, and a useful insight into the reasons for the stance adopted by certain Schools.

The results of the survey are provided in an Appendix to this paper.

#### **A. Employment commitments**

There was overwhelming (but not unanimous) support for recognising the impact of employment through the coursework extensions and Special Circumstances processes from colleagues in the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine. This largely reflects the volume of online programmes offered in the College, which primarily cater to medical professionals, whose employment commitments are significant and can be unpredictable.

Colleagues in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences were more divided on the issue, with respondents from five Schools supportive, four opposed, and a further two

presenting differing views. Those Schools which did support the idea of giving consideration to employment commitments largely felt that this was only appropriate for coursework extensions, and not for Special Circumstances.

Fewer Schools from the College of Science and Engineering responded; those that did respond were either divided on the issue, or gave qualified support (e.g. that it should only be considered for part-time, or online students).

The Students' Association were supportive of the idea that exceptional employment commitments should be considered both for coursework extensions and Special Circumstances.

### **Rationale**

The primary arguments given in favour of recognising exceptional employment commitments as a valid reason for coursework extensions and Special Circumstances related to the needs of part-time, and especially online students. In CMVM in particular, many online students are medical professionals in full-time employment, whose shifts can change at short notice beyond their control. Respondents felt that it was to be expected that these students would prioritise their employment over their studies, and that the University should offer sufficient flexibility to support these students. Some respondents also cited the increasing financial pressure which students find themselves under during their studies.

Opposition primarily related to the difficulty to evidence claims that changes to employment were beyond a student's control (see below). Some respondents were also particularly uncomfortable with the idea that students could, for example, potentially be excused from attendance at a compulsory assessment due to employment commitments.

A summary of the free text responses to the survey is provided in the Appendix to this paper.

### **Full-time Vs Part-time students**

Several respondents suggested that it may be desirable to set different rules regarding coursework extensions and Special Circumstances for part-time students relative to those in place for full-time students. Intuitively, the balance between commitments to employment and study will generally weigh more heavily towards employment for part-time, and especially perhaps online students than for full-time students. However, a report published recently by the University's Careers Service would indicate that issues relating to employment encountered by part-time and online students also affect full-time students in significant numbers. The report presents data from a survey of 653 full-time undergraduate students at the University. 39% of respondents were working in excess of 15 hours per week in paid employment; of those, 76% stated that they needed to work in order to pay for essentials, or rent. It is perhaps worthy of mention that students with caring responsibilities reported working longer hours than those without, although the number of responses from carers was very small (n=14). Likewise, students from Widening Participation backgrounds were also more likely to be working longer hours.

These findings militate against differentiating between part-time and full-time students with regard to any provisions the University makes to recognise the impact of employment commitments on studies. Moreover, were the University to set policy which prescribed different treatment of full-time and part-time- or online and on-campus- students, this would be likely to lead to instances of perceived unfairness; for example, where part-time and full-time students may be taking the same courses, but would receive different treatment for similar circumstances. In addition to this, treating part-time and full-time students differently

could also lead to indirect discrimination against certain categories of students who more commonly study on a full-time basis.

### **Evidence requirements**

A number of respondents, including those who were supportive of recognising employment commitments, suggested that it would be difficult for students to evidence changes in their employment being beyond their control, for example due to employers being unable or unwilling to provide evidence, or students being concerned about jeopardising relations with their employer. With regard to this latter concern, it should be expected that students may be reluctant to request evidence for Special Circumstances from someone who may on other occasions be required to make a judgement about their competence.

There was broader support for permitting the use of exceptional employment commitments as a justification for coursework extensions. Although some respondents suggested that it may be difficult to draw a distinction between valid reasons for coursework extensions and Special Circumstances, the University already does so in considering job or internship interviews as a potential reason for a coursework extension but not Special Circumstances. It is worth noting that the SCEC project is proposing that all requests should be self-certified. This would obviate any concerns about the availability of supporting evidence for requests relating to employment commitments. Further, the fact that requests for coursework extensions will be self-certified means that most requests are likely to be accepted, provided that the student adequately describes the impact of their circumstances and refers to legitimate grounds.

### **Impact of longer than one week**

Some respondents cited the need to recognise the impact of changes to employment commitments which lasted for longer than one week, and were therefore not regarded as being appropriately addressed by coursework extensions. This view predominated among colleagues involved in the delivery of online programmes, primarily to students who are also full-time professionals. As one respondent noted, however, staff involved in organising courses which cater exclusively to students with known professional commitments can consider offering a flexible approach to deadlines in order to meet their students' needs.

Where there is a need to set coursework deadlines for logistical, or other reasons, it should be noted that these are usually set several weeks in advance. Where a change to a student's employment status is so significant and prolonged that a further week of study will be insufficient to address the issue, it is likely that they may need to consider requesting an interruption of studies, or a change to their mode of study, or the volume of courses they are undertaking (if they are already part-time).

### **B. Caring Responsibilities**

The impact of exceptional (i.e. non-routine) caring responsibilities is currently regarded as an appropriate reason for making a coursework extension or Special Circumstances request, but no explicit reference is made to caring responsibilities in the relevant policy and regulations. The Students' Association in particular have been encouraging explicit recognition of this issue in relevant University policies and regulations. As part of the survey, colleagues were therefore asked whether they were supportive of a proposal to include "exceptional (i.e. non-routine) caring responsibilities" in the list of valid reasons to request a coursework extension or consideration of Special Circumstances.

Respondents were unanimously supportive of including this statement in the list of valid reasons both for coursework extensions and Special Circumstances. Several commented that they would already make allowances for these circumstances. Others noted that some institutions have clear policy on support for student carers, and that support for staff who are carers is more clearly defined within HR frameworks. It should be noted that the University is undertaking a thematic review during the current session which will cover support for mature students, including student parents and student carers, and will consider these issues in detail.

### **3. Recommendations**

In view of the findings presented above, it seems proportionate to recommend that exceptional employment commitments be considered as a valid reason for coursework extension requests, but not for Special Circumstances. The Service Excellence project proposals would- if supported- move the University towards a culture of generosity with regard to coursework extensions, so the expansion of the grounds to include the impact of employment commitments should not represent a significant shift in policy. The fact that coursework extension requests are proposed to be self-certified in future would serve to allay any concerns about the availability of evidence to support requests. These concerns, however, suggest that considering exceptional employment commitments as a valid reason for Special Circumstances requests would be much more challenging, and could pose a risk of inequitable treatment of students. Moreover, the opposition to considering employment commitments via the Special Circumstances process was considerable in some areas of the University.

With regard to exceptional caring responsibilities, the survey responses support a recommendation that these should be considered a valid reason for requesting coursework extensions and Special Circumstances.

#### **CSPC is therefore asked to consider the following recommendations:**

- i) That the following be added to the list of valid reasons to request a coursework extension, from the 2018/19 session onwards:

“exceptional and significant change in employment commitments, where this is beyond the student’s control”.

