

The University of Edinburgh

**Meeting of the Senatus Researcher Experience Committee
to be held on 25 September 2018 at 2.00pm
in the Board Room, Chancellor's Building, Little France
Convener: Professor Neil Mulholland**

A G E N D A

1. **Minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2018** Enclosed
 2. **Matters Arising**
 - 2.1 Old Kirk Project
 - 2.2 Enlightenment Scholarships
 3. **Conveners' Communications**
 - 3.1 UK Council for Graduate Education: supervisor accreditation
- For Discussion**
4. **Increasing Go Abroad Opportunities for Postgraduate Research Students** REC 18/19 1A
 5. **Service Excellence Programme – update on postgraduate research activity**
 - 5.1 Student Administration and Support Update REC 18/19 1B
 6. **E-only submission of the final version of PhD theses** REC 18/19 1C
 7. **Excellence in Doctoral Research & Career Development: Progress reports June 2018**
 8. **Regulations**
 - 8.1 Supervisor attendance at oral examination: benchmarking REC 18/19 1D
 - 8.2 PhD by Research Publications: benchmarking REC 18/19 1E
 - 8.3 Thesis assessment criteria REC 18/19 1F
 9. **Senate Committee Planning**
 - 9.1 Senate Committee input into 2019-22 Planning Round REC 18/19 1G
 - 9.3 Annual review of effectiveness of Senate Committees REC 18/19 1H
- For information and formal business**
10. **Students' Association Priorities 2018-19** REC 18/19 1I
 11. **Senate Committee Operation**
 - 11.1 Committee priorities REC 18/19 1J
 - [REC Terms of Reference](#)
 - [REC Membership](#)
 - [Senate Committee Members Guidance](#)
 12. **External Engagement:**
 - 12.1 League of European Research Universities (LERU) REC 18/19 1K

Date of next meeting: 6 November 2018, Torridon Room, Charles Stewart House, Chambers Street

[All meeting dates and venues for 2018/19](#)

- 12.2 UK Council for Graduate Education (UKCGE)
- 12.3 Coimbra
- 12.4 Network of Universities from European Capitals (UNICA) REC 18/19 1L
- 12.5 Universitas 21

- 13. Planned task groups:**
 - 13.1 Student status of PhD student after thesis submission
 - 13.2 Practical operation of PhD with Integrated Study programmes

- 14. Report from the Knowledge Strategy Committee: 25 May 2018 meeting** REC 18/19 1M

- 15. Research Policy Group report**
 - 15.1 REF 2021 draft guidance – summary of key information REC 18/19 1N

- 16. Any other business**
 - 16.1 Conferences and events**
 - 16.1.1 Vitae Conference – September 2018
 - 16.1.2 UK Council for Graduate Education Scottish Forum – 30 November 2018

Susan Hunter, Academic Services, 18 September 2018

The University of Edinburgh

Research Excellence Committee

25 September 2018

Increasing Go Abroad Opportunities for Postgraduate Research Students

Executive Summary

In line with Vision 2025, Go Abroad are working towards expanding the range of international opportunities available to students and staff, as well as ensuring participation amongst underrepresented groups. One of these groups is postgraduate students, who make up a very small proportion of our outgoing numbers. Although we have recently increased efforts to recruit more postgraduates, a lack of available information and inflexible nature of postgraduate taught (PGT) courses means that participation is still dominated by undergraduates. We feel now is the time to actively encourage postgraduate research (PGR) students, who have more flexibility built into their programme, to undertake an international experience as part of their studies.

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

This initiative aligns with many of the themes outlined in the University's strategic plan:

- Allowing students to both learn from and contribute to the work of international experts in their field helps them to **challenge the boundaries of knowledge and research**, and ultimately improve **the quality of learning**
- Spending an extended period abroad helps to build resilience and intercultural skills, helping students become **exceptional individuals equipped to address global challenges** and promoting **good cultural understanding**

Encouraging postgraduate research overseas also helps the University to:

- 'Form deep and lasting relationships in research and innovation with other globally leading universities'
- Encourage research staff and students to gain experiences and share knowledge and skills with global partners universities'
- 'Progressively increase collaborative academic research and innovation outputs of the highest quality and value'.
-

Action requested

To formally note the recommendations

- To consider ways in which the committee can support Go Abroad in cascading the information to the relevant audience
- To consider ways in which we can expand postgraduate Go Abroad activities in the future

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

Promotional activity and materials will be undertaken and created by Go Abroad, with information cascading to be taken forward by colleagues from Schools/Colleges.

Resource / Risk / Compliance**1. Resource implications (including staffing)**

Costs of promotional activity will be met by Go Abroad, who will also provide the appropriate funding for students to undertake a mobility period.

2. Risk assessment

Given the difficulty of incorporating a mobility period into our year-long PGT courses without this being embedded into degree programmes, our initiative focuses on PGR students only, who have more flexibility in terms of when they can go abroad. There is therefore a risk that PGT students may feel alienated from our work. Given our work will focus on European destinations due to the nature of Erasmus+ funding, there is also a risk of non-European destinations being perceived as less of a priority. However, these are both areas we are keen to explore in the near future, and would welcome the Committee's thoughts on how this could be taken forward.

3. Equality and Diversity

Additional Erasmus+ funding is available for widening participation students, as well as for students with a disability.

4. Freedom of information

Open

Key words

Erasmus+, international, exchange, research, postgraduate

Originator of the paper

Lynsey Pilcher, Go Abroad projects Coordinator, 10 September 2018

Increasing Participation of Postgraduate Research Mobility in Erasmus+ Mobility Programmes

Introduction and context

The University's Vision 2025 outlines the ambition to offer "...all our students an international learning experience, enabling us to make a truly global impact through educating the brightest and best from and across the world."

Go Abroad are committed to working towards Vision 2025; as part of this, we endeavour to not only increase the number of students we send abroad each year, but also to ensure that students from the widest possible variety of backgrounds can access these opportunities. The University's widening participation agenda is intrinsically linked to this, and it is imperative that careful consideration is given to achieving inclusivity for all students, at all stages.

The University's Go Abroad activity has traditionally been focused on undergraduate opportunities, and we now aim to significantly increase participation amongst postgraduates. We have recently made a greater effort to recruit more postgraduates onto our programmes, and although numbers have been relatively small, they have been increasing year on year, showing clear demand from this group.

The University has been awarded a record €2.2million in Erasmus+ funding for the coming two years, which will enable us to fund an additional 145 students to work, study, volunteer or undertake research in Europe. We are keen to ensure that as many students as possible can benefit from this additional funding, and we see the recruitment of more postgraduate research onto Erasmus+ placements as an important first step towards achieving this goal.

What is Erasmus+?

Erasmus+ is the European Union programme for education, training, youth and sport. It runs for seven years, from 2014 to 2020, with organisations invited to apply for funding each year to undertake creative and worthwhile activities. The University of Edinburgh participates in the Higher Education side of the programme, which provides funding for staff and students to study, work, train or research in Europe.

There are two strands to Erasmus+ which are available to PGR students: Erasmus+ study exchange and Erasmus+ traineeships. PGR students can undertake very similar (if not identical) types of activity under each strand, with the only varying factors between the two being the application process and grant amounts. An overview of the two strands can be found in the table below, alongside what we see as the benefits and challenges of each from a PGR perspective:

Name of strand	What it covers	Application process	Benefits	Challenges
Study exchange	Students going to one of our partner universities in Europe to study or undertake research (3-12 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select desired exchange from destinations guide • Apply through Mobility Online • Initial application period from 1-30 November • Further application rounds to be introduced for PGR students to increase flexibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established exchange opportunities – less searching required by student • Existing relationship with host university 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing exchanges may not align with research interests • Places on agreements may be reserved for UG students
Traineeships	Students going to a university or organisation in Europe to work, volunteer or undertake research or fieldwork (2-12 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise your own placement • Apply for funding on Mobility Online • Applications open year-round (apply one month before departure) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility to work with non-HE organisations, or universities with which we don't have an agreement • No fixed deadline • Opportunity to go for a shorter period • Higher Erasmus+ grant rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of clarity about traineeship funding and how it can be used by PGR students • Student finds opportunity themselves (applies to us for funding)

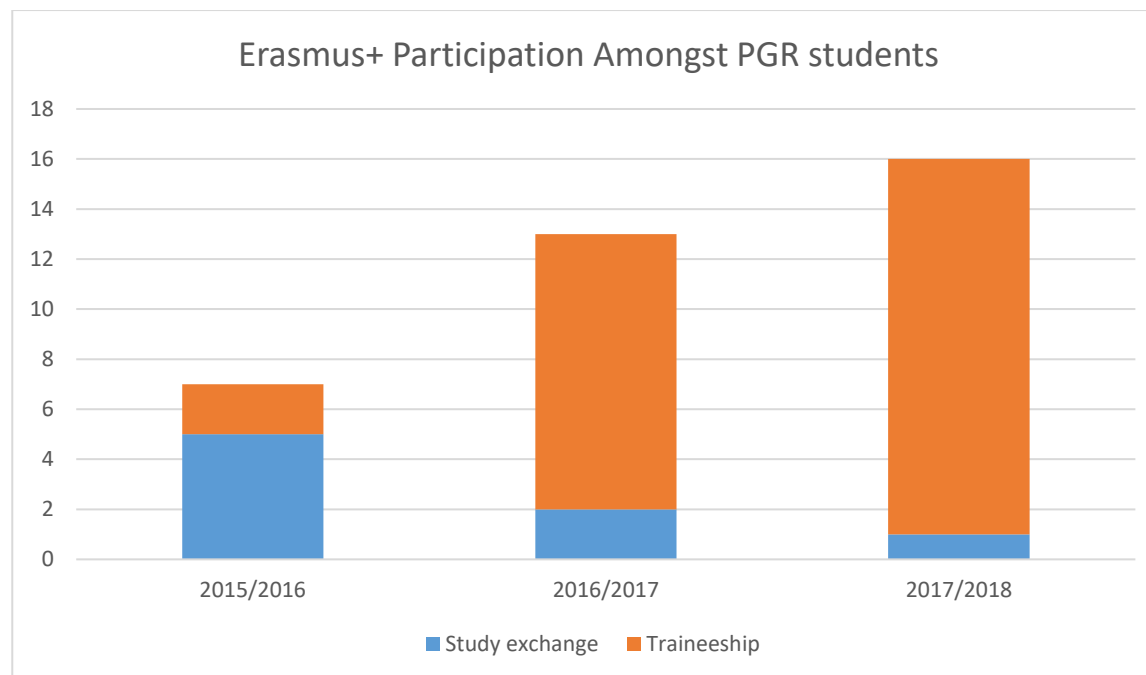
Scope

Our focus will be on the following:

	Target	Not in scope	Reason why not in scope
Participants	PGR students	PGT students	The short nature of PGT courses means a mobility period would need to be embedded into degree courses. Although this is a topic for future consideration, the complexity of doing this means it is not feasible within the life of our current Erasmus+ funding contract.
Destinations	Erasmus+ programme countries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU member states • FYR Macedonia • Iceland • Liechtenstein, • Norway • Turkey 	International exchange countries (outside of Europe)	Erasmus+ only covers the Erasmus+ programme countries (this includes providing grants to participating students, as well as resourcing costs). We would like to extend our ambitions to cover international exchange in the future. However, given the additional resource we will need to recruit and manage additional participants this is not possible at the moment.

Where we are now

The graph below shows participation of PGR students participating in Erasmus+ mobilities over the last three years:



As you can see, participation amongst PGR students is low, with numbers across both Erasmus+ strands standing at just 13 in 2017/18. However, when we consider that this has increased by 85% from 2015/16, it is clear to see that interest in international opportunities amongst this group does exist; particularly in the traineeship strand, which offers PGR students more flexibility in terms of destination, application timeline and duration of placement.

It is also interesting to note that 2015/16 was the year we first started specifically reaching out to PGR students via email, showing a clear correlation between increased participation and promotional activity.

