

The University of Edinburgh

**Minutes of the Senatus Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CSPC)
held on Thursday 20 September 2018 at 2.00pm in the Raeburn Room, Old College**

Present:

Professor Alan Murray (Convener)	Assistant Principal, Academic Support
Professor Graeme Reid (Vice-Convener)	Dean of Learning and Teaching (CSE)
Dr Paul Norris	Associate Dean (Academic Progress), CAHSS
Dr Antony Maciocia	Dean of Students (CSE)
Ms Philippa Burrell	Head of Academic Administration (CMVM)
Dr Lisa Kendall	Head of Academic and Student Administration (CAHSS)
Ms Alexandra Laidlaw	Head of Academic Affairs (CSE)
Professor Neil Turner	Dean of Undergraduate Learning and Teaching (CMVM)
Dr Jeremy Crang	Dean of Students (CAHSS)
Ms Gin Lowdean	Advice Place Manager, Students' Association
Ms Ellie Tudhope	Advice Place Senior Academic Adviser
Dr Adam Bunni	Head of Governance and Regulatory Framework Team
Anne-Marie Scott	IS Learning, Teaching and Web
Dr Cathy Bovill	Institute for Academic Development
Mrs Lisa Dawson	Director of Student Systems and Administration

In attendance:

Mr Tom Ward	Director, Academic Services
Miss Theresa Sheppard	Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services
Mr Chris MacLeod	Programme Lead - Student Administration & Support, Service Excellence Programme (item 3 only)
Professor Stuart Anderson	Director of Teaching, School of Informatics (item 4 only)
Mr Ben Morse	MSc Programmes Officer, EPCC (item 4 only)
Ms Linda Criggie	Deputy Director of HR (item 12 only)

Apologies for absence:

Dr Juliette MacDonald	Edinburgh College of Art
Professor Lesley McAra	Assistant Principal, Community Relations
Ms Diva Mukherji	Vice President Education Students' Association
Dr Geoff Pearson	Dean of Students (CMVM)
Professor Susan Rhind	Assistant Principal, Assessment and Feedback

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 31 May 2018 were **approved** as an accurate record.

2. Matters Arising

a) Electronic Business 31 August-5 September 2018: Graduate Apprenticeship in Data Science

The Committee noted that it had conducted electronic business by correspondence between 31 August and 5 September 2018, to approve the an opt-out from the curriculum framework for the Graduate Apprenticeship in Data Science.

b) Electronic Business 26-29 June: Taught Assessment Regulations 2018/19 and Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure

The Committee noted that it had conducted electronic business by correspondence between 26 and 29 June 2018 to agree a minor amendment to the Taught Assessment Regulations 2018/19 and revisions to the Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure.

c) Authorised Interruption of Study Policy

At its meeting on 31 May 2018, the Committee had approved the Authorised Interruption of Study Policy; Dr Bunni noted, however, that wording from the Degree Regulations with regard to Retrospective Interruptions of Study had been omitted from the final version, and recommended that this wording be inserted. The Committee **approved** this addition to the Policy.

d) Academic Misconduct

Dr Bunni updated the Committee on a decision taken under CSPC Convener's Action: at its meeting on 31 May 2018, the Committee approved a revised version of the University's Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures, subject to further non-material changes being agreed with College Academic Misconduct Officers.

On reviewing the final draft procedures, however, the College Academic Misconduct Officers agreed that they would prefer to delay the more substantial changes for further discussion and consultation in the next session, reverting for 2018/19 to the existing procedure, with only necessary changes being made. These changes (which were approved by Convener's action) had been included in the draft approved by CSPC in May, and covered the following:

- The reinstatement of a 20-mark penalty for application by CAMOs (in addition to 10 and 30 mark penalties);
- The addition of a section (10) covering procedures for informing Research Councils of allegations of academic misconduct relating to Research Council funded students;
- The removal of a section at the end of the document providing contact details of CAMOs and administrators within Colleges, which will now be held on Academic Services' web pages.

e) Publication of Results

Dr Bunni noted that the agreed deadline of 22 February 2019 for the publication of Semester 1 PGT course results, which had been agreed at the meeting of CSPC on 31 May 2018, had been changed by agreement between the colleges to 21 February 2019, in recognition of the fact that 22 February 2019 is a Friday.

3. Service Excellence Programme – Special Circumstances Update (CSPC 18/19 1 A)

The Committee noted the paper, which provided a brief update on the work being undertaken by the Student Administration and Support strand of the Service Excellence Programme.