- ii) That the following be added to the list of valid reasons to request a coursework extension or consideration of Special Circumstances, from the 2018/19 session onwards:

“exceptional (i.e. non-routine) caring responsibilities”

The University would provide students and staff with additional guidance regarding what types of circumstances would be likely to be regarded as “exceptional”. Guidance currently offered by the University of Liverpool on this issue is provided below for reference:

“The expectation is that students with known caring responsibilities should normally have made appropriate arrangements to be able to manage these ordinarily alongside their studies. An extenuating circumstances claim will therefore only be considered where there are unforeseen circumstances (e.g. illness of another carer, unforeseen need to change care arrangements). For example, a parent may be expected to foresee that they will need to make care arrangements for their child during a half-term holiday but not to foresee that a child-minder is unwell and thus unable to care for their child on the day of an exam. Equally, a student who has an elderly parent with Alzheimer’s Disease may need to make an

extenuating circumstances claim if their studies are affected by an unforeseen need to respond to a deterioration in their parent's condition requiring new care arrangements to be made. The Extenuating Circumstances Committee will normally expect to see written independent evidence which confirms the circumstances and their timing.”

[https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/tqsd/code-of-practice-on-assessment/appendix\\_M\\_Annex1\\_cop\\_assess.pdf](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/tqsd/code-of-practice-on-assessment/appendix_M_Annex1_cop_assess.pdf) (Accessed 10th October 2017)

## Appendix: Survey responses

- 56 respondents
  - 19 Schools and Deaneries represented (including COL)
  - 34 academic staff
  - 22 professional/administrative staff
- a) **Should exceptional and significant change to employment commitments be considered a valid reason for coursework extensions and/or Special Circumstances?**

### Schools and Deaneries

- Yes: 12
- No: 4
- Split: 3
- CAHSS: Yes: 5; No: 4; Split: 2
- CMVM: Yes: 5; No: 0
- CSE: Yes: 2; No: 0; Split 1

- b) **If so, is this appropriate only for coursework extension requests? Or also for Special Circumstances?**

### Individual responses by College

- CAHSS: Both: 6; Extensions only 6; Neither 5
- CMVM: Both: 26; Extensions only 4; Neither 2
- CSE: Both: 4; Extensions only 1; Neither 2

- c) **Should exceptional (i.e. non-routine) caring responsibilities be considered a valid reason for coursework extensions and Special Circumstances?**

### Individual responses

- Yes: 56
- No: 0

## Overall responses

### Number of respondents by College

- 17 CAHSS
- 32 CMVM
- 7 CSE

### Number of respondents by School/Deanery

- 14 Clinical Sciences
- 6 Medical School
- 5 Population Health Sciences
- 4 Biological Sciences
- 4 Biomedical Sciences
- 3 Vet School
- 2 Centre for Open Learning

- 2 Divinity
- 2 ECA
- 2 Economics
- 2 Geosciences
- 2 Health in Social Science
- 2 LLC
- 1 Education
- 1 Business
- 1 HCA
- 1 Informatics
- 1 Law
- 1 PPLS

### **Summary of free-text responses**

#### Reasons to accept employment commitments as a valid reason for requests

- Many students on online programmes are in full-time work;
- Hospital shifts can change at short notice and are not optional due to sick leave, unfilled posts etc.;
- Vital to offer flexibility on online programmes;
- Increasing financial pressure on students;
- Appropriate for students working full-time and studying part-time;
- Appropriate to students studying part-time whose work takes priority over studies;
- Part-time students are at the University for a long time; it is impossible to predict what could happen over such a long period;
- Students who are single parents or from particular backgrounds may struggle more when employment commitments change;
- A student may be required to work in order to keep their job;
- Changes to work commitments may affect patient care where the student is in clinical practice;
- On online programmes, employment commitments may place students in locations without reliable internet access.

#### Reasons not to accept employment commitments

- Design courses and submission deadlines for courses on part-time programmes to take account of students' other commitments;
- Difficult to police and would lead to inconsistency of treatment of students;
- Difficult to verify that a change was outwith a student's control;
- Students working while studying is a conscious decision and should be planned for.

#### Coursework Extensions Vs Special Circumstances

- Not appropriate for employment commitments to excuse non-attendance at compulsory assessments;
- Would depend on the nature of the change of employment commitments;
- Should apply to both, as would disadvantage those where circumstances changed for more than a week;
- If it is appropriate for coursework extensions, it should also be appropriate for Special Circumstances- difficult to justify a distinction;

- Coursework extensions of longer than seven days should be permitted for part-time students.

What evidence would you expect to see that a change was beyond a student's control?

- May be difficult for the student to evidence without jeopardising work relationships in some cases;
- Employer may not be willing to put reasons in writing;
- Letter from employer or line manager (or person responsible for rota) would be sufficient;
- No evidence required, as students are professionals.

The University of Edinburgh

Senatus Curriculum and Student Progression Committee

23 November 2017

## **Academic Misconduct – An Overview and Future Planning**

### **Executive Summary**

This paper provides an overview of current practices and preventative measures taken in relation to academic misconduct and discusses the recent recommendations provided by the QAA in relation to contract cheating.

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

This paper aligns with the University strategic objectives of leadership in learning and leadership in research.

### **Action requested**

For discussion – Committee members are invited to discuss current practice and advise on whether this is sufficient or whether further action is required. Advice is also sought in relation to whether current University practices are sufficient in addressing the recommendations provided within the QAA guidelines on contract cheating.

### **How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?**

Any action agreed will be implemented and communicated via the College Academic Misconduct Officers.

### **Resource / Risk / Compliance**

#### **1. Resource implications (including staffing)**

This paper has no resource implications as it has been submitted for discussion purposes at this time.

#### **2. Risk assessment**

A risk assessment is not required as the paper aims to prompt discussion in relation to existing practice.

#### **3. Equality and Diversity**

An Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment is not required as the paper is not proposing any new or revised policies or practices. Equality and diversity issues will be taken into consideration in any discussions/actions which result from committee discussions.

#### **4. Freedom of information**

This paper is **open**.

#### **Key words**

Academic Misconduct, Good Academic Practice, Academic Integrity, Contract Cheating

#### **Originator of the paper**

Roshni Hume, Academic Policy Officer, 08 November 2017

## **Academic Misconduct – Overview and Future Planning**

### **1. Context**

Recently Higher Education Institutions have been at the centre of heightened media interest in relation to the increasing volume of academic misconduct cases which are being reported. This has been reported as an increasingly worrying trend and brings into question what institutions are doing to reduce the levels of academic misconduct. Additionally, there has been increased concern at government level regarding contract cheating (the use of ghost-writing services also referred to as 'Essay Mills') within Higher Education Institutions. In response to this, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education has recently released guidance for Higher Education Institutions which includes suggested actions on how to tackle contract cheating.

This paper provides an overview of current practices and preventative measures taken in relation to academic misconduct and discusses the suggested actions provided by the QAA in relation to contract cheating.