Our aims

Our aim is to recruit 60 additional PGR students onto our Erasmus+ study and work programmes in the 2017/18 Erasmus+ cycle (which lasts 24 months, running from 1 June 2018 to 31 May 2020). We will do this by:

- Increasing promotional activities aimed specifically at PGR students and relevant staff
- Implementing a more flexible application timeline for PGR study exchange
- Encouraging PGR students to use Erasmus+ Traineeship funding to undertake research overseas
- Working with Schools and Colleges to increase the number of PGR places available through our Erasmus+ exchange agreements

Requested action

We would like the committee to consider ways in which it can help the Go Abroad team cascade information about these activities to the relevant audience, including (but not limited to):

- Students
- PhD supervisors
- Exchange coordinators
- Heads of School

We would welcome the committee's suggestions on dissemination methods to achieve maximum participation.

REC: 25.09.18

H/02/26/02

REC 18/19 1B

The University of Edinburgh

Senate Researcher Experience Committee

07 September 2018

Service Excellence, Student Administration & Support Update

Executive Summary

Dated 07 September 2018, 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 areas.

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

To note (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 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

Chris MacLeod

Student Administration & Support Programme Lead

07 September 2017

SEP 2018: UPDATE ON SERVICE EXCELLENCE (STUDENT ADMINISTRATION & SUPPORT)

The Student Administration & Support (SA&S) Programme Board last met on 20th August 2018 with a revised membership; 2 Heads of Schools (Professors Argyle and Kelly) and one former Head (Professor Foster) have joined the Board reflecting a desire for strengthened academic representation. The Board received the following updates:

- The recruitment of the following new team members:
 - Brian Butler (Programme Manager)
 - Tejesh Mistry (Implementation Lead)
 - Cat Cairns (Design Lead)
 - Chris MacLeod (Programme Lead)
- Presentation of a revised programme plan designed to be ambitious in its focus on pace and the realisation of benefits, while addressing concerns about deliverability and workload.
- Presentation of a “conceptual Target Operating Model” for Student Administration and Support as a whole. This is a model that identifies the structures, people, systems and processes that are required to deliver student administration and support activities at UoE in the future, with the aim of:
 - Simplifying access to support for students
 - Reducing the administrative burden on academic colleagues
 - Strengthening the professional development and career possibilities for professional services staff in Schools, Colleges and other areas whilst also reducing the volume of repetitive or redundant work carried out these colleagues due to poor systems, lack of data etc
 - Achieving greater efficiencies for the University overall.
- Presentation on the approach to be deployed in taking the “conceptual Target Operating Model” to the next stage
- Presentation on the status of projects currently in implementation (further information below)

The Board endorsed the following proposals:

- The recruitment of 1 x Grade 8 Design Lead and 3 x Grade 7 Service Excellence Partners – these are posts to be filled on a secondment basis by appropriate professional services staff from within the University, where possible.

Detailed Design - The programme is scheduled to run a range of workshops with key stakeholders during October, November and December in support of its detailed design phase. The focus of these workshops will be on: Programme and Course Information Management (PCIM), Academic Lifecycle, Post Graduate Research (PGR), Board of Examiners, Exam Operations, Course Selection and Student Finance.

Work is currently underway to identify subject matter experts within the University to assist the design team on PGR.

Implementation – the following projects are currently in implementation phase:

- Exam Timetabling - was launched as a new service in July 2018 introducing exam information directly in Office 365 calendars across 5,000 re-sit exams benefitting 2,500 students. The

second phase of the project is planned to roll-out across all exams from November. Further communications will support the wider launch in December 2018.

- Student Immigration Service – the new single service (bringing together teams currently split between Edinburgh Global and Student Administration) is expected to launch in November 2018 with the staff team having come together into the new office space by the end of October. Activities are being delivered to ensure that the service can launch in the best possible position including: website development, team building, introducing the UniDesk enquiry management system, review of existing procedures, staff recruitment and a communications plan.
- Comprehensive Student Timetabling – bringing together the bulk of timetabling activity in the Timetabling Unit to deliver comprehensive student timetables - is on track for launch in January 2019 with Trade Union consultation currently being carried out to review any impact on staff. Plans have been developed to support Schools and Deaneries in the coming months to implement local administration and coordination which is essential for the new Timetabling model to function effectively. Ongoing work is required to resolve the issue of NHS staff access to the new room booking system (in CMVM)
- Work and Study Away (WSA) - the new service taking on responsibility for administration of most working and studying away opportunities across the University (not just study abroad) is scheduled to be launched in March/April 2019. The staff impact assessment has been completed, and shows that significantly more staff are involved in administration of WSA than was previously thought. The HR process has been delayed to allow for the business case to be rebased. There are ongoing discussions about the continued role of academic staff in approving learning agreements. Procurement of the new WSA system has progressed to the scoring phase for prospective vendors.

Further information is available on the SA&S wiki: [SA&S Wiki](#)

REC: 25.09.18

H/02/26/02

REC 18/19 1C

The University of Edinburgh

Senate Researcher Experience Committee

25 September 2018

E-only submission of the final version of PhD theses

Executive Summary

Students undertaking Research Degrees are responsible for submitting their final version of their thesis in electronic form in addition to one hard bound copy. The Library and University Collections (L&UC) division of the Information Services Group (ISG) propose to remove the requirement for hard copy submission of the final version in the Academic Year 2020/21.

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

This paper aligns with the University's development theme of *Digital Transformation and Data* by driving digital transformation in our way of working.

Action requested

This paper is intended to inform REC about the intention to move to e-only submission and to solicit feedback on the initial proposals.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

If there is general agreement that this is the correct direction of travel then L&UC will begin planning systems development and guidance for implementation in 2020/21.

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

We have identified risks in the area of Knowledge Exchange which are highlighted in this paper.

3. Equality and Diversity

As the paper is for discussion an Equality Impact Assessment is not required at this stage. Going forwards any impact on Equality & Diversity will be considered.

4. Freedom of information

The paper is **open**.

Key words

PhD submission, e-only

Originator of the paper

Dr Theo Andrew, Library and University Collections,
September 2018

E-only submission of the final version of PhD theses

Background

At the end of the examination process all successful PhD and MPhil candidates are required to submit the final version of their thesis to the appropriate College Postgraduate Office. The final version of the thesis is sent to the Library for storage and to enable discovery and access for readers.

Prior to 2005 successful candidates submitted two hardbound copies to the University. One copy was held in the Main Library Special Collections for consultation (Thesis Section 1), and a second archival copy was securely held (Thesis Section 2).

In 2005, the Postgraduate Degree regulations were changed so that candidates starting in that year were obliged to submit one hardbound final version of their thesis, and one electronic copy on CD. Since 2008 the Library has received an estimated 7,000 final electronic copies of PhDs on CD. These electronic copies have been deposited in the Edinburgh Research Archive (ERA) and where appropriate made available to the general public via the Internet. Once the theses have been archived in ERA the CDs have been securely disposed.

From March 2017 the Library stopped asking for the electronic copy to be submitted on CD and moved to online submission of the PDF via the Thesis Module of the University's Current Research Information System (Pure). Since the switch to online submission around 1,100 Postgraduate Research theses have been deposited in Pure with very few problems reported from users. Electronic copies of theses deposited in Pure are transferred to the Edinburgh Research Archive, which is a better system for digital curation and preservation.

Currently the Library holds 26,000 theses and dissertations produced at the University of Edinburgh in ERA. Whilst the majority of these items are traditional PhD theses, the University's diverse thesis collection in ERA ranges from digitised Latin M.D. theses printed in 1739 through to born digital Portfolio of Compositions (with all its associated music and video files) produced for a Music PhD in 2018. The Edinburgh Research Archive is now in its 15th year of operation and the Library is confident of its longevity.

The proposal: Moving to e-only for PhD theses

The Library is considering requesting the removal of the requirement for Postgraduate Research students to submit one hardbound copy of the final version of their thesis and moving completely to electronic only in the Academic Year 2020/21. **No hardbound copies of PhD theses produced from 2020/21 onwards will be held by the Library.** The existing hardbound copies from preceding years will be held in storage as per the current practise and procedures.

Timescale

L&UC is developing a standards compliant system (Open Archival Information Systems, ISO 14721) for the accession, management and long term preservation of digital archives. This system will preserve both institutional archival records created by the University as part of its

core business (e.g. University Court records), and digital heritage collections, which have sufficient cultural and historical value. The University thesis collection will fit into this second category. This Digital Preservation Service is currently in development and we envisage that records held in ERA will be able to take advantage of the system in the Academic Year 2020/21.

Benefits

The main benefits we envisage moving to e-only would bring are:

1. to greatly simplify the submission process for all Postgraduate Research students,
2. to remove the costs associated with binding which are entirely borne by the student,
3. to reduce the significant invisible costs of storage which are borne by the institution.

Current students are required to submit the final hardbound copy at the relevant College Office, which means that someone is required to be there in-person to hand over the physical copy and other documentation. This is not normally a problem for students residing in Edinburgh; however, we have found that many international students may have left the U.K to return home between the period of completion of the viva examination and degree graduation. Submission of the final version can be problematic and ad hoc work-around solutions have to be found. Removing the requirement for a hardbound copy of the thesis will mean that final submission can be done virtually.

Hard binding prices start from £19 and includes the gold lettering on the spine. The cost of copying per side is £0.05 per mono print, and £0.40 per colour print. A small PhD thesis 150 pages in length with 20 pages of colour will cost £34.50. A larger double volume PhD thesis 400 pages in length with 40 pages of colour will cost nearly £70. Moving to e-only will remove the costs of producing one copy – although we recognise that students will produce more than one copy for supervisors etc.

Currently there are approximately 700 Postgraduate Research theses submitted to the Library each year. Assuming this figure does not change this equates to 15 linear metres of extra shelving need to be added each year. Commercial storage charges for archival material is £7.50/year per linear metre. This does not initially sound much, but as this is a compound charge incurred in perpetuity the costs soon add up:

Time	Shelf size (Metres)	Yearly cost (£)	Compound costing	Total cost (£)
Year 1	15	112.50	[Year 1]	£112.50
Year 10	150	1125.00	[Y1+Y2+....+Y10]	£6,187.50
Year 20	300	2250	[Y1+Y2+Y3+.....+Y19+Y20]	£23,625.00
Year 50	750	5625	[Y1+Y2+Y3+Y4+.....+Y48+Y49+Y50]	£143, 437.50

Risks

One of the benefits of looking after physical collections is that if the storage conditions have been adequately controlled then you can expect to find the books in 50 to 100 years time in a condition that you could pluck off a shelf and still read. The key risk of this proposal is that the digital files and metadata are not stored sufficiently well so that degradation occurs and the information is completely lost. Whilst we are confident in not losing digital information in the short to medium timescale of 10-15 years; as a memory institution we have to consider longer timescales greater than 100 years. There is currently a gap in the Library's ability to manage and preserve digital material over this kind of timescale. This is being addressed by the development of a Digital Preservation Service, which will put in place appropriate processes and systems to ensure these collections remain accessible and to ensure their integrity, authenticity and usability is not compromised. Until the Digital Preservation Service is running we cannot commit to an e-only strategy which is why we propose to start in the Academic Year 2020/21.

Questions for REC

1. Do you support the Library's proposal to remove the requirement for Postgraduate Research students to submit one hardbound copy of the final version of their thesis?

No hardbound copies of PhD theses produced from 2020/21 onwards will be held by the Library.

2. Can you think of any other concerns that the Library has not considered?

REC: 25.09.18

H/02/26/02

REC 18/19 1D

The University of Edinburgh

Senate Researcher Experience Committee

25 September 2018

Supervisor attendance at viva: benchmarking

Executive Summary

At the June 2018 meeting, the Committee requested that Academic Services carry out benchmarking with comparator institutions on supervisor attendance at the viva. This paper comprises the results of the benchmarking exercise, which showed that the current University regulation on supervisor attendance at the viva, contained within the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees, is broadly consistent with sector practice. The paper is intended to inform discussion on the current University of Edinburgh regulation. Any proposed changes to regulations will require approval from Curriculum and Student Progression Committee by March 2019.

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

The paper aligns with the University's Strategic Plan Objectives of Leadership in research.