Mr MacLeod also updated the Committee orally on the work of the Service Excellence Programme (SEP) relating to Special Circumstances. He noted that, at its meeting in November 2018, CSPC would be invited to approve policy dimensions of final proposals relating to the University-level unit which would be responsible for reviewing Special Circumstances applications. Under the revised proposals, the central Special Circumstances team would make an objective assessment of the applications via an online workflow, before referring them electronically to School Committees for consideration of recommended action. Representatives from the Service Excellence Programme will be seeking feedback from key stakeholders prior to proposals coming to CSPC in November.

It was emphasised that the final proposal should ensure that applications will be handled consistently, that efficiency (both for the unit and for staff in Schools) will be a key priority of the procedure, and that the process should be clear and transparent for students. The Committee highlighted that the final proposal would also need to give careful thought and consultation to the nature and level of information that the unit would provide to Schools, and guidance offered to Schools regarding the likely requirement for a local Special Circumstances Committee.

In discussion, the Committee highlighted the need for SEP to consider how applications for Special Circumstances might be made on a rolling basis, rather than at fixed times; this was a particular issue for applications for coursework extensions of over seven days. The possibility of resolving applications which require quick decisions via Exam Board Convener's Action was raised.

<p>Action: CSPC members are invited to pass further feedback to Mr MacLeod as part of the consultation exercise.</p>

4. Edinburgh Parallel Computing Centre MSc Programmes – Academic Governance (CSPC 18/19 1B)

Professor Anderson and Mr Morse provided an overview of the governance arrangements of the Edinburgh Parallel Computing Centre (EPCC) MSc programmes and three standalone Level 11 courses offered by EPCC. The arrangements for these programmes are non-standard, and some aspects are changing following the transfer of oversight from Physics & Astronomy to Informatics; while EPCC programmes will be listed under the School of Informatics in the DRPS, they have a distinct offering, and the Centre will operate as a subsidiary of the School. The EPCC staff will oversee the day-to-day management and delivery of programmes, while existing governance structures in the School of Informatics will be in place for matters beyond day-to-day programme management level.

In discussion, the Committee **agreed** that it was satisfied with the governance arrangements, while advising EPCC representatives to examine precedents for this type of governance arrangement; the programmes delivered with the Royal Botanic Gardens, in conjunction with the School of Biological Sciences, was suggested as an example.

5. Data Science, Technology, and Innovation Distance Learning Programme: Structure and Governance at University Level (CSPC 18/19 1C)

Professor Reid presented the paper, which provided an update on the management of the suite of Online Learning Programmes in Data Science, following approval by the Committee of the structure and governance of the programmes on 23 November 2017.

The Committee, having reviewed the arrangements, **agreed** that it was satisfied with the management of the programmes.

6. Intercalation into Edinburgh by students from medical programmes at other institutions (CSPC 18/19 1 D)

Professor Turner presented the paper, which proposed that external MBChB students be allowed the possibility of being awarded an intercalated degree at the University at the end of their year of study, without altering the process for internal students. The paper proposed that external students be allowed to intercalate after two years of study, with recognition of prior learning being awarded to address the deficit in credits which affected these students.

The Committee **approved** the proposal, while recommending that a separate discussion be held between the relevant colleges to determine whether the agreed process would apply to programmes outside CMVM.

7. MEd Leadership and Learning: Request for Concession to TAR56 (CSPC 18/19 1 P)

The Committee **approved** the concession request regarding the Med Leadership and Learning, which was to waive the progression requirement of completing all taught components, before undertaking the project component of a PGT degree, as outlined in Taught Assessment Regulation 56.

8. Postgraduate Assessment and Progression (CSPC 18/19 1 E)

The Committee considered proposals for further work relating to the recommendations contained within the report of the Postgraduate Assessment and Progression Task Group, received by CSPC in 2017/18 (CSPC 17/18 6 B). The paper included benchmarking information and analysis of potential implications of changes to pass marks and progression requirements for Taught Master's programmes.

CSPC discussed the potential models for changes both to the pass marks for Master's degrees, and to the progression hurdle between the taught and research component of the most common type of Master's degree. The Committee noted that Assistant Principal, Professor Susan Rhind, was preparing a paper for Senate Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) relating to other aspects of the University's approach to marking schemes and marking practices; this would mean that any future action in this area would need to be aligned with broader discussion by LTC.

It was further noted in discussion that the proposed modifications may need to extend beyond Postgraduate Taught Programmes, since some courses were taken by both undergraduate and postgraduate students. The importance of consultation, and communication to students on the implications of the changes, was also emphasised.