Committee members are invited to discuss current practice and advise on whether this is sufficient or whether further action is required. Advice is also sought in relation to whether current University practices are sufficient in addressing the recommendations provided within the QAA guidelines on contract cheating.

### **2. Statistics**

The table below provides a summary of Academic Misconduct offences detected and dealt with by the University's College Academic Misconduct Officers (CAMO), across the three Colleges, over the previous six academic years.

<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>Number of Academic Misconduct Offences</b>	<b>Percentage change from previous year</b>
2011-2012	131	35% increase
2012-2013	183	40% increase
2013-2014	211	15% increase
2014-2015	185	12% decrease
2015-2016	267	31% increase
2016-2017	351	24% increase

There is a clear upward trajectory in the number of cases detected and dealt with by the CAMO's since 2011-12. There has been a notable increase within the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (CAHSS) and the College of Science and Engineering (CSE). There are a number of factors which could be said to have contributed to the increase such as the increase in student numbers. The increase could also be partly explained by the increased use of plagiarism detection software across the University. For example, CAHSS have attributed the increase in academic misconduct cases within the College largely to the College-wide use of Turnitin which has allowed for easier detection. The College of Science and Engineering have highlighted that students are asked to submit an increased number of pieces of coursework which has resulted in increased opportunity for detection and investigation.

### **3. The University and Academic Misconduct**

#### **3 (a) Procedures**

Currently, the University's handling of academic misconduct operates within a largely devolved structure. Central University takes responsibility for the procedures in relation to academic misconduct, however, College Academic Misconduct Officers are responsible for implementing the procedures when handling cases of academic misconduct and for encouraging the promotion of good practice within their respective Colleges. School Academic Misconduct Officers are currently responsible for deciding whether there is a case to answer. They are not able to apply a penalty but can refer cases to the College Academic Misconduct Officers if it is believed that there is a case to answer. They are also involved in providing advice and guidance and helping students understand good academic practice.

Current procedures can be found at:

<http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Discipline/AcademicMisconductProcedures.pdf>

The College Academic Misconduct Officers meet bi-annually with a representative from Academic Services and the Students' Association to discuss trends and any major issues which have arisen. Professor Tina Harrison, Assistant Principal, Academic Standards and Quality Assurance chairs these meetings. The College Academic Misconduct Officers and the Students' Association inform changes to the University procedures.

### **3 (b) Prevention via the Promotion of Good Scholarship**

Colleges and Schools as well as other sections across the University place a great deal of emphasis on the promotion of good scholarship in order to mitigate against the increase in the number of cases of academic misconduct dealt with on an annual basis.

#### **Colleges and Schools**

The College Academic Misconduct Officers (CAMO'S) work closely with the School Academic Misconduct Officers and ensure that good academic practice is promoted within each of the Colleges. A variety of strategies are utilised across the Colleges. Students receive both written and verbal advice and guidance in relation to good academic practice during Welcome Week. Information on good academic practice is also provided within Course and Programme handbooks throughout the University.

Within CAHSS, SAMO's play an important role in supporting students, providing advice and promoting good academic practice within their individual schools. When disciplinary action is required, the student is provided with personalised written feedback, which provides an explanation as to why action is being taken, guidance on good academic practice and further information regarding sources of support.

Within the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine, students at undergraduate level are provided with a dedicated session on good academic practice during the first year of their programme. All undergraduate and postgraduate taught students receive written guidance on good academic conduct at the beginning their studies and are made aware of the consequences for those accused of plagiarism and the potential implications of these upon their studies. The College also strongly encourages PGR students to engage with courses provided by the Institute of Academic Development on good research practices.

Within the College of Science and Engineering, Course Organisers are asked to provide clear instructions on what method of working practice is required during different types of assessment to ensure that students who are not familiar with certain types of assessment are made aware of the expectations placed upon them. As well as promoting good academic practice, the College also

promotes the theme of ethics in research. Information in relation to good practice is available online to all students and e-mail reminders are circulated when significant pieces of coursework are due for submission. The College also encourages Course organisers to allow students the option to view their Turnitin report and make amendments ahead of the submission date in order to strengthen their understanding of good academic practice. The College is also currently in the process of developing a College-wide strategy focussing on allowing students the opportunity to develop and enhance good academic practices as a part of the curriculum.

#### Edinburgh University Students' Association

##### The Advice Place

The Advice Place within the Edinburgh University Students' Association provide information on good scholarship on their website at:

[https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/support\\_and\\_advice/the\\_advice\\_place/academic/plagiarism\\_and\\_misconduct/](https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/support_and_advice/the_advice_place/academic/plagiarism_and_misconduct/)

The Academic Advisers within the Advice Place also support students who have been accused of academic misconduct as well as accompany them to meetings with the CAMOs. They play a pivotal role in the promotion of good academic practice and in the support of students.

##### Read.Write.Cite Campaign

The Read.Write.Cite campaign was successfully launched in 2015 by the Students' Association in conjunction with the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences with the aim of raising awareness of good scholarship and in particular the importance of referencing. There is a great deal of information, including detailed information on different referencing styles, available to students on the Read.Write.Cite page on Students' Association website at:

[https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/support\\_and\\_advice/the\\_advice\\_place/academic/citeright/](https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/support_and_advice/the_advice_place/academic/citeright/)

There is currently an appetite for a relaunch of the campaign at a University-wide level and this is being considered by the University in collaboration with the Students' Association.

#### Institute for Academic Development

The Institute for Academic Development website has a section dedicated to the promotion of good academic practice. It includes further pages with detailed information on understanding good academic practice as well as referencing and avoiding plagiarism. Additionally, there are a number of printable resources for students to utilise when writing and referencing. The Institute for Academic Development also provide a number of workshops which focus on good academic practice and referencing as well as one-to-one study skill support for students.

The aforementioned webpages and resources can be found at:

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/institute-academic-development/undergraduate/good-practice>

#### Technology/Resources for the purpose of developing good academic practice

There is potential to explore the use of technology and electronic resources in promoting good academic practice. Work has taken place within the University in relation to the use of Turnitin as a tool to develop and improve academic practice. It is common practice within some subject areas within the University to allow students a single opportunity to check their Turnitin results and make amendments ahead of the submission deadline. This allows students to learn from any errors that

they may have made and allows them to strengthen their academic skills. Additionally, it allows them to gain an insight into how plagiarism is detected and what constitutes poor academic scholarship. Work has been conducted in relation to how Turnitin can be utilised in the improvement and development of good academic practice. Further information on this work can be found at: <https://www.teaching-matters-blog.ed.ac.uk/?p=1557>.

Another example of good practice in relation to the use of technology is within the School of Education who have piloted the use of Turnitin to screen PhD work at four significant milestones throughout the length of the PhD. The purpose of Turnitin in this instance is not to trigger the initiation of an academic misconduct investigation but to act as a learning and development process for the students concerned. It is beneficial in providing supervisors with an early insight into the academic work of their student and to protect the student against the risk of undergoing an academic misconduct investigation at a later stage at which point the extent of poor scholarship/plagiarism could be significant. Further information on this work can be found at: <https://www.teaching-matters-blog.ed.ac.uk/?p=1862>

The College Academic Misconduct Officers have played an active role in promoting the strands of work summarised above and continue to highlight and share instances of good practice within their Colleges.