Action requested

The Committee is invited to confirm whether it is content with current regulations on supervisor attendance at the viva.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

No action is associated with the paper, which is provided to stimulate discussion.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. Resource implications (including staffing)

Any resource associated with proposed amendments to regulations is provided by Academic Services as core business.

2. Risk assessment

No risk assessment is included in the paper, which is provided to stimulate discussion.

3. Equality and Diversity

As the paper does not propose any change to current policy, regulations or practices, an equality impact is not required at this stage.

4. Freedom of information

The paper is **open**.

Originator of the paper

Susan Hunter

Academic Services, 5 September 2018

Supervisor attendance at viva

Benchmarking

As requested by the June 2018 Research Experience Committee, Academic Services carried out desk-based research on supervisor attendance at the viva, on Russell Group university websites during July 2018. The research yielded 20 results obtained from:

Bristol, Cardiff, Durham, Exeter, Glasgow, Imperial, Kings, Leeds, Liverpool, London School of Economics, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Oxford, Queen Mary, Sheffield, Southampton, University College London, Warwick and York.

Benchmarking results

The results showed that the current University regulation on supervisor attendance at the viva, contained within the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees, is broadly consistent with sector practice.

“21.4 Supervisors may attend the oral examination, with consent of the student and examiners, but will not participate in or comment during the oral examination. Supervisors must leave the examination room with the student and do not participate in the examiners’ discussion and decision on recommendations.”

Supervisor attendance

All institutions, apart from one, make provision in their regulations for supervisor attendance at the viva. The University of Liverpool was the only instance where the regulations state that the supervisor must not attend the viva. Two other institutions state that supervisor attendance is exceptional and on request by the student. The majority of institutions (16) state that the supervisor may attend as a non-participant observer. There were seven institutions that allow the supervisor to answer questions when called up to do so by the Chair or examiners.

Inviting the supervisor

The approach to inviting supervisors to attend the viva varies. Some institutions always invite the supervisor to attend, while others provide for the student or examiners to invite the supervisor to attend. Eleven institutions specifically state that supervisor attendance must be with agreement from the student. Five institutions make provision for other members of the university community (for example a second supervisor or Head of School) to attend the viva, normally at the request of the student or with agreement from the student.

When the supervisor must leave the viva

Three institutions state that the supervisor must leave the viva with the student and one states the supervisor leaves before the student. Two institutions state that the examiners can ask the supervisor, or other observers, to leave if their presence may jeopardise the conduct of the viva.

Supervisor consultation by examiners

Four institutions state that the supervisor should be available for consultation during the viva (if not in attendance). One of those states that the supervisor will be consulted by the examiners, although it was not clear what the examiners would consult the supervisor about.

Action requested

The Committee is invited to confirm whether it is content with current regulations on supervisor attendance at the viva.

Susan Hunter

Academic Services, 5 September 2018

REC: 25.09.18

H/02/26/02

REC 18/19 1E

The University of Edinburgh

Senate Researcher Experience Committee

25 September 2018

PhD by Research Publication: Benchmarking

Executive Summary

In June 2018, the Committee requested that Academic Services carry out benchmarking with comparator institutions on PhD by Research Publications degree regulations. This paper comprises the results of the benchmarking exercise and is intended to inform discussion on the current University of Edinburgh regulations on PhD by Research Publications. Any suggested changes to regulations will need to be submitted for approval to Curriculum and Student Progression Committee by March 2019.

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

The paper aligns with the University's Strategic Plan Objectives of Leadership in learning and Leadership in research.

Action requested

The Committee is invited to consider whether further work is required to strengthen the current regulations on PhD by Research Publications.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

No action is associated with the paper, which is provided to stimulate discussion.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. Resource implications (including staffing)

Any resource associated with proposed amendments to regulations is provided by Academic Services core business.

2. Risk assessment

No risk assessment is included in the paper which is provided to stimulate discussion.

3. Equality and Diversity

As the paper does not propose any change to current policy, regulations or practices an equality impact is not required at this stage.

4. Freedom of information

The paper is **open**.

Originator of the paper

Susan Hunter

Academic Services, 5 September 2018

PhD by Research Publications

Benchmarking

Context

The PhD by Research Publications is intended as a route to achieving a PhD for active researchers who are graduates of the University or members of staff. It should not be confused with the option of including publications in a PhD thesis available to matriculated postgraduate research students.

Benchmarking results

As requested by the Committee at the June 2018 meeting, Academic Services conducted desk-based research on other institutions regulatory approach to the PhD by Research Publications. A review of Russell Group university websites and an email survey of the Academic Registrars' Council, during July 2018, yielded 19 results summarised below.

Results were obtained from:

Birmingham, Bristol, Central Lancashire, Cardiff, Glasgow, Hull York, Kingston, Lancaster, Newcastle, Nottingham, Nottingham Trent, Open University, Portsmouth, Queens Belfast, Sheffield, Sunderland, University College London, Warwick and York.

Eligibility

Of the 19 institutions who offer PhD by Published Work(s) or PhD by Publications:

- Five offer to staff only and seven offer to staff or graduates of the institution only (staff include honorary and former staff members)
- Two institutions stipulated that candidates must be graduates of any UK institution, and three stipulated that candidates must hold a 2:1 undergraduate degree as a minimum.

Of the institutions that stipulated a timeframe for holding a degree or being a member of staff, the most common was "of three years standing" in five institutions (two occurrences of "six years standing" and two occurrences of "five years standing") and only one institution stipulated different timeframes for staff and graduate candidates.

Current University of Edinburgh (UoE) regulations state that, "Applicants must be either graduates of the University of Edinburgh of at least five years' standing; or members of staff of the University of Edinburgh or of an Associated Institution of not less than three years' standing." (Postgraduate Degree Regulations)

Application process

Most institutions (13) had an application or prima facie stage before accepting candidates. The range of material required at application stage varied but generally included at least a list of publications (either to be submitted for the degree or complete list of all the candidate's publications), a synopsis or summary, and a CV. Some institutions defined specific responsibilities for considering the prima facie stage and some outlined their process in detail within their regulations or guidance.

Current UoE regulations state that, “Applicants must apply to the relevant College for approval of their candidature. Applicants are required to submit their published work, together with a 500-word abstract, their CV and a self-critical review of all their submitted work.” (Postgraduate Degree Regulations)

Definition of published work and number of publications for submission

Some institutions define “published work”, for example as being in the public domain, peer-reviewed, or published by a reputable academic publisher. There were also some that stipulated the timescale in which publications could be considered, for example published within three to six years, or during the period of employment. No regulations were found that stipulated the number of publications that could be submitted. As noted above, some institutions dealt with this by stipulating a timescale within which publications were eligible for submission. One institution gave guidance on expectations of between three and eight publications being included in the submission.

Current UoE regulations state that, “Applicants must have been active postgraduate researchers in their field of expertise for a minimum of five years, and they must not submit material published more than ten years prior to the date of registration.”

“The portfolio of published work must consist of either one or two books or at least six refereed journal articles or research papers, which are already in the public domain. The total submission, including the critical review should not exceed 100,000 words.”

(Postgraduate Degree Regulations)

Registration

In all cases, once accepted, candidates have an academic advisor appointed to them by the institution. Submission is within 12 months of registration in the majority of institutions.

Current UoE regulations state that, “If College approves registration, it will appoint an adviser to assist the applicant with the format of their submission and to guide them on the selection, coherence and quality of the portfolio of research work, the abstract and critical review.” (Postgraduate Degree Regulations)

Current UoE regulations do not state a specific maximum submission time for PhD by Research Publications. [2004/05 General Postgraduate Degree Regulations 49.8 Candidates must submit between three and twelve months from commencement of registration.]

Submissions

The range of material required for submission for assessment varied by institution. However, as a minimum, the majority of institutions require submission of the published or creative works to be assessed and a critical review, commentary or essay. The expected average length for the critical review, commentary or essay was around 10,000 words.

Current UoE regulations state that, “The portfolio of published work must consist of either one or two books or at least six refereed journal articles or research papers, which are already in the public domain. The total submission, including the critical review should not exceed 100,000 words. ... The critical review must be at least 10,000 words, but not more than 25,000 words in length.” (Postgraduate Degree Regulations)

Assessment criteria

The criteria institutions most often stated for the award of the degree were:

- That the submission makes a substantial and original contribution and addition to knowledge in the field.
- That the submission shows evidence of independent critical judgment and original research.
- That the submission presents a coherent understanding of knowledge in the field (for example relevant literature or techniques).

Current UoE regulations state that, “The portfolio submitted for the PhD by Research Publications must demonstrate a substantial and coherent body of work which would have taken the equivalent of three years of full-time study to accomplish. The portfolio must demonstrate original research and make a significant contribution to knowledge or understanding in the field of study, and is presented in a critical and scholarly way.”
(Postgraduate Degree Regulations)

Assessment

All institutions operate a two stage assessment process with a preliminary assessment by the examiners followed by an oral examination. This is consistent with current UoE Postgraduate Degree Regulations.

Examiner recommendations

Recommendations available to examiners also varied by institution. The majority of institutions (14) provide for outcomes of: pass, corrections to critical review, no award. Five institutions allow the award of a different degree, for example MPhil; four institutions permit an amended or alternative selection of publications to be resubmitted and four permit retaking the oral examination. Three institutions permit all the same examiner recommendations for PhD by Publications that are available to standard PhD theses.

Current UoE regulations stipulate specific examiner recommendations for PhD by Research Publications:

- Award PhD/Doctorate
- Minor corrections
- Additional oral examination needed
- Additional work on thesis – no oral examination needed
- Substantial work on thesis and oral re-examination needed – resubmit for PhD by Research Publications
- Fail.

(Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees)

Action requested

The Committee is invited consider whether further work is required to strengthen the current regulations on PhD by Research Publications.

Susan Hunter

Academic Services, 5 September 2018

The University of Edinburgh

Senate Researcher Experience Committee

25 September 2018

Thesis Assessment Criteria

Executive Summary

During the review of the Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students in 2017/18, some minor inconsistencies emerged between the wording in the regulations and Code of Practice relating to thesis assessment criteria for PhD and MPhil award. The wording on thesis requirements for inclusion in the Code of Practice was agreed by Conveners' action in July 2018. The regulations on thesis assessment include the Postgraduate Degree Regulations and Postgraduate Assessment Regulations. There is minor inconsistency between the regulations and the questions on the examiner report forms. The paper proposes that Academic Services review the relevant regulations and examiner report forms to ensure consistency.

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

The paper aligns with the University's Strategic Plan Objectives of Leadership in learning and Leadership in research.

Action requested

The Committee is invited to consider the proposal that Academic Services review the relevant regulations and examiner report forms to ensure consistency.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

Any action associated with changes to regulations will be progressed by Academic Services and communicated in the annual communication on updated policies and regulations.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. Resource implications (including staffing)

Any resource associated with proposed amendments to regulations is provided through Academic Services core business.

2. Risk assessment

No risk assessment is included in the paper, however there may be some risk to thesis assessment if the relevant regulations are not consistent.

3. Equality and Diversity

As the paper does not propose any change to current policy, regulations or practices, an equality impact assessment is not required at this stage.

4. Freedom of information

The paper is **open**.

Originator of the paper

Susan Hunter

Academic Services, 13 September 2018

Thesis assessment criteria

Postgraduate Degree Regulations

Below are extracts from the regulations relevant to thesis assessment criteria for PhD and MPhil award.

“Grounds for the Award of Doctoral and MPhil Research Degrees

Demonstration by Thesis and Oral Exam for the Award of PhD

42. The student must have demonstrated by the presentation of a thesis and/or portfolio, which presents a coherent body of work, and by performance at an oral examination that the student is capable of pursuing original research making a significant contribution to knowledge or understanding in the field of study, relating particular research projects to the general body of knowledge in the field, and presenting the results of the research in a critical and scholarly way.

“MPhil by Research

45. The thesis must not exceed a maximum of 60,000 words. There is no minimum word count. The student must have demonstrated by the presentation of a thesis and/or portfolio containing a significant amount of material worthy of publication or public presentation, and by performance at an oral examination, that the student is capable of pursuing original research making a significant contribution to knowledge or understanding in the field of study, relating particular research projects to the general body of knowledge in the field, and presenting the results of the research in a critical and scholarly way.”

Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students

The content for the “Thesis requirements” section of the Code of Practice was agreed by Researcher Experience Committee Conveners’ action in July 2018.

“Thesis requirements

The criteria for the award of research degrees as set out in the Postgraduate Degree Regulations or otherwise agreed by the Senate Researcher Experience Committee are that the thesis must:

- Be the student’s own work, except where indicated throughout the thesis and summarised clearly on the declarations page of the thesis, and must not have been presented for any other degree except as specified on the declarations page.
- Present a coherent body of work.
- Make an original and significant contribution to knowledge in the field of study.
- Relate particular research projects to the general body of knowledge in the field and show adequate knowledge of relevant literature.
- Demonstrate critical judgement of the candidate’s own work and that of other scholars in the field.
- Present the results of the research in a critical and scholarly way.
- Make clear the intentions of the work, its background, methods and conclusions.
- Contain material worthy of publication.
- Demonstrate that any publications included in the thesis are the students own work, except where indicated throughout the thesis and summarised clearly on the declarations page.

“The thesis should be written to:

- Be satisfactory in its literary presentation.
- Provide a coherent structure with full and adequate references.
- Be understandable to a scholar in the same field.
- Be presented in a clear, consistent and accessible format.”

Action requested

The Committee is invited to consider the proposal that Academic Services review the relevant regulations and examiner report forms to ensure consistency. If agreed, Academic Services will provide a draft proposal for consideration by the next Committee meeting before seeking approval from Curriculum and Student Progression Committee for any changes to the regulations. It is not anticipated that any changes will be substantive or indicate changes to current policy or practice.

Susan Hunter

Academic Services, 13 September 2018

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Researcher Experience Committee

25 September 2018

Senate Committee input into 2019-22 Planning Round

Executive Summary

The paper summarises out how the planning round for 2019-22 will operate, and how the Senate Committees will be able to input into it. The paper also seeks the Committees' views on some initial thoughts on priorities for the student experience, learning and teaching, which we are asking Schools, Colleges and support groups to engage with during 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 discuss some initial thoughts on priorities for student experience, learning and teaching for the planning round.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

Section 1 explains the arrangements.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. Resource implications (including staffing)

Yes. The paper will assist the University to use its resources strategically.

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

Senate Committee input into 2019-22 Planning Round

1 Overview of 2019-22 planning cycle

- In August / September 2018, the Senate Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) identified key strategic themes in Schools' annual quality reports and in Teaching Programme Reviews (TPRs) and Postgraduate Programme Reviews (PPRs) held in 2017-18;
- At their meetings in September 2018, the Senate Committees will have an initial opportunity to identify student experience, learning and teaching issues that Schools / Colleges / support groups should take account of in the planning round;
- In autumn 2018 (exact timelines to be determined by University Executive), Governance and Strategic Planning will circulate to Schools / Colleges / support groups an initial indication of the strategic planning round priorities;
- At their meetings in November 2018, the Senate Committees will have a full discussion of issues that should be taken account of in the planning round, including identifying:
 - 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;
 - Changes that the Committee 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 late 2018 / early 2019 (exact timelines to be determined by University Executive), Governance and Strategic Planning will publish the detailed planning guidance.
- In Semester Two, the Committees will undertake a broader discussion of their priorities for the coming session – and will submit their plans to the 29 May 2019 Senate meeting for approval.

2 Reference points for identifying student experience, learning and teaching issues for the 2019-22 planning round

Key reference points when identifying issues for the planning round include:

- The results of the 2018 National Student Survey and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey and the 2017 Postgraduate Research Experience Survey
- The most recent Career Destination data (relating to 2016-17 graduates)
- The University's Learning and Teaching Strategy:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/learning_teaching_strategy.pdf
- The strategic themes identified in Schools' quality reports, and in TPRs and PPRs held in 2017-18 (see Annex)
- The student experience action plan under development by the Principal's Direct Reports Group for agreement by the University Executive

3 Initial thoughts on priorities for student experience, learning and teaching that Colleges, Schools and support groups should engage with during the planning round

Taking account of these reference points, and initial discussions at the Principal's Direct Reports Group, the Senior Vice-Principal has suggested the following as an initial statement of priorities for student experience, learning and teaching. The expectation is that these will be addressed explicitly in College Plans (and that Colleges will in turn require them to be addressed in the School-Level planning discussions that inform College Plans) and in Support Group Plans (and similarly in internal Support Group planning discussions).

- Enhancing the sense of shared community linking academic staff and students, and developing more effective ways of listening and responding to students' views;
- Keeping a tight focus on improving the timeliness and quality of feedback on assessment in the light of disappointing National Student Survey results;
- Recognising and rewarding excellence in teaching and learning and ensuring that all teaching staff have meaningful conversations about teaching and other student experience themes in their annual reviews, while engaging with consultation regarding the Principles that should underpin the University's future approach to these issues;
- Ensuring all Schools recruit, support and develop their tutors and demonstrators in line with the University's Policy;
- Respond to insights from the University's first staff survey regarding the staff experience in relation to student experience, learning and teaching.

4 For discussion

The Committee is **invited to discuss** these initial ideas for priorities for student experience, learning and teaching, and to suggest any other priorities to take into account in the planning round. The Committee will then have a more substantive opportunity to input into the planning round in November 2018.

5 Process for seeking resources for major developments

If the Senate Committees identify any major developments with implications for the Colleges or support groups, the Senior Vice-Principal will invite the relevant College or support group to consider including a bid for this in their planning round submissions.

Annex: Key themes identified in Schools' quality reports, and in TPRs and PPRs held in 2017-18**Student support**

Recommendations from teaching/postgraduate programme reviews (T/PPRs) identified the need to build academic communities, extend peer mentoring, support student transition and clarify expectations of the Personal Tutor system. Student feedback on satisfaction with the Personal Tutor system has dropped across a large number of Schools. In response, Schools are carefully considering the reasons for this and have planned actions. However, no strong sense of why satisfaction has dropped has been identified and a need to think more fundamentally about the Personal Tutor system is recognised.

Learning and teaching accommodation

Schools are continuing to identify challenges with accessing suitable learning and teaching accommodation. Comments in School annual quality reports primarily related the lack of availability of large lecture theatres and classrooms to accommodate growing student cohorts. T/PPR recommendations primarily related to the provision of study and social space for students, noting the importance of students establishing and maintaining a sense of identity with their School.

Pressure on staff time/resourcing

As student numbers increase, staff identified challenges with, for example, effectively delivering the Personal Tutor system, providing quality feedback to students on assessments within the required timescales, and providing effective supervision for dissertations. Recommendations from T/PPRs related to the resourcing of programmes and courses should student numbers expand, investing in teaching to allow for forward planning, and rewarding and recognising teaching.

Supporting and developing academic staff, including postgraduate tutors and demonstrators.

T/PPR recommendations focussed around career development, training and support, with a particular reference to training and support to ensure the effective use of virtual learning environments.

REC: 25.09.18

H/02/26/02

REC 18/19 1H

The University of Edinburgh

Senate Researcher Experience Committee

25 September 2018

Annual review of effectiveness of Senate Committees

Executive Summary

As part of the annual review of the Senate Committees, members of the four Senate Committees were asked to complete a questionnaire over the summer 2018. The questionnaire sought to gauge the effectiveness of the composition, support, engagement and impact of the Senate Committees. The results of the questionnaire are summarised in the attached paper, along with some suggestions for addressing some specific issues.

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

This paper aligns with the University strategic objective of leadership in learning.

Action requested

The Committee is invited to discuss the outcome of the questionnaire and consider whether it wishes to recommend any changes to its operation.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

The summary of the annual review will feed in to the externally-facilitated review of Senate and its committees conducted in 2018/19.

The report from the externally-facilitated review will be communicated to the Senate Committees in early 2019/20.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. Resource implications (including staffing)

If the Committee wishes to identify any changes to its operation as a result of the questionnaire, Academic Services will review the resource implications of implementing them.

2. Risk assessment

The paper will assist the University in ensuring that its academic governance arrangements are effective and will enable the University to manage a range of risks associated with its academic provision.

3. Equality and Diversity

The results of the questionnaire highlighted the need for equality and diversity of the committee membership to be addressed. This issue should be considered by the Committee when considering action to take after discussing the results.

4. Freedom of information

Open

Key words

Governance, committees

Originator of the paper

Tom Ward, Director of Academic Services

Theresa Sheppard, Academic Policy Officer, September 2018

Annual review of effectiveness of Senate Committees

1. Background

The 2017 version of the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance states that institutions are expected to review the effectiveness of their Senate and its committees annually and to hold an externally-facilitated review every five years:

“49. The governing body is expected to review its own effectiveness each year and to undertake an externally facilitated evaluation of its own effectiveness and that of its committees, including size and composition of membership, at least every five years. As part of these processes or separately, the effectiveness of the academic board (also known as Senate, Senatus Academicus or academic council) is expected to be reviewed similarly. These reviews should be reported upon appropriately within the Institution and outside. Externally facilitated reviews should be held following any period of exceptional change or upheaval (allowing suitable time to see the effects of changes made), the usual timetable for externally facilitated review being brought forward if necessary in these circumstances.”

In line with the requirements of the Code, Academic Services conducted an annual review of Senate and its committees over the summer 2018.

An email was sent to all Senate Committee members which included a link to an online questionnaire. The questionnaire invited participants to indicate their opinion of the effectiveness of the composition, support, engagement and impact of the Senate Committees. 25 committee members responded in total (around 45 per cent of the overall membership).

The Committee is invited to discuss the findings of the questionnaire and to consider whether to recommend any changes in practice, taking account of the suggestions set out below.

The University is planning to undertake an externally-facilitated review of Senate and its committees during 2018-19 and the results of the questionnaire, including follow-up discussion by committees, will be submitted to the external facilitator as part of the review documentation. While it was originally planned for the results of this questionnaire to be submitted to Senate in October, it is now recommended that they be considered by Senate members at a later stage within the context of the report on the externally-facilitated review.

2. Key issues

Senate Committee members were asked to indicate their level of support for a series of statements about the operation of the committees, and these statements were grouped together by a common theme. The responses of committee members to these statements are summarised in Section 3.

Free text boxes gave committee members the opportunity to comment in detail about the issues and to make suggestions. The main themes to emerge from these comments are summarised in Section 4.

Overall, the results of the questionnaire showed patterns emerging which were broadly consistent for all four committees, which is why the results are summarised as a group, rather than having been divided up by committee (which would involve attempting to analyse very small data).

The questionnaire included a set of demographic questions which were analysed in relation to the responses; the sample was too small to draw any meaningful conclusions, however.

Overall, the results of the questionnaire indicated that members were satisfied with a range of aspects relating to the operation of their committee.

While the key themes are set out in detail below, the Committee is invited to discuss the following principal issues to emerge from the results:

a) Place of the Committees within the overall governance of the University

Several committee members indicated that they were unsure of how their committee's remit related to governance structures in Schools and Colleges, with a request for clarity around the links between the committee structures (see Section 4.1).

This issue will be highlighted at the externally-facilitated review of Senate in Semester 1, which will examine the place of Senate and its Committees within the University's overall governance structure. Furthermore, Colleges could be asked to demonstrate how their committee structures link to the Senate Committees.

b) The need for Committees to manage implementation of decisions and evaluate their impact

Comments suggested that it was challenging for committees to manage the implementation of decisions and evaluate their impact, particularly given the size and structure of the University (see Section 4.2). Suggestions for improvement in this area included better communication with Heads of Schools, and fewer items on the University-wide agenda, which would allow committees to focus in depth on specific issues.

All Task Group reports and proposals for Senate Committees are obliged to include an implementation plan, which is a component of the standard cover sheet for committee papers. In addition, the Committees do routinely evaluate the impact of significant changes. However, implementation planning and evaluation could be strengthened, and Academic Services will emphasise the importance of this to Task Groups for the forthcoming year.

c) Volume of papers and agenda items

Several respondents observed that there was a high volume of papers to read for the committee meetings, which was a barrier to meaningful participation (see Section 4.3); comments in this regard related in particular to Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CSPC).