The Committee **agreed** that it wished to commit to further work in exploring the potential models, and that it would undertake this work once discussion had been held on the topic at LTC.

9. Consolidation of Programme and Course Approval and Management Information (CSPC 18/19 1 F)

The Committee discussed the proposals set out in the paper and **approved** the following:

- The amendments to the Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy
- Support for the development by Academic Services (for subsequent approval by Resolution) of a simplified Boards of Studies Terms of Reference document
- The deletion with immediate effect of the Non-Credit Bearing Online Course Approval: Procedure for External Release

10. Mitigating the academic impact on students of the Spring 2018 industrial action while maintaining academic standards (CSPC 18/19 1 G)

The Committee discussed the paper, which provided an analysis of evidence regarding the effectiveness of the temporary guidance and concessions for Schools to mitigate the academic impact on students of the Spring 2018 industrial action.

In general, it was felt that the measures had operated well, with a number of examples of good practice. In discussion the Committee made the following points:

- It had been challenging to ensure that internal moderators were in place who had sufficient expertise, but were external to the degree subject.
- CAHSS noted that greater clarity would be useful in future around communications to students on the mitigating actions which had been taken by Boards of Examiners
- CAHSS further noted that schools would appreciate guidance on providing alternate ways of delivering content in the absence of face-to-face teaching.

CSPC **formally recognised** the exceptional amount of time and effort employed by many staff, both academic and professional services, in mitigating the impact of the industrial action (including preparation for Boards of Examiners meetings).

11. Distance Learning at Scale Update

The Committee noted that a paper with regard to opt-outs from some elements of the curriculum framework for a MicroMaster's programme would be brought to the meeting of CSPC in November 2018. The Committee **requested** that information be circulated in the mean time regarding the scope of the work and the business case for the distance learning project.

Action: Anne Marie Scott to circulate brief document to CSPC members on the business case for, and scope of, the Distance Learning project.
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12. Publication of semester and vacation dates (CSPC 18/19 1 I)

The Committee **approved** the proposal that, when agreeing semester dates on an annual basis (in November), CSPC agree an additional provisional year's semester dates, and that the provisional dates be published on the University's webpages. It was noted that due caution should be given to publishing provisional semester dates, in order to ensure that there would be flexibility to make alterations in future, if required.

13. Review of Student Support

Professor Murray briefly outlined plans to review the academic and pastoral support for students, and these were noted by the Committee.

14. Assessment and Progression Tools

The Committee noted that a full update would be provided at its meeting in November 2018.

15. Senate Committee Input into 2019-22 Planning Round (CSPC 18/19 1 J)

The Committee noted the initial ideas for priorities for student experience, learning and teaching.

16. Edinburgh University Students' Association Priorities (CSPC 18/19 1 K)

The Committee noted the Students' Association Vice-President Education's priorities for the 2018/19. These included the following:

- Promoting a diverse curriculum
- Creating inclusive teaching environments
- Developing alternative approaches to learning.

17. Collaborative Provision: Memoranda of Agreement (CSPC 18/19 1 L)

The Committee noted the list of institutions with which Memoranda of Agreement had been signed or renewed since January 2017. The Committee was invited to note the contents of the report and members were invited to bring to attention any gaps observed in this information by contacting Theresa Sheppard in Academic Services (theresa.sheppard@ed.ac.uk)

18. Annual review of effectiveness of Senate Committees (CSPC 18/19 1 M)

The Committee noted the paper, which summarised the results of the questionnaire which had been sent to committee members as part of the annual review of the Senate Committees. The questionnaire had sought to gauge the effectiveness of the composition, support, engagement and impact of the Senate Committees.

The following key points were raised in discussion:

- The Committee highlighted the concerns which had been raised by respondents, in particular CSPC members, with regard to the volume of committee papers
- The Committee noted that it would welcome further discussion on, and input into, the possibility of mapping the links between School, College and Senate Committees
- The request was made that the release of the questionnaire be timed in future to include the outgoing Students' Association Vice-President, Education.

19. Knowledge Strategy Committee Report (CSPC18/19 1 N)

The paper was received by the Committee for information.

20. Guidance for Committee Members 2018/19

The Committee noted the guidance for members, which included the following:

- CSPC Membership and Terms of Reference 2018/19
- Committee Members' Guidance
- Annual report of the Senate Committees (31 May 2018) outlining agreed plans for 2018/19 (CSPC 18/19 1 O)

Theresa Sheppard, Academic Services, 25 September 2018