#### **4. Strategic Issues**

##### **4.1 QAA Guidance on Contract Cheating**

The QAA guidance in relation to contract cheating was produced in response to serious concerns raised within Higher Education Institutions and the UK government about companies who supply completed academic assignments to students in exchange for payment. The guidance document can be found at:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Contracting-to-cheat-in-higher-education.pdf>.

##### Recommendations

The recommendations from the QAA focus on the following areas:

##### Education (for students and staff)

*Students:* Universities are encouraged to promote academic integrity amongst the student population from an early stage. The guidance emphasises the importance of providing information in writing to students.

*Staff:* Universities should be active in ensuring that staff are kept up-to-date with academic regulations on assessment and ensure that they are made aware of the concept of contract cheating.

##### Prevention

The guidance encourages universities to consider alternative assessment methods which would limit cheating opportunities. This should be considered when creating and reviewing courses and the related assessments.

The guidance also asks universities to consider blocking ghost-writing service websites from their IT systems and be aware of advertising on campus. A number of these companies promote their

services by distributing leaflets and displaying posters on campus as well as utilise social media forums such as Twitter and Facebook.

### Detection

Universities have been asked to consider organisation-wide detection methods and consider alerting Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies of misconduct by students on professional degree programmes.

### Regulations and policies

The guidance asks universities to formalise and highlight their commitment to academic integrity e.g. by embedding the message into institutional values or in a mission statement.

The guidance also asks Universities to ensure that all regulations and guidance are as clear as possible and that all staff are aware of the procedures to follow if they suspect an instance of academic misconduct.

Universities are also asked to consider having specialist conduct officers who would be able to mediate in situations where misconduct is suspected.

Universities are also encouraged to record statistics for all cases of academic misconduct to inform any future action.

### **Contract Cheating and the University**

The guidelines have been welcomed by the College Academic Misconduct Officers and it is clear that the University is currently doing much of what is suggested within the document. The University College Academic Misconduct Officers have also had concerns in relation to contract cheating for some time and a meeting was held with interested parties to discuss the issue and to establish if any resources were available to assist with the detection of assessment which has been produced by a ghost-writing company and how to prove such an allegation without breaching University regulations in relation to anonymous marking. There is a shared consensus that prevention is the best method in such cases due to the difficulty of detection and that there should be an increased emphasis on the promotion of good academic practice.

The University is aware that similar discussions are taking place within other institutions and plans to maintain contact with colleagues involved in such discussions.

In relation to detection, the University does not currently require the use of plagiarism detection software within Schools, however, there has been a significant increase in the use of Turnitin, particularly within the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences where Schools are encouraged to make use of the software. Other types of more subject specific detection software is also utilised within areas of the University. For example, some subject areas within the School of Informatics make use of software specifically created to detect plagiarism within the subject area of coding. Further information on the software can be found at: <https://theory.stanford.edu/~aiken/moss/>.

Initial discussions with Student Systems indicate that there are difficulties in attempting to block ghost-writing service websites and e-mail addresses from IT equipment and systems as there is a strong likelihood that the companies would be able to circumvent these restrictions by creating a new URL or e-mail identification/address.

The College Academic Misconduct Officers have ensured that the School Academic Misconduct Officers have been made aware of discussions taking place in relation to contract cheating and that

they have a clear understanding of University guidance and procedures. An emphasis is placed by both the CAMO's and SAMO's on the importance of academic integrity and ensuring that students understand the values of good academic practice.

The Committee is invited to discuss current practice in relation to the QAA recommendations and advise on whether this is sufficient or whether further action is required.

#### **4.2 Other Emerging Issues**

Other issues in relation to academic misconduct which have recently generated increased media interest include the use of performance enhancing drugs to enhance mental performance in order to gain an academic advantage. Further information can be found at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/feb/15/students-smart-drugs-higher-grades-adderall-modafinil>

There is no evidence to suggest that this is an issue at the University of Edinburgh but it is emerging as a widespread issue which has gained media attention. The University will continue to monitor developments within the sector in relation to the use of performance enhancing drugs but no formal action is being taken at this time.

#### **5. Future Planning**

##### Awareness Raising

The College Academic Misconduct Officers and the Students' Association are in agreement that Colleges and Schools should continue to promote good academic practice and raise awareness in relation to the importance of academic integrity. The potential relaunch of the 'Read.Write.Cite' campaign is strongly supported by the College Academic Misconduct Officers and would be welcomed as an addition to local level guidance.

##### Assessment design – broader range of assessments

Professor Susan Rhind, Assistant Principal Assessment and Feedback, is currently working with IAD, Colleges and Schools to encourage the use of new or alternative approaches to assessment within their courses and programmes. Additionally, the University's Assessment and Feedback Enhancement Group will be discussing more broadly the role of examinations including the function that they can serve in minimising opportunities for students to cheat.

A feedback and assessment guide, replacing the previous feedback policy, has been created by Professor Rhind with support from colleagues in IAD and across the colleges. It outlines the role feedback and assessment play in supporting learning in different contexts and the fundamental importance of course and programme design in facilitating good feedback and assessment practice. The guide can be found at:

[http://www.docs.hss.ed.ac.uk/iad/Learning\\_teaching/Academic\\_teaching/Resources/Student\\_Engagement/UoE\\_IADEngage\\_FeedbackAssess\\_A5\\_V4\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.docs.hss.ed.ac.uk/iad/Learning_teaching/Academic_teaching/Resources/Student_Engagement/UoE_IADEngage_FeedbackAssess_A5_V4_WEB.pdf)

This work is on-going and is very much a University priority at this time. Careful attention to assessment design can both address and minimise opportunities for cheating but, more importantly, allow students to develop their academic skills and graduate attributes in their journey through courses and programmes.

##### Review of Procedures

The College Academic Misconduct Officers have expressed an appetite for a review of the current Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures in order to allow the School Academic Misconduct Officers to play a more active role within the investigation process and in the promotion of good academic practice. The procedures are currently scheduled for review in 2018/19, however, we may be required to make changes prior to this in order to comply with the recently-revised RCUK Policy and Guidelines on Governance of Good Research Conduct

### **Summary**

The College Academic Misconduct Officers plan to continue to meet regularly to share best practice and raise any issues which may arise. They will also continue to work closely with the School Academic Misconduct Officers and the Students' Association to raise awareness in relation to good academic practice (including using plagiarism detection software as a learning tool) and encourage the use of different types of assessment. Academic Services will continue to support the College Academic Misconduct Officers and seek their input in any review of procedures and/or guidance, which is required as a result of developments in relation to academic misconduct, and the promotion of good academic practice.