The nature of some types of committee business can in some circumstances necessitate long and detailed papers, and the nature of CSPC's work can lead to particularly long Committee documentation. While the guidance for committee members on producing papers emphasises the importance of succinct papers, Academic Services will continue to emphasise the importance of this when engaging with authors of papers.

d) Induction of new members

Some responses highlighted the need for inductions for new members, which would inform them of their responsibilities (see Section 4.4).

Members of the four committees are offered an induction on an annual basis, and the members' handbook is also made available. Further suggestions for effective ways of informing members of their responsibilities are welcomed.

e) Equality and Diversity issues

Responses indicated that, while members felt that committee membership was as diverse as it could be given the need to include specific roles and expertise on the Committee, more could be done to ensure diversity in membership (see Section 4.6).

The composition of the Senate Committees is largely determined according to defined role-holders (e.g. defined Assistant or Vice-Principals, Director of a defined support service or

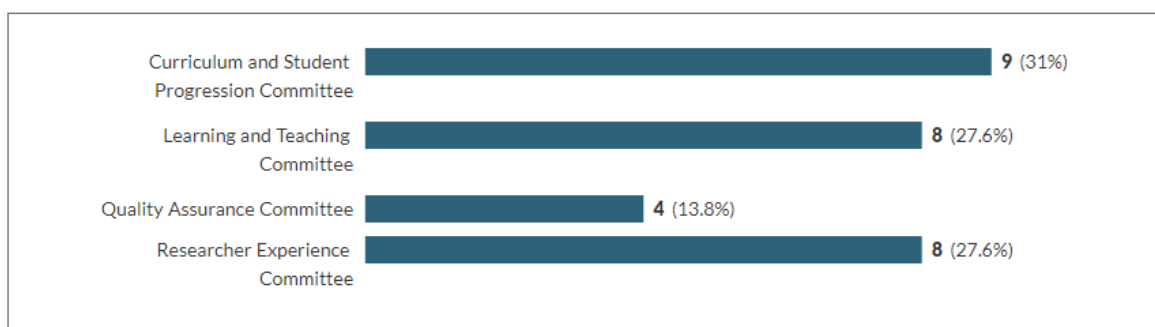
delegate) or as representative of a particular stakeholder (e.g. a College or the Students' Association). The membership of these committees is therefore largely a consequence of decisions made elsewhere to appoint individuals to particular roles.

In practice, in recent years all the Committees have had a gender balance broadly in line with the relevant population (when the inevitable volatility associated with small populations is taken into account). It is less clear whether the committee membership is representative in terms, for example, of ethnicity or disability, since Academic Services does not hold data on these characteristics of its committee members. The Committee may wish to consider whether Academic Services should collect this information in the future. While it is useful to understand the diversity of the committee member population, there would be limited actions open to us on the basis of this information, in view of numbers of ex officio members on committees. The need for a diverse range of demographics could be taken into consideration when appointing co-opted members, however.

3. Summary of quantitative responses

The following shows the response levels by committee:

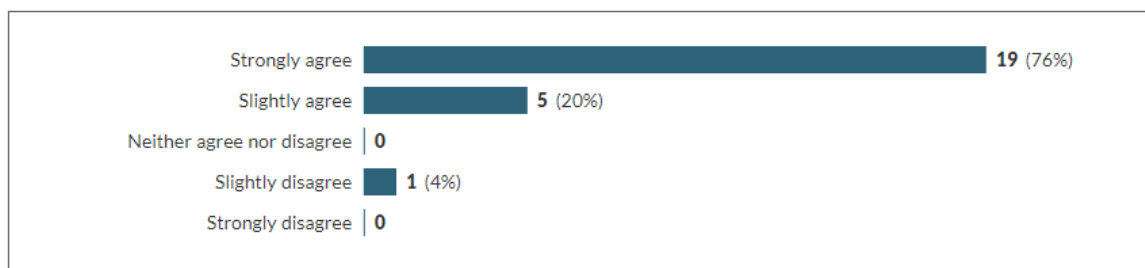
1 Please indicate the Senate Committee(s) of which you are a member



Remit and Governance

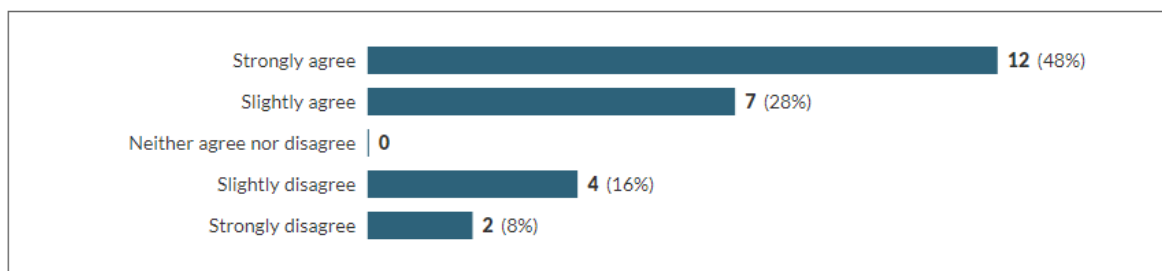
The majority of respondents (96 per cent) indicated that they were clear about their committee's remit.

2.1 I am clear about the Committee's remit

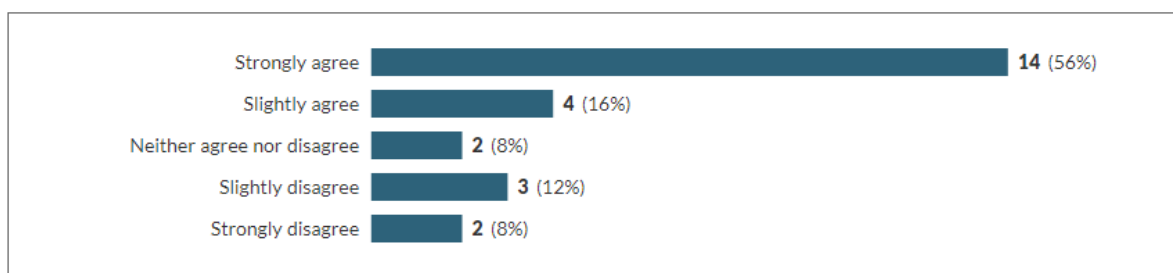


While the majority of respondents was aware of how their committee fitted into the overall governance structures of the University, (Senate and Court, and Schools and Colleges) several indicated that this was not the case:

2.2 I am aware of how the Committee reports to Senate and Court

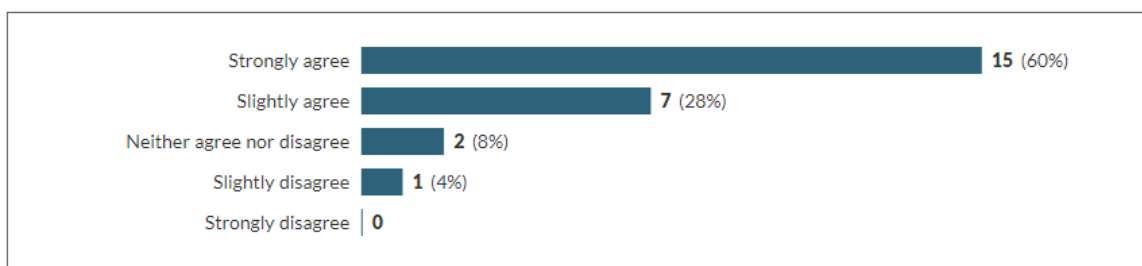


2.3 I am aware of how the Committee's remit relates to governance structures in Schools and Colleges

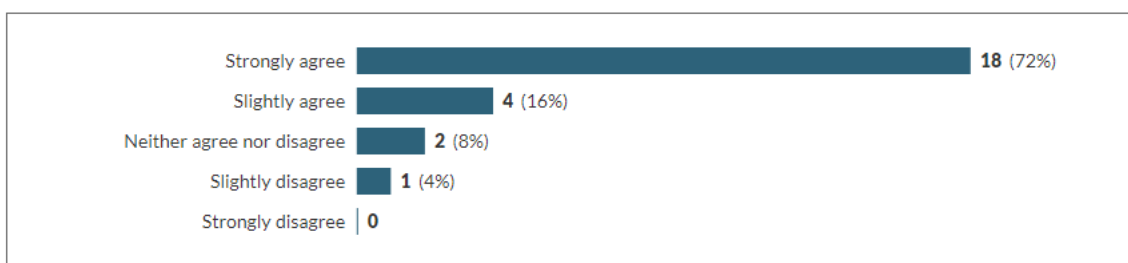


The majority of respondents thought that their committee handled its business effectively, was flexible enough to adapt to changes in priorities, and used Task Groups effectively:

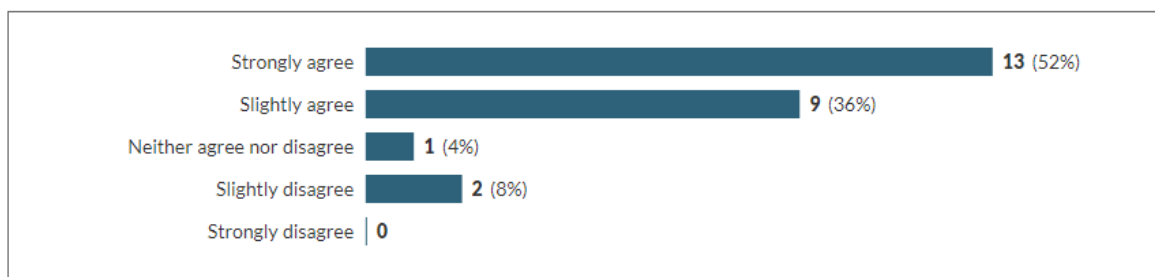
2.4 The Committee manages its business effectively



2.5 The Committee is flexible enough to adapt to changes in priorities

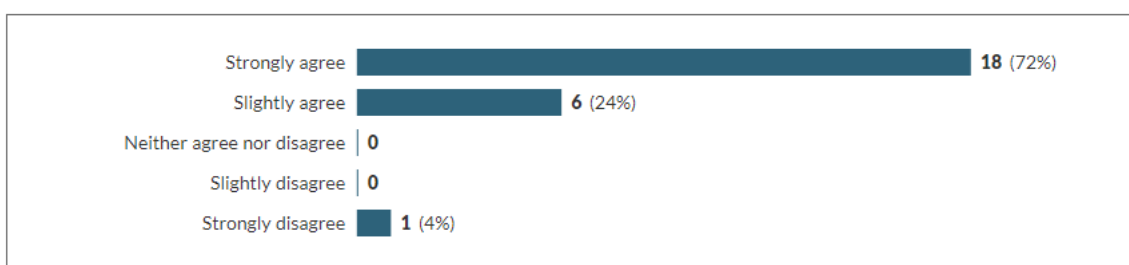


2.6 The Committee uses Task Groups effectively

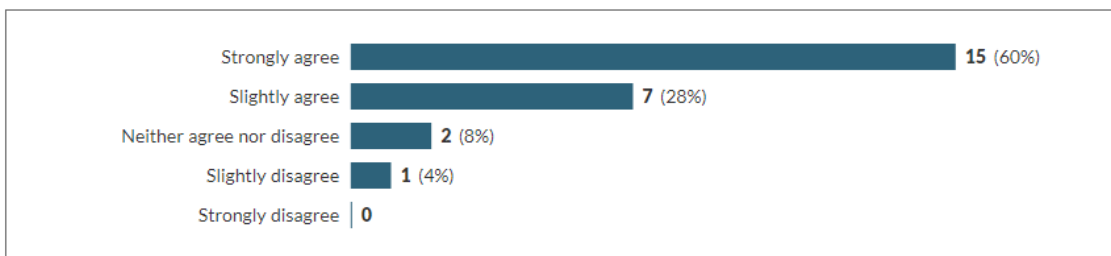
*Responsibilities and Participation of Committee Members*