Roshni Hume

November 2017

The University of Edinburgh

Senatus Curriculum and Student Progression Committee

23 November 2017

## **Timing of Boards of Examiners for Semester 1 courses**

### **Executive Summary**

In March 2017, CSPC restated a commitment to holding Boards of Examiners directly following Semester 1 to ratify results for courses fully assessed in Semester 1. Data from the 2015/16 and 2016/17 sessions indicated that there had been a significant increase in the volume of undergraduate Semester 1 courses issuing ratified results at the end of Semester 1 to around 80%. However, at postgraduate taught level, publication of ratified Semester 1 course results after Semester 1 stood at less than 20%. This paper considers the rationale for holding Boards of Examiners at the end of Semester 1, and the implications of doing so at PGT level.

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

Providing students with timely assessment decisions supports the strategic goal of Leadership in Learning.

### **Action requested**

The Committee is asked to **approve** the recommendations in the paper.

### **How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?**

Academic Services will provide the Colleges with information regarding the rationale for holding Semester 1 Boards, to share with Schools and subject areas where this is not already common practice.

### **Resource / Risk / Compliance**

#### **1. Resource implications (including staffing)**

For those programmes which do not currently hold Boards of Examiners at the end of Semester 1, their introduction will likely lead to some increase in workload during January/February. This increase will be partially offset by a reduction in the volume of courses needing to be considered at Semester 2 Boards of Examiners.

#### **2. Risk assessment**

If the deadline for upload of Semester 1 course marks is delayed beyond the deadline for partial refund of fees, some students wishing to withdraw following receipt of their Semester 1 course marks may no longer be eligible for a refund. However, the apparent need to delay the upload deadline suggests that these students are currently receiving even provisional results later than the current refund

deadline.

### **3. Equality and Diversity**

A large proportion of Special Circumstances requests relate to mental health issues. Providing students with more prompt responses to their requests relating to Semester 1 courses better supports their wellbeing.

### **4. Freedom of information**

Open.

#### **Key words**

Boards of Examiners, progression

#### **Originator of the paper**

Adam Bunni, Head of Governance and Regulatory Team, Academic Services, 13<sup>th</sup> November 2017.

## **Timing of Boards of Examiners for Semester 1 Courses**

### **Background**

In March 2017, CSPC restated a commitment to holding Boards of Examiners directly following Semester 1 to ratify results for courses fully assessed in Semester 1. While the Committee accepted that there may be pedagogical reasons for delaying assessment of some Semester 1 courses until the end of Semester 2, members did not see a justification for delaying the publication of ratified results for courses fully assessed during Semester 1.

CSPC was presented with data from the 2015/16 and 2016/17 sessions which indicated that there had been a significant increase in the volume of undergraduate Semester 1 courses issuing ratified results at the end of Semester 1 to around 80%. However, at postgraduate taught level, publication of ratified Semester 1 course results after Semester 1 stood at less than 20%. It is possible, however, that there may be a significant increase in this figure during the current session.

Although the Committee recognised that some logistical and resourcing issues may make the publication of ratified course results after Semester 1 more challenging to achieve at PGT level, members agreed that there was no fundamental reason to take a different approach to postgraduate taught courses.

### **Rationale for holding Boards of Examiners at the end of Semester 1**

The primary motivation for providing ratified Semester 1 course results at the end of Semester 1 is the benefit that this offers to the student experience. Although provisional marks for courses may not frequently be adjusted subsequently by Boards of Examiners, students benefit from having certainty regarding their performance in Semester 1 courses while undertaking Semester 2 courses, especially where their progression to the next stage of study may be at risk.

Moreover, students submitting Special Circumstances requests during Semester 1 cannot be provided with a final outcome until their course results are certain. A significant delay in providing these students with certainty about how their request has been addressed can impact negatively upon their wellbeing. The absence of Semester 1 Boards of Examiners can also lead to further delay in providing final results to these students following Semester 2: for example, where a null sit may be offered for a coursework assessment from Semester 1, holding a Board at the end of Semester 1 could allow the student to undertake reassessment during Semester 2, rather than the summer.

### **Implications of holding Boards of Examiners at the end of Semester 1**

Some programmes, especially those at PGT level with small numbers of students, regard holding one course Board of Examiners after Semester 2 as the most efficient way to ratify course results for students. Holding an extra Board of Examiners meeting at the end of Semester 1 generates some additional workload, although it can offer logistical benefits by spreading the workload across the year, reducing compression around Semester 2 Boards of Examiners. It also better supports the operation of two-stage Course/Progression Boards, with June Progression Boards waiting for fewer course results from other Schools or subject areas.

Colleagues have also expressed concern about the potential challenge of engaging External Examiners in an extra meeting; it should be emphasised, however, that External Examiners are not required to attend all Board meetings in person, but to participate, including by phone or electronically.

During the 2016/17 and 2017/18 sessions, the deadline for entry of ratified course marks for Semester 1 courses into EUCLID has been set at 31<sup>st</sup> January. This has been challenging for some PGT programmes, particularly those which involve submission of some assessments for Semester 1 courses after the winter vacation. While the deadline date for publication of results for Semester 2 courses is ultimately dictated by graduations, there are not similar interdependencies for the publication of Semester 1 results. However, the existing deadline was set based on the fact that students who withdraw voluntarily from the University by 31<sup>st</sup> January can expect to receive a partial refund of their tuition fees. It is expected, however, that students who are likely to perform particularly poorly in their final assessments in Semester 1 should have been given some warning of this through their feedback on earlier formative or summative assessments.

### **Recommendations**

CSPC is asked to consider and agree or modify the following recommendations:

- Boards of Examiners should be held following the end of Semester 1 to ratify results for all courses whose assessment is complete during, or immediately following Semester 1; Schools will be expected to comply with this recommendation for all undergraduate and postgraduate taught courses during the 2018/19 session.
- The deadline for entry into EUCLID of ratified course results for Semester 1 courses should be adjusted to accommodate those PGT programmes struggling to meet the current deadline.
- Academic Services should discuss with Fees and Student Support whether there is any possibility of delaying the 31<sup>st</sup> January deadline for partial fee refunds for students.

The University of Edinburgh

Senatus Curriculum and Student Progression Committee

23 November 2017

## **MSc Transfusion, Transplantation and Tissue Banking Programme Revision**

### **Executive Summary**

We want to revise the current programme to provide three options to students undertaking their final year of the three year part time programme. We are seeking approval from CSPC because the structure varies from the Models for Degree Types and Framework for Curricula of the University.

The first two years will remain the same which is the current taught element of the programme consisting of 8 taught courses over two years. (120 credits). The third year will have three options/pathways for students.

- **Option 1:** Research Project (60 credits).

We are seeking approval for the other two options which we would like to provide as alternatives. For students who do not have access to resources for a research project, they would have a choice of either

- **Option 2:** Two 30 credit courses.
  - Course 1 will be “Transfusion Science Practice & Data Interpretation (On campus + work based).
  - Course 2: “Clinical Audit/Service Evaluation (work based)”.
- **Option 3:** this option is a variation of option 2 but it is the option which deviates most from the Models for Degree Types and Framework for Curricula of the University. It will only apply to students who have previously gained a particular professional qualification. The University of Manchester/British Blood Transfusion society (UoM/BBTS) Specialist Certificate in Transfusion Science.
  - Course 1 will be “Transfusion Science Practice & Data Interpretation (On campus + work based). **Student exempt if they have the University of Manchester qualification ( 30 credits APL added to record)**
  - Course 2: “Clinical Audit/Service Evaluation (work based)”.

See full paper for more details.

### **How does this align with the University / Committee’s strategic plans and priorities?**

It aligns with the current development themes of improving partnerships with industry. In this case revising a current programme to make it fit for purpose and meet the needs of scientists working within the NHS Transfusion laboratories. It also promotes leadership in learning as the management module within the programme has been reviewed with more emphasis on leadership and change management.

## **Action requested**

Consider the recommendations/approval to implement.

## **How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?**

Implement the options during the third year of this current cohort, in academic year 2019 – 2020 as it will not compromise any students wishing to undertake the current option of undertaking a research project. They can continue to take this option, it just offers alternatives.

## **Resource / Risk / Compliance**

### **1. Resource implications (including staffing)**

Resource implications will be minimal once the initial courses have been developed and finalised as per the course specifications already produced.

### **2. Risk assessment**

There is a risk if the changes are not made, the student numbers will decline making the programme no longer viable.

### **3. Equality and Diversity**

Has this been considered? Yes the options provided within the third year should make the programme more accessible than the current situation.

### **4. Freedom of information**

Open

## **Key words**

## **Originator of the paper**

Anne Thomson, Programme Co-ordinator, November 2017

# **MSc Transfusion, Transplantation and Tissue Banking Programme Revision**

## **Proposal:**

Revise the current MSc Transfusion, Transplantation and Tissue Banking programme to provide three options to students undertaking their final year of the three year part time programme.

## **Background**

The current part time programme has been a collaborative venture between the University of Edinburgh and the Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service (SNBTS) since 2005 with the programme being delivered over three years and student intakes every two. The first two years are a taught programme on campus supplemented with the knowledge and experiences the students gain whilst working within the NHS. The students would then progress to the third year to undertake a research project within their workplace provided they met the criteria as set out by the University and detailed in the handbook. As this programme is part of the succession planning initiatives within the NHS, the employer in the main funds the students including the resources required to undertake the third year research project. In recent years, securing suitable research projects has become more of a challenge. This is primarily due to the major change programmes currently ongoing within the NHS in UK and Ireland. As services are consolidated and there is more use made of the workforce educated to undergraduate level, the long term prognosis is a lesser demand by employers to educate their workforce to masters level. For those employers who continue to support students, there is the continuing challenge of providing a research project in areas where all of the research facilities have been removed and centralised. The UK Transfusion laboratory Collaborative (UKTLC) have produced standards that say NHS employees working within Blood Transfusion Laboratories must have managers educated to masters level or equivalent in transfusion. Smaller and remote laboratories are faced with the challenge of sending their students on a masters course relevant to what they do but are unable to support them with the research element.

## **Situation**

With this background there is also the current situation where graduates enter the NHS laboratories and continue education through the professional bodies. This allows them to gain their registration with the health and Care Professions Council and continue postgraduate training to specialist Biomedical Scientist training. (Other staff groups can undertake this course but the majority are Biomedical Scientists). The British Blood Transfusion society have now partnered with the University of Manchester to deliver a Specialist Certificate in Transfusion Science Practice. This on line programme is valued at 45 credits at Masters level. Students completing this course are starting to want to build on these credits to complete a full programme worth 180 credits and graduate with a masters degree. If we could modify our programme to recognise students with this prior learning, it would not only benefit the student but would also benefit the programme by providing a sustainable source of continuous students as the traditional sources decline within Scotland.

## Recommendation

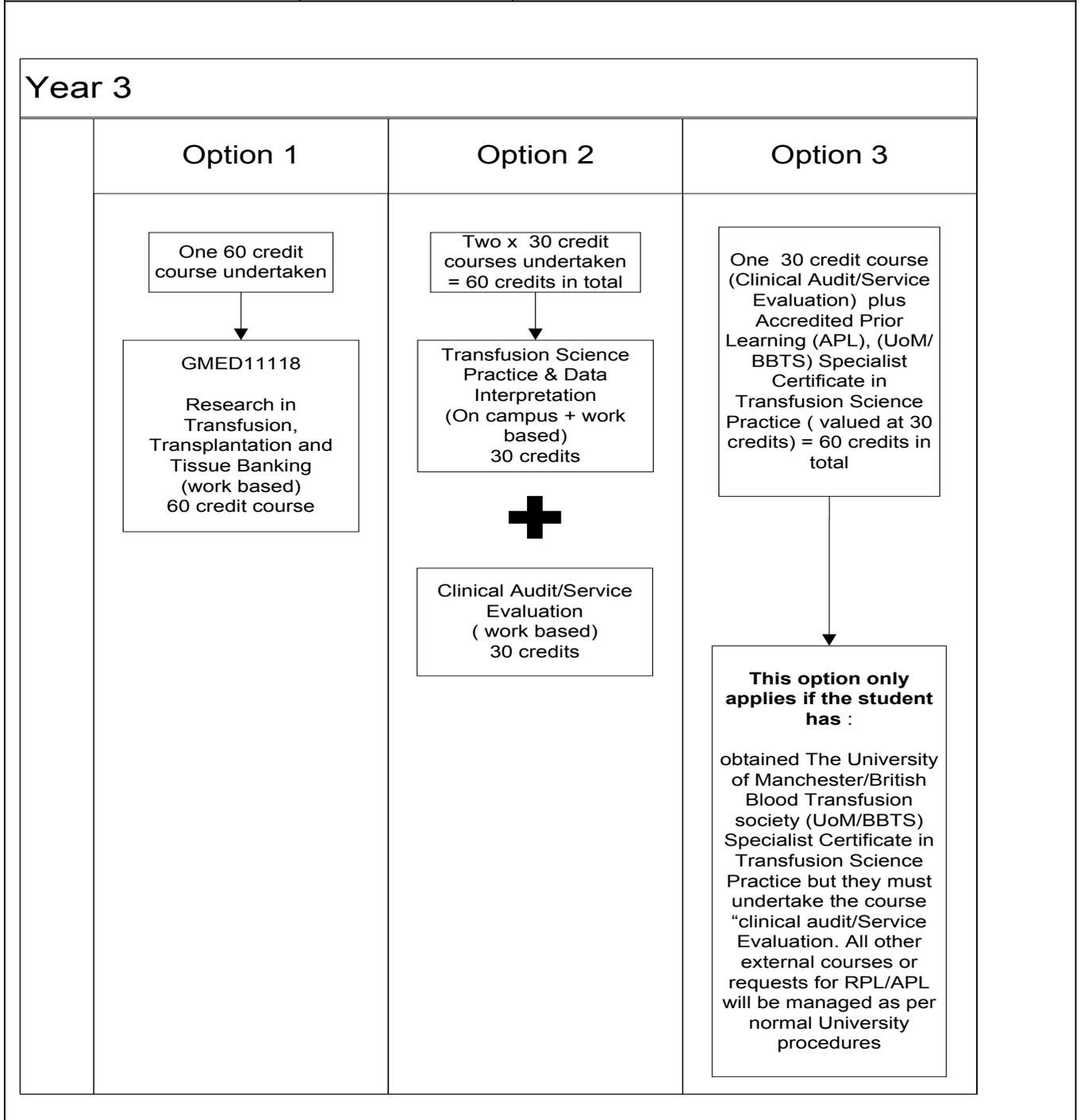
Revise the third year of the programme to make the programme more flexible. This flexibility would take into account the very specific and relevant professional qualifications taken by some students and the challenges other students face when trying to complete a traditional research project. By providing alternatives to meeting the learning outcomes of the third year, the programme will be more robust giving the students a better learning experience. The new options provided would still meet the overall outcomes of the third year but in a different way than the traditional research project, although that option would still be available for students wishing to take that route.