The majority of respondents (96 per cent) felt that they were clear about what their responsibilities were as members, and the majority (88 per cent) indicated that they participated fully in committee business:

3.1 I am clear what my responsibilities are as a Committee member

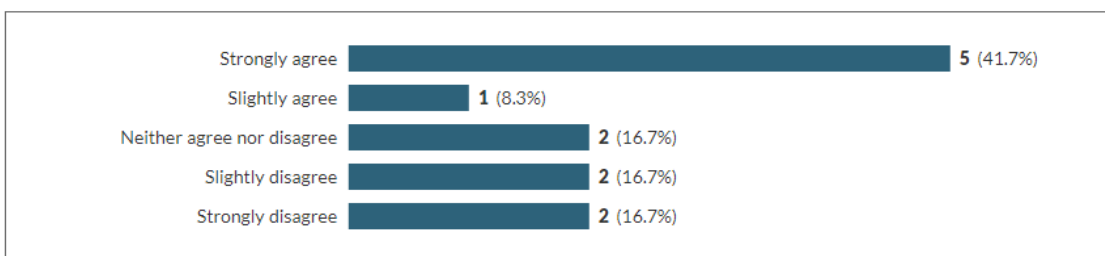


3.2 Members participate fully in Committee business



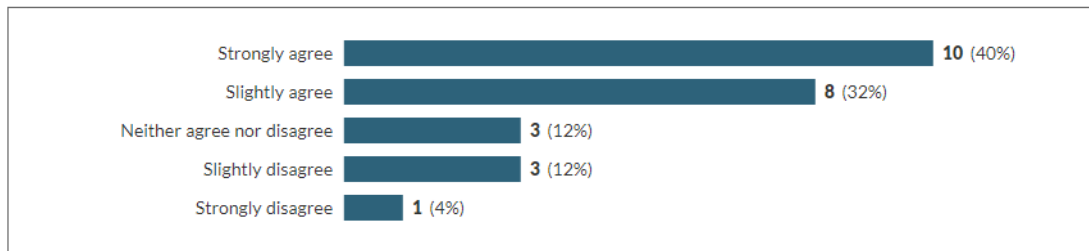
Members who were new in 2017/18 were asked if they were happy with the induction they received and responses were varied:

3.3 (For new members in 2017/18) I am happy with the induction I was given to the Committee and its business

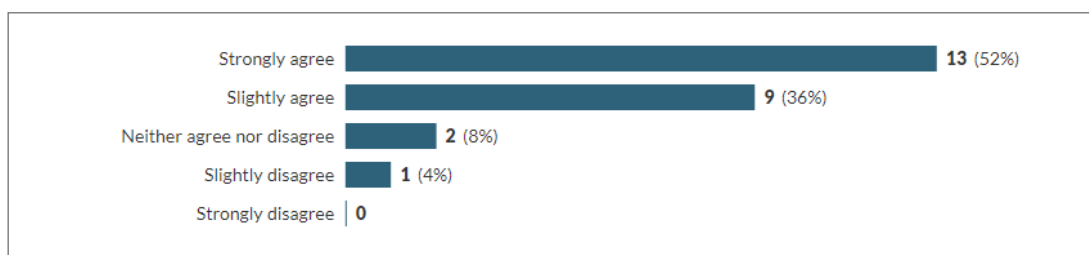
*Composition and Support of the Committees*

The majority of respondents indicated that the current composition of their committee enabled it to fulfil its remit, that the size of the committee was appropriate in order for it to operate effectively, and that committee operations were supported effectively.

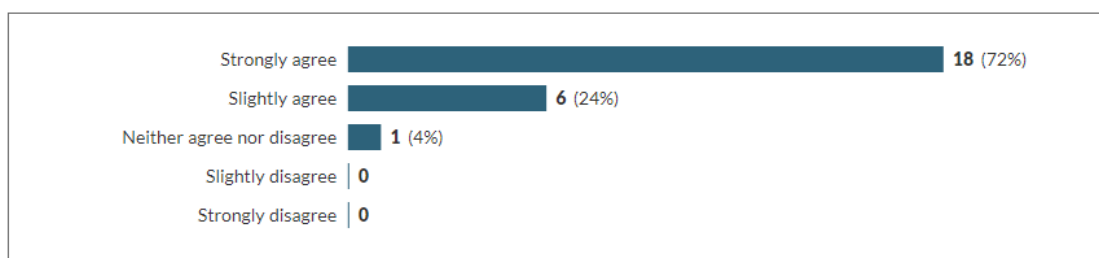
4.1 The current composition of the Committee enables it to fulfil its remit



4.2 The size of the Committee is appropriate in order for it to operate effectively

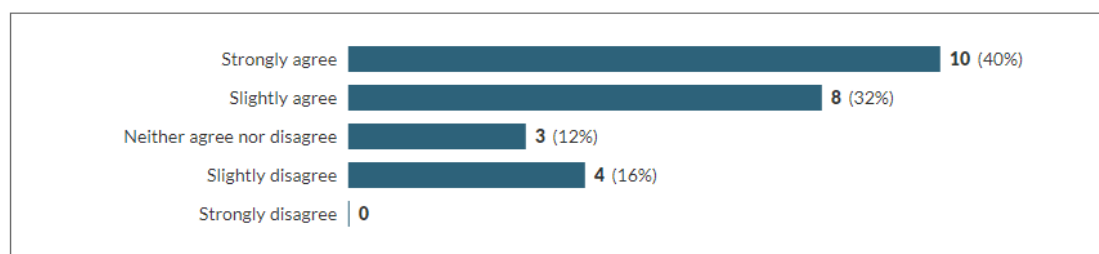


4.3 The Committee operations are supported effectively



While most of the respondents agreed that the volume and format of committee papers enabled them to make decisions, opinions were more divided on this subject:

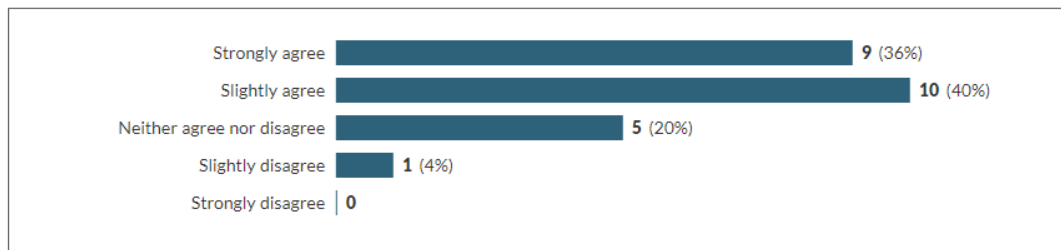
4.4 The volume and format of Committee papers enable me to make decisions



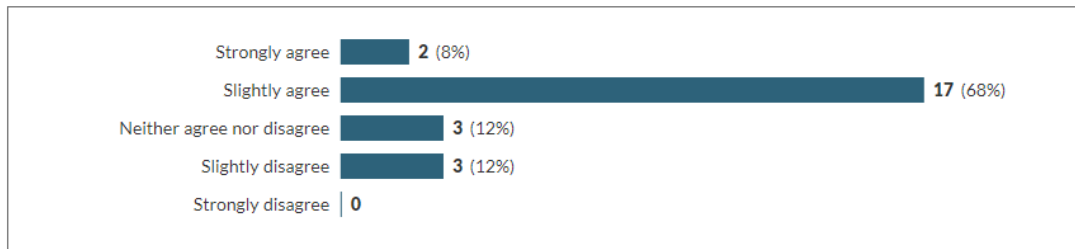
Engagement and Impact

While respondents mostly agreed that their committee engaged and communicated effectively with stakeholders, made adequate plans to ensure that its decisions were implemented effectively, and evaluated the impact of its decisions, the responses indicated that there was room for improvement in this area.

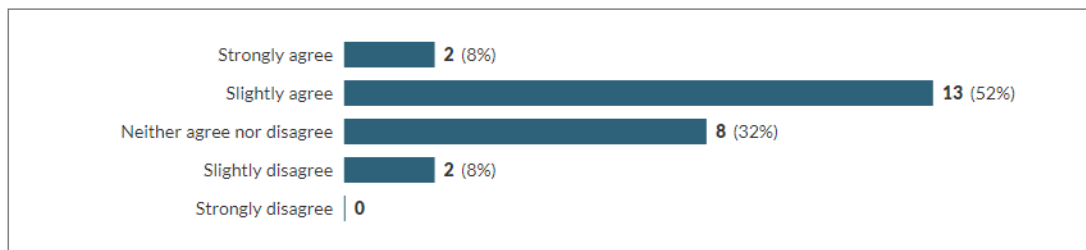
5.1 The Committee engages and communicates effectively with stakeholders, such as Schools, Colleges and the Students' Association



5.2 The Committee makes adequate plans to ensure that its decisions are implemented effectively



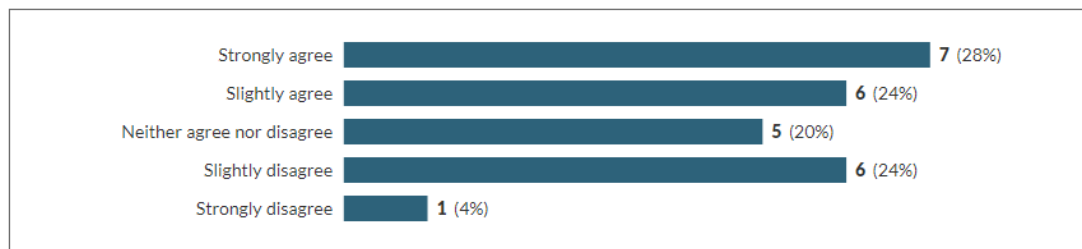
5.3 The Committee always evaluates the impact of its decisions



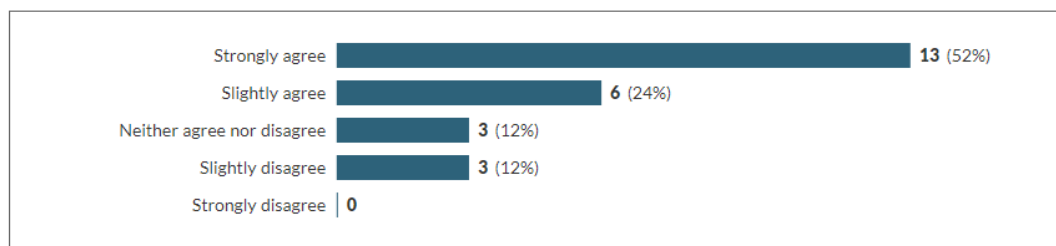
Equality and Diversity

Opinion was divided among respondents as to whether the composition of the Committee was suitably representative of the diverse University population, while the majority was satisfied that equality and diversity considerations were adequately addressed when discussing committee business.

6.1 The composition of Committee members is suitably representative of the diverse University population



6.2 I am satisfied that equality and diversity considerations are adequately addressed when discussing Committee business



4. Summary of free text comments

4.1 *Place of the Committees within the University's governance structure*

Comments around the place of the committees within the University's overall governance structure demonstrated uncertainty around the link between the Committee and School/College governance infrastructure (from 20 per cent of respondents). A particular issue highlighted was the challenge in aligning School/College committees with the central governance apparatus; it was observed that there was no clear link between central university governance and Schools/College, with one member noting that CSPC was not mirrored at School/College level, meaning that consultation and dissemination of information were a challenge. A request was made for clarity around how the Senate Committees mapped on to School/College committees.

4.2 *Communications and implementation of committee business*

Members' comments around the communications of the Committees indicate that it is not always clear to members how committee decisions are converted into practice, with the size of the University being mentioned as a barrier to communication of decisions. 12 per cent of respondents disagreed that their committee made adequate plans to implement its decisions. 32 per cent neither agreed nor disagreed that the committee always evaluated the impact of its decisions, with 8 per cent disagreeing with this. Observations were made that the committees had little power to ensure that decisions were implemented and that a receptive culture was required in Schools and Colleges in order for committee decisions to be effective.

Suggestions which were made with regard to communication and implementation included better evaluation of committee activity, with one response suggesting having fewer items on the University-wide agenda, meaning that more attention could be given to implementation and evaluation of individual initiatives. Greater focus on communication with Heads of Schools, which would allow messages to cascade to colleagues, was also mentioned.

4.3 *Participation in committee business*

Several members indicated that the volume of the committee papers and number of items on the agenda made engagement with business, and consideration of issues in depth, challenging (this was raised in particular by members of CSPC), with 16 per cent of respondents disagreeing that the volume and format of committee papers enabled them to make decisions. The suggestion was made that the agenda could be prioritised, to ensure that the most important issues were raised in the meeting, and that a comfort break be included. One member of QAC suggested that subgroups of readers could be employed for certain items of business. It was also noted that student committee members may not always feel comfortable in challenging ideas in the committee forum.

4.4 *Induction of new members*

Some members reported that they had not received an induction (33 per cent), and other comments indicated that induction sessions for new members were helpful.

It was suggested that a summary of the responsibilities of members would be a useful resource for new members, to ensure that they understood the operation of the committee and how they were to represent their constituents.

4.5 *Membership of committees*

With regard to the composition of the Committees, a member of CSPC suggested that it would be useful to have more Heads of School members, while a member of REC highlighted the need for sustained involvement by post-doctoral researchers.

It was also suggested that committee membership should be reviewed to ensure that it was enabling the remit to be fulfilled, and that joint sessions or workshops between committees would be helpful when considering overlapping issues.

4.6 *Equality and Diversity*

While the responses demonstrated that equality and diversity was adequately considered when discussing committee business, comments indicated that the membership composition should be monitored to ensure that a range of protected characteristic voices was included.

Opinions about whether the membership was suitably representative of the diverse University population were more divided (28 per cent of respondents disagreed that the composition of committee members was suitably representative of the diverse University population). Comments implied that the membership was as diverse as it could be in view of the need to include specific roles, while acknowledging that more could be done to improve diversity.

With regard to committee discussion, one member felt that more could be done to ensure that decisions were taken which took account of differing student perspectives, while it was also suggested that there could be greater representation of students on the committees.

REC: 25.09.18
H/02/26/02

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The University of Edinburgh

Senate Researcher Experience Committee

25 September 2018

Edinburgh University Students' Association Priorities 2018-19

Executive Summary

This paper provides an introduction to the Students' Association Vice-President Education's priorities for 2018-19.

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

The paper aligns with the strategic objective of 'Leadership in Learning'.

Action requested

For information and discussion.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

To be agreed if specific actions arise from the paper.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. Resource implications (including staffing)

To be considered if specific actions arise from the paper.

2. Risk assessment

To be considered if specific actions arise from the paper.

3. Equality and Diversity

The ideas discussed in the paper aim to encourage and support equality and diversity. Equality and diversity implications will be considered further if specific actions arise from the paper.

4. Freedom of information

This paper is **open**

Originator of the paper

Diva Mukherji, Students' Association Vice President Education
10 September 2018

1. Promoting a diverse curricula.

Student groups are increasingly discussing the need for a curriculum which represents voices from various backgrounds, and one wherein students are exposed to a host of different perspectives. Aligning with the work the LTC task group will be conducting, understanding how students interpret a 'diverse curriculum' will be essential in how this work will occur at school-level.

- Creating institutional guidelines which promote diversifying the curriculum as a necessity, while ensuring autonomy to subject areas to interpret the way in which it'd be most appropriate to a discipline.
- Hosting workshops with students to understand what those in various academic areas want to see within their curriculum.
- Raising awareness on the importance of diversity and representation in academic spheres with staff and students.
- Encouraging this is a prioritized guideline for when pre-honours courses are being audited.

2. Creating inclusive teaching environments.

We need to ensure that all teaching spaces are comfortable spaces for students from different backgrounds, and that we're able to challenge various view points and opinions in a healthy environment. This includes ensuring students can access necessary support services, both academic and pastoral.

- Emphasizing the importance of the mental health training for all Personal Tutors, and ensuring all Personal Tutor's undertake the training.
- Structuring the PT role more clearly, distinguishing the role as an academic and pastoral role, and emphasizing the role PT's play in academic development for students.
- Clarifying to both staff and students the role of the PT, so both groups have a better understanding of what that relationship entails.
- Developing microaggression training, to equip staff with the tools necessary to minimize the impact of microaggressions may have on students from various social backgrounds.
- Continue working to reduce the BME attainment gap.
- Understanding the experiences of widening participation students and increasing levels of support throughout their studies.

3. Developing alternative approaches to learning.

Encouraging the use of innovative teaching and learning pedagogies which centre student engagement in their academic journey. By ensuring students have opportunities to critically engage with their studies, we can collectively build wider learning communities.

- Create frameworks encouraging co-curricula, and a closer relationship between staff and students in course development.
- Support the development and enhancement of peer learning and mentoring schemes.
- Mainstreaming innovative and forms of assessment which appropriately assess learning outcomes.
- Utilizing better forms of feedback, focusing on how students can constructively implement feedback in future assessment.
- Ensuring students are guided to optimize their experience of taking outside courses, to enhance the first and second year experience.

The University of Edinburgh

Senate Researcher Experience Committee

25 September 2018

Committee priorities**Executive Summary**

The Committees priorities for 2018/19 as agreed by Senate on 30 May 2018.

Activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellence in Doctoral Training and Career Development programme (focusing on supervisor training and support, and student mentorship and wellbeing)*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee the introduction of the Enlightenment Scholarships scheme*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the implementation of the new Policy for the Recruitment, Support and Development of Tutors and Demonstrators*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance support for Early Career Researchers (make more visible, enhance and structure provision, strengthen partnerships)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop guidance for the operation of PhD by Integrated Study programmes*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify the status of students during the period following the submission of the thesis for assessment

* Already underway in 2017-18

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

The Committees priorities align with the University Strategic Plan Objects of Leadership in Learning and Leadership in Research.

Action requested – The Committee is invited to formally note the paper.**How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?**

No action is associated with the paper which is provided for information only.

Resource / Risk / Compliance**1. Resource implications (including staffing)**

No resources are associated with the paper which is provided for information only.

2. Risk assessment

A risk assessment is not included as the paper is provided for information only.

3. Equality and Diversity

The paper is provided for information only. Equality and diversity will be considered as appropriate in relation to Committee priorities during 2018/19.

4. Freedom of information – The paper is **open****Originator of the paper**

Susan Hunter

Academic Services, 14 September 2018

REC: 25.09.18

H/02/26/02

REC 18/19 1K

The University of Edinburgh

Senate Researcher Experience Committee

25 September 2018

League of European Research Universities (LERU) report

Executive Summary

Summary report of the LERU policy group for Doctoral Education (DOCT) meeting in Leiden 6th and 7th September 2018.

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

Participation in LERU activity aligns with the University's Strategic Plan Objective of leadership in research to create ever better conditions for national, European and global partnerships.

Action requested

For information.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

No action is associated with the paper which is provided for information only.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. Resource implications (including staffing)

No resource implications are associated with the paper.

2. Risk assessment

A risk assessment is not included as the paper is for information only.

3. Equality and Diversity

The paper is provided for information only and no equality impact assessment is required.

4. Freedom of information

Open paper

Key words

LERU, Early Career Researcher, Graduate Schools, Doctoral College, Mental Health, Wellbeing, Supervisor Training, Quality Assurance of postgraduate research.

Originator of the paper

Dr Antony Maciocia, Dean of Students

College of Science and Engineering, September 2018



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

Report Form: LERU Activity

Name	Antony Maciocia
Meeting/Event Title	LERU DOCT Group
Meeting/Event Venue	Leiden
Meeting/Event Date	6/9/18-7/9/18
Relevant Agenda Items	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Recruitment and Transitions2. Early Career Centres3. Well-being and mental health of PhD students4. LERU Policy paper on supervision5. Summer School6. LERU update7. Doctoral/graduate schools
Key Discussion Points	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Demo from Munich of new recruitment tool with advertising, admissions processing, referee system and bespoke for each programme.<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Inkpath app (Oxford) being considered by Cambridge- How to identify best postgrads for postdocs2. Talk from Karina Prasad (Cambridge). Expected 2.5% per annum growth in postdoc numbers. Postgrad centres built by Uni with social amenities. Also provide courses as well as elite leadership training for a few. Postdocs become alumni and are a pool of mentors for the scheme. The elite training is a day a week and partly funded from fundraising. Centre also provides mandatory induction training. Loans for visa & healthcare for international postdocs and families. Scheme needed high level institutional buy in.

Talk from John Creemers (Leuven) about OJO scheme from Belgian government 1.5m euros for Leuven for early career training. Formed "YouReCa" (young researcher careers) with 4.5FTE staff within doctoral school to provide skills training, career guidance and stimulate international mobility. 10% postdocs in each year. Rough funding is about 500euros/postdoc/year.

3. Talk from David Bogle (UCL) on embedding their well-being strategy and from John Creemers on surveys done in Leuven. Key issues are adverse publicity (press coverage of poor conditions for PhD students), financial and job insecurity (but evidence shows this is a myth), problematic relations with supervisor and "Imposter Syndrome". Solutions in Leuven include training of supervisors, student charter agreed with supervisor used as milestone, exit polling of students and an ombudsperson to deal independently with issues. It would help to build better bridges with employers.
4. Not much progress on paper for supervision. Key issue identified as producing a doctor versus contribution to knowledge. Need to shift focus away from paper writing machines to develop career aspirations and skills. QA of supervision talk by Isolde von Bulow (LMU Munich). Provides a framework for quality assurance which is useful to demonstrate quality to funders.
 - supervision agreements
 - network events
 - modularized monitoring questionnaires (early PhDs, late PhDs, postdocs and supervisors) covering 3 aspects: set-up, qualification/training, supervision context.
 - provided on demand for programmes.
5. Brief report on Leuven summer school – great talks, some social events were hijacked by the football, event finished at roughly 3pm and all students stayed to the end. Kurt will probably want to visit (Edinburgh). He closed the event in Leuven.
6. Report from Katrien. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion paper due later this year. PlanS open research calls for all funded research to require immediate open publication and APC paid by funder/university not researcher and capped. Hybrid subscription & APC scheme to be outlawed. Consequence likely that publishing

	<p>in certain top journals will be impossible. From David Bogle: the concordat agreement will include the recommendation that 20% of postdoc time be reserved for their own use (eg teaching, cpd, time out).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Most (all?) of the other LERU universities had more central graduate schools (required in Netherlands) or doctoral schools. Cambridge strongly recommend keeping postdoc training in a separate organisation to postgrad training. But some do not and prefer to share it. There was a clear benefit to the additional autonomy UK universities experience. Constraints in NL, Italy, France hamper the ability to deliver good PhD training. 8. Next meeting will be Trinity, Dublin
<p>Best Practice Shared</p>	<p>See above</p>
<p>Opportunities for Edinburgh</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ombudspeople for research students and ECR staff to acts as independent people to discuss concerns. This might be better than using HoGS or maybe HoGS for one School can acts as ombudspeople for another School. 2. The case for a “doctoral college” centrally as well as an early career research centre were strongly made by a number of institutions and we should now draw up plans for both. 3. The concordat agreement is likely to be one we can sign up to and the star recommendation of allowing 20% unconstrained time for early career research staff is one we should actively embrace. I suspect there will be less push-back from PIs than we might think.

The University of Edinburgh

Researcher Experience Committee

25th September 2018

Meeting Report: 9th Network of Universities from European Capitals (UNICA) PhD Masterclass The role of doctoral schools to enhance quality in doctoral education

Executive Summary

This report comprises a review of the UNICA PhD Masterclass held in Dubrovnik. It summarises key components of the Masterclass and suggests key actions that could be implemented to improve support for Doctoral Education in the University of Edinburgh.

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

This aligns with the University's **mission** aims to provide the highest-quality, research-led teaching and learning; enable our graduates and staff to be exceptional individuals equipped to address global challenges; promote good health, economic growth, cultural understanding and social well-being. It also aligns with the **strategic objectives** on Leadership in Learning and Leadership in Research.

Action requested

For consideration and discussion by the Committee. Implementation of suggestions would be the responsibility of postgraduate research (PGR) leads in the three Colleges.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

Implementation would be through College postgraduate support structures and communicated through their established channels.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. Resource implications (including staffing)

None.

2. Risk assessment

No risk assessment is included as the paper is provided to stimulate discussion.

3. Equality and Diversity

Equality and diversity was not considered separately during the workshop plenary or interactive discussions. Implementation of changes in policy and practice could potentially have implications for equality and diversity that should be considered as they arise.

Freedom of information

This paper is **open**.

Key words

Doctoral Schools, Quality, Training, Professionals.

Originator of the paper

Dr Patrick Hadoke, PGR Director, College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine, 17/09/18.

**Meeting Report: 9th Network of Universities from European Capitals
(UNICA) PhD Masterclass
The role of doctoral schools to enhance quality in doctoral
education**

Venue: Centre for Advanced Academic Studies, University of Zagreb in Dubrovnik.

Dates: 2nd-5th September 2018

Relevant Agenda items:

- 1) **Can you change doctoral education? Some results from the field.** Slaven Mihailovic, University of Zagreb.
- 2) **Different doctoral education models.** Melita Kovacevic, University of Zagreb.
- 3) **Organising doctoral education: how to enhance quality of experience and output within an institution.** Mick Fuller, University of Plymouth.
- 4) **Intervision exercise on difficult cases in doctoral education.**
- 5) **Roles and drivers in doctoral education.** Kenneth Wann, Cardiff University.
- 6) **“Third space” professionals and professionalization in doctoral education.** Lucas Zinner, President of the PRIDE (Professionals in Doctoral Education) Network, University of Vienna; Bibiane Freche, University Libre de Bruxelles & PRIE Network Board Member.

The masterclass comprised a combination of plenary session with workshops and reflective sessions aimed at comparing and exploring different approaches to implementation of doctoral schools in universities from the capitals of Europe. The meeting was co-hosted by UNICA and the PRIDE (Professionals in Doctoral Education) Network and was attended by academics and administrators. Its aim was to assess the different approaches institutions had taken to in response to the Bologna Process and outlining of the Salzburg Principles (2005) that led to the introduction of doctoral schools.

Notes:

- 1) **Can you change doctoral education? Some results from the field.** Slaven Mihailovic, University of Zagreb.
Based on a review of 4 Universities (Vienna, Montenegro, Ljubljana, Nova Delista). Interviews with staff (16 leaders of change) assessed motivations, situation and obstacles for introduction of doctoral schools. The presenter reported that all Heads of Doctoral Schools were satisfied with the changes but acknowledged that the research was biased as they did not interview the “other side” (no students interviewed) to confirm that the changes were universally welcomed. Covered **Why** changes were necessary, **Who** started the changes, **How** the changes unfolded, and considered **obstacles**.

Suggested a number of outcomes and questions that were considered in a discussion session after the presentation.

- 2) **Different doctoral education models.** Melita Kovacevic, University of Zagreb.
Summarised doctoral education before (pre-2005) and after (post-2005) The Bologna Process and the Salzburg Principles. The presentation considered the balance of doctoral provision between “**unstructured, structured and over-structured.**” In Europe ~90% of Universities now have doctoral schools; 40% have a doctoral school that covers the whole institution. It is hoped that the Survey on Doctoral Education in Europe (2018 EUACDE) will provide information, backed by data, to answer some of the questions discussed at the Masterclass.
Key questions considered “**Is it sustainable to have further “Massification” of doctoral education?**” and what is “**The role of Professionals in Doctoral Education?**”
- 3) **Organising doctoral education: how to enhance quality of experience and output within an institution.** Mick Fuller, University of Plymouth.
This presentation considered the role of graduate students as researchers in training (not technicians) and the role of the Postgraduate Research (PGR) Director (“*Keeping the University out of Court*”). It was noted that PGR Directors often spend 98% of their time on 2% of cases. Covered incentives (to improve quality) and system structures (e.g. supervisor training, etc.) to achieve these. Followed by discussion on a number of issues, including “*How can an Institution set incentives and rewards to enhance quality?*”.
- 4) **Intervision exercise on difficult cases in doctoral education.**
Small working groups (6-8 people) considered approaches to handling a difficult cases in doctoral education raised by one of the group members. A structured approach allowed presentation of the case, followed by questions and then suggestions from the team (during which the case presenter did not contribute) on possible ways to handle the situation.
- 5) **Roles and drivers in doctoral education.** Kenneth Wann, Cardiff University.
Set the scene for a reflective exercise on the purpose and approach of doctoral schools. Focussing on the need to be clear about what is meant by terms such as “quality”.
- 6) **“Third space” professionals and professionalization in doctoral education.**
Lucas Zinner, President of the PRIDE Network, University of Vienna; Bibiane Freche, University Libre de Bruxelles & PRIE Network Board Member.

A Matrix filling exercise was performed to consider tasks performed by doctoral schools and identify those responsible for completing these tasks. Rapidly became overwhelmed by the number of tasks required (too detailed too quickly) but made the point that in many cases responsibility over-lapped between several individuals.

Summary and Actions

The Masterclass was a very useful opportunity to gain insights into approaches taken to doctoral education by other institutions and to reflect on our own models. Take home messages include:

1. Issues experienced in the University of Edinburgh are similar to those experience in other European Universities.
2. Approaches to addressing these issues vary depending on the need of the institution.
3. There is a need to *understand and explain* the objectives of a doctoral school.
4. There is an overall intention to increase QUALITY **but** it is essential to understand what is meant by quality.
5. It is important to *demonstrate and report* the benefit of the doctoral school.
6. There a lots of impressive, intelligent, able and motivated people addressing issues to do with doctoral education across Europe.
7. There is a clear benefit from networking and learning from others' experience.

Actions:

1. Report on Masterclass to relevant parties (Edinburgh Global; Researcher Experience Committee; College Office Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (CMVM)) with a view to implementing changes in University of Edinburgh.
2. Determine how to integrate academic and administrative sides of the Graduate School in CMVM.
3. Introduce a mechanism to collect and analyse data on supervision in CMVM – so that we can identify and reward good practice, and identify and eradicate bad practice.
4. Discuss PRIDE with relevant colleagues – to ensure we are making the most of our professional staff and are interacting with relevant groups across Europe.

REC: 25.09.18

H/02/26/02

REC 18/19 1M

The University of Edinburgh

Senate Researcher Experience Committee

25 September 2018

Report from the Knowledge Strategy Committee

Executive Summary

To update Senate on certain matters considered by the Knowledge Strategy Committee at its meeting on 25 May 2018.

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

Not applicable.

Action requested

The Committee is invited to note the report.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

Not applicable.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. Resource implications (including staffing)

Where applicable, as covered in the report.

2. Risk assessment

Where applicable, as covered in the report.

3. Equality and Diversity

Where applicable, as covered in the report.

4. Freedom of information

This paper is open.

Key words

Knowledge Strategy Committee

Originator of the paper

Dr Lewis Allan, Head of Court Services, September 2018

REPORT FROM THE KNOWLEDGE STRATEGY COMMITTEE**25 May 2018****1 Near Future Teaching Project**

Professor Siân Bayne, Assistant Principal Digital Education, presented a project to co-design the future of digital education at the University, drawing on consultation exercises held with staff, students and school pupils and horizon scanning to develop four different educational future scenarios. The next stages of the project will involve testing the scenarios with student, academic expert and school pupil panels, proposing recommendations and translation into policy and action. The project is scheduled to conclude in December 2018.

The Committee welcomed the presentation and project, with the following points raised in discussion:

- Equity of access to information technology – globally and locally;
- Consulting outside already interested parties to those who perceive information technology more negatively;
- Appropriate levels of technology use and links to wellbeing;
- Seeking employers views; and
- Using the outcomes to design teaching within the Edinburgh Futures Institute.

2 Web Strategy

Melissa Highton, Assistant Principal Online Learning, introduced a strategy to address the University's use of web technologies to enhance student experience, disseminate research and engage the wider public. It was noted that the University's web estate consists of 1,709 websites, with www.ed.ac.uk counted as a single website. Almost 50% of the websites carry 'amber' risk indicators including security, technology and accessibility concerns. Work is underway to contact website owners and resolve the risk indicators, although 500 websites presently have no identified owner, reflecting the historically highly devolved nature of the web estate.

3 Distance Learning at Scale Programme Business Case

A business case for the Distance Learning at Scale programme to establish a small number of large scalable online courses in areas of strength for the University, including data science and business education. The business case was endorsed, with the following points raised in discussion:

- Building on the University's success in provision of Massive Open Online Courses;
- Existing online masters courses may be relatively small but many are highly valued and of continuing benefit;
- Benefits for on-campus students in making available new learning technology;
- Implications for student statistics such as the retention rate, depending on categorisations used by bodies such as the Higher Education Statistics Agency.

4 Authentication and Authorisation Services Review

The summary recommendations of a review of the University's authentication and authorisation services were noted, including changes to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation and improve security.

5 IT Network Replacement Project – Student Residences

A proposal to incorporate the externally operated Accommodation, Catering and Events student residences data network and telephony service into the University campus network within the current Campus Network Replacement project was approved, with the associated increased capital cost endorsed. The opportunity to improve the student experience was welcomed, with members discussing alternative study locations when the Main Library is full and noting the intention to include student residences leased on a long term basis by the University within the scope of the project.

6 Learning Analytics Policy

Following earlier approval for an institutional statement of Principles and Purposes for Learning Analytics, a draft institutional policy on Learning Analytics was approved. It was noted that the draft Policy had been developed in light of the General Data Protection Regulation.

7 Main Library Occupation Levels

Data on the occupancy of the Main Library prior to the first and second semester examination diets was noted, confirming that the building is regularly full during these periods. Members requested further information on occupancy rates across the year as a whole, discussed facilities for student parents, the availability of refreshment facilities with 24/7 library opening and the potential for study spaces in other buildings.

8 Lecture Recording Policy Update

The findings of the policy consultation and final draft Lecture Recording Policy were noted. The following points were raised in discussion:

- 75% of the 400 teaching rooms will have lecture recording equipment installed by September, with 100% coverage by the end of the next academic year;
- Subsequent monitoring of the number of opt-outs granted, particularly on core courses; and,
- Achieving a balance between a lecture that is engaging for students present and those watching at a later date.

REC: 25.09.18

H/02/26/02

REC 18/19 1N

The University of Edinburgh

Researcher Experience Committee

25 September 2018

REF (Research Excellence Framework) 2021 Guidance documents

Executive Summary

The key guidance documents for REF 2021 were published in draft form for consultation in July.

- Draft guidance on submissions (2018/01)
- Consultation on the draft panel criteria and working methods (2018/02)

These and other documents are available at: <http://www.ref.ac.uk/publications/>.

The attached document represents a summary of the key new information in the published REF2021 documents. As these are in draft for consultation, some details of this may change as the guidance is finalised.

The consultation will run until 15 October 2018 and the final guidance is anticipated to be released in early 2019. A University of Edinburgh response to the consultation is in preparation with input from across the University. Representatives have attended informational meetings and webinars associated with the consultation to help inform the response.

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

Achieving an excellent REF2021 performance directly aligns with the University's mission. Success in REF2021 will demonstrate Leadership in Research as well as requiring each Unit of Assessment to show that we are working toward each of the four development themes.

Action requested

For Information.

The support of Researcher Experience Committee (REC) was of value during REF2014 and will continue to be relevant to REF2021 as Units of Assessment have to show that their research environment is both sustainable and vibrant as well as demonstrating world leading research and impact.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. Resource implications (including staffing)

REF resourcing has been included in the 2018-19 annual planning round process.

REF2014 results inform the Research Excellence Grant funding allocations from Scottish Funding Council, currently around £80 million per annum.

2. Risk assessment

Failure to grow and diversify sources of research income, and to respond to external drivers such as REF2021 and changes in the regulatory infrastructure for research, is a specific risk in the University Risk Register.

The performance of the University in REF influences both our reputation and funding, and in both areas the University has a low appetite for risk. It is important that we take action to minimise risks to our performance.

3. Equality