### **New Proposal: MSc Transfusion, Transplantation and Tissue Banking: 2017 – 2020 (PTMSCTTATB1P)**

<b>Year 1 2017/2018</b>	<b>Sept 2017</b>	
<b>Semester 1</b>		
18 <sup>th</sup> – 22 <sup>st</sup> Sept 2017 On campus	<a href="#">GMED10001</a> 10 credits	Management & Communication
13 <sup>th</sup> – 16 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2017 On campus Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2017	<a href="#">GMED11003</a> 10 credits  <a href="#">GMED10001</a>	Blood Donation Processing & Testing + Governance/Ethics/Risks of Transfusion  Presentation Skills
<b>Semester 2</b>		
22 <sup>nd</sup> – 26 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2018 On campus	<a href="#">GMED11006</a> 20 credits	Transplantation and Tissue Banking
7 <sup>th</sup> – 10 <sup>th</sup> May 2018 On campus	<a href="#">GMED11004</a> 10 credits	Immunology & Molecular Biology of Transfusion
<b>Year 2 2018/2019</b>	<b>Sept 2018</b>	
<b>Semester 1</b>		
17 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2018 On campus	<a href="#">GMED11001</a> 20 credits	Quality and GMP, Fundamentals of Transfusion Science & Communication
12 <sup>th</sup> – 15 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2018 On campus	<a href="#">GMED11002</a> 10 credits	Information Technology & Donation
21 <sup>st</sup> – 24 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2019 On campus	<a href="#">GMED11005</a> 20 credits	Biopharmaceutical Transfusion, Clinical Trials & Clinical Blood Banking

29 <sup>th</sup> April– 3rd May 2019 - On campus	<a href="#">GMED11007</a>  20 credits	Review, Revision and <b>Diploma Examination</b>
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<b>Year 3 2019/2020</b> <span style="float: right;"><i>3 options available</i></span>		
Sept 2019- On campus and workbased	60 credits	3 Options available to the students depending on their circumstances  The student must meet the pre requisites for their preferred option as detailed in the course descriptors.  See options below:



### Year 3:

- **Option 1:** is the option that is currently provided and is a research project which will still be available to students who have access to the resources to complete this in their workplace. (60 credits).

We are seeking approval for the other two options which we would like to provide as alternatives. These would be for students who do not have access to resources for a research project.

- **Option 2:** Course 1 will be “Transfusion Science Practice & Data Interpretation (On campus + work based). This course will involve the critical review of data focussing on complex patient blood grouping test results which are generated within hospital transfusion science practice. More importantly it will focus on the subjective interpretation of that data and application of this information. The application will be in relation to patients and the decision making process involved in the selection of appropriate/suitable blood components as part of the patient’s treatment. The second course for option two will be another 30 credit course, “Clinical Audit/Service Evaluation (work based)”. This course enables students to develop an appreciation of the nature of clinical audit or service evaluation and the scientific methods required to carry them out. They will still require to integrate and critically review information, applying the principles of scientific enquiry to plan and undertake a clinical audit or advanced critical analysis of current practice.
- **Option 3:** this option is the option which deviates most from the Models for Degree Types and Framework for Curricula of the University. It will only apply to students who have previously gained a particular professional qualification. The University of Manchester/British Blood Transfusion Society (UoM/BBTS) Specialist Certificate in Transfusion Science. Students who have this previous qualification complete year one and two as normal and in the third year will still undertake the 30 credit “Clinical Audit/Service Evaluation (work based)” course but will also be credited 30 credits as part of APL for previously undertaking the University of Manchester course giving them 60 credits for the third year. This is different because it allows students to take a previously undertaken stand alone course accredited by the University of Manchester at masters level and have it recognised and integrated into another programme (our programme) in a kind of “pick and mix” as they build their masters degree across universities. The University of Manchester course teaches the same content as the content we plan to deliver in the “Transfusion Science Practice & Data Interpretation” (On campus + work based) course. Hence we would automatically credit the student with 30 credits (for previous APL) and exempt them from our data interpretation course in option 2. They would just need to complete the other 30 credit course in third year, “Clinical Audit/Service Evaluation (work based)”.

Anne Thomson, Programme Co-ordinator, November 2017

The University of Edinburgh

Senatus Curriculum and Student Progression Committee

23 November 2017

## **Senate Committee Planning**

### **Executive Summary**

The paper invites the Committee to input into the planning round.

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

Aligns with the University's strategic objective of Leadership in Learning.

### **Action requested**

The Committee is invited to identify:

- Any changes that it has initiated or plans to initiate which would require support groups, Colleges or Schools to allocate significant additional resources;
- Changes in the external environment (eg regulatory changes) which would result in significant additional work for the University; and
- Major institutional projects that the Committee would like to make a case for, which would require significant support from support services which could not be accommodated within existing resources.

### **How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?**

Section 2 explains the arrangements.

### **Resource / Risk / Compliance**

#### **1. Resource implications (including staffing)**

Yes. The paper will assist the University to use its resources strategically. If the Senate Committees identify any major developments with implications for the University Secretary's Group (USG), or other support groups, the Senior Vice-Principal will invite the relevant support group to consider including a bid for this in their planning round submissions.

#### **2. Risk assessment**

No. Since the paper aims to generate ideas rather than to recommend a specific course of action, it is not necessary to undertake a risk analysis.

**3. Equality and Diversity**

No. Since the paper aims to generate ideas rather than to recommend a specific course of action, it is not necessary to undertake an equality and diversity assessment.

**4. Freedom of information**

For inclusion in open business

Tom Ward, Director of Academic Services, 20 October 2017

## **Senate Committee Planning**

### **1 Introduction**

The Senate Committees' input into the planning round has three stages:

- At their meetings in September 2017 the Senate Committees had an initial discussion regarding student experience, learning and teaching issues that Schools / Colleges / support groups should take account of in the planning round. This informed the Senior Vice-Principal's input into Governance and Strategic Planning's initial guidance to Schools / Colleges / support groups regarding priorities for the planning round. In practice, the Committees made more suggestions than was possible to include in the planning guidance – and the Senior Vice-Principal prioritised those that were more strategic and had more significant resources implications. See attached Annex.
- For this meeting - the Committees are invited to have a fuller discussion of issues that should be taken account of in the planning round.
- In Semester Two, the Committees will undertake a broader discussion of their priorities for the coming session – and will submit their plans to the 30 May 2018 Senate meeting for approval.

### **2 For discussion**

The Committee is invited to identify:

- Any changes that it has initiated or plans to initiate which would require support groups, Colleges or Schools to allocate significant additional resources;
- Changes in the external environment (eg regulatory changes) which would result in significant additional work for the University; and
- Major institutional projects that the Committee would like to make a case for, which would require significant support from support services which could not be accommodated within existing resources.

In addition, the Committee is invited to identify any additional strategic priorities for student experience, learning and teaching with significant resource implications that Schools / Colleges and support groups should take account of in their plans, other than those already discussed at the Committee's meeting in September and considered for inclusion in the initial guidance (see Annex).

## **Annex: Senior Vice-Principal's initial thematic input into 2017-18 planning round guidance**

- Enhancing the sense of shared community linking academic staff and students, and developing more effective ways of listening and responding to students' views;
- Enhancing the academic and pastoral support we give to students;
- Developing new and innovative approaches to online learning that can provide an excellent student experience to large numbers of students;
- Enhancing the development of employability skills through the curriculum;
- Developing high quality learning and teaching spaces for taught and research students.

The University of Edinburgh

Senatus Curriculum and Student Progression Committee

23 November 2017

**Academic Year Dates 2019/20 and Provisional Academic Year Dates 2020/21**

**Executive Summary**

This paper provides the proposed academic year dates for 2019/20 and provisional academic year dates for 2020/21, for approval.

The academic year dates for 2018/19 have already been approved by CSPC and are available at

[www.ed.ac.uk/semester-dates/201819](http://www.ed.ac.uk/semester-dates/201819)

Current projections mean that in 2020/21 a potential induction start date of 14 September 2020 will have a knock-on effect on the revision/examination period in semester 1 of 2020 with a truncated revision and examination diet (revision period commencing on 7 December 2020). The dates will mirror the situation in 2015/16, when the Committee agreed to a reduction in the revision period for students, in order to have enough time to fit in the December examination diet.

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

Aligns with the strategic objective of Leadership in Learning.

**Action requested**

For approval

**How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?**

The information will be conveyed to Communications and Marketing who will re-format and formally publish at [www.ed.ac.uk/semester-dates](http://www.ed.ac.uk/semester-dates)

**Resource/Risk/Compliance**

**1. Resource implications (including staffing)**

No resource implications

**2. Risk assessment**

No key risks associated with this paper

**3. Equality and Diversity**

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

**4. Freedom of information**

The paper is open.

**Originator of the paper**

Ailsa Taylor, Academic Services, 6 November 2017

## Academic Year Dates 2019/20

1	09 September 2019	Induction
2	16 September 2019	T1
3	23 September 2019	T2
4	30 September 2019	T3
5	07 October 2019	T4
6	14 October 2019	T5
7	21 October 2019	T6
8	28 October 2019	T7
9	04 November 2019	T8
10	11 November 2019	T9
11	18 November 2019	T10
12	25 November 2019	T11
13	02 December 2019	Revision
14	09 December 2019	Exams
15	16 December 2019	Exams
16	23 December 2019	Winter vac 1
17	30 December 2019	Winter vac 2
18	06 January 2020	Winter vac 3
19	13 January 2020	T1
20	20 January 2020	T2
21	27 January 2020	T3
22	03 February 2020	T4
23	10 February 2020	T5
24	17 February 2020	Flexible Learning Week
25	24 February 2020	T6
26	02 March 2020	T7
27	09 March 2020	T8
28	16 March 2020	T9
29	23 March 2020	T10
30	30 March 2020	T11
31	06 April 2020	Spring vac 1
32	13 April 2020	Spring vac 2
33	20 April 2020	Revision
34	27 April 2020	Exams
35	04 May 2020	Exams
36	11 May 2020	Exams
37	18 May 2020	Exams
38	25 May 2020	Summer vac 1
39	01 June 2020	Summer vac 2
40	08 June 2020	Summer vac 3
41	15 June 2020	Summer vac 4
42	22 June 2020	Summer vac 5
43	29 June 2020	Summer vac 6
44	06 July 2020	Summer vac 7
45	13 July 2020	Summer vac 8
46	20 July 2020	Summer vac 9

47	27 July 2020	Summer vac 10
48	03 August 2020	Resits/Summer vac 11
49	10 August 2020	Resits/Summer vac 12
50	17 August 2020	Summer vac 13
51	24 August 2020	Summer vac 14
52	31 August 2020	Summer vac 15
53	07 September 2020	Summer vac 16

### Provisional Academic Year Dates 2020/21

1	14 September 2020	Induction
2	21 September 2020	T1
3	28 September 2020	T2
4	05 October 2020	T3
5	12 October 2020	T4
6	19 October 2020	T5
7	26 October 2020	T6
8	02 November 2020	T7
9	09 November 2020	T8
10	16 November 2020	T9
11	23 November 2020	T10
12	30 November 2020	T11
13	07 December 2020	Revision/Exams
14	14 December 2020	Exams
15	21 December 2020	Exams/Winter vac 1
16	28 December 2020	Winter vac 2
17	04 January 2021	Winter vac 3
18	11 January 2021	T1
19	18 January 2021	T2
20	25 January 2021	T3
21	01 February 2021	T4
22	08 February 2021	T5
23	15 February 2021	Flexible Learning Week
24	22 February 2021	T6
25	01 March 2021	T7
26	08 March 2021	T8
27	15 March 2021	T9
28	22 March 2021	T10
29	29 March 2021	T11
30	05 April 2021	Spring vac 1
31	12 April 2021	Spring vac 2
32	19 April 2021	Revision
33	26 April 2021	Exams
34	03 May 2021	Exams
35	10 May 2021	Exams
36	17 May 2021	Exams
37	24 May 2021	Summer vac 1
38	31 May 2021	Summer vac 2
39	07 June 2021	Summer vac 3
40	14 June 2021	Summer vac 4
41	21 June 2021	Summer vac 5
42	28 June 2021	Summer vac 6

43	05 July 2021	Summer vac 7
44	12 July 2021	Summer vac 8
45	19 July 2021	Summer vac 9
46	26 July 2021	Summer vac 10
47	02 August 2021	Summer vac 11
48	09 August 2021	Summer vac 12
49	16 August 2021	Summer vac 13
50	23 August 2021	Summer vac 14
51	30 August 2021	Summer vac 15
52	06 September 2021	Summer vac 16

Academic Services  
6 November 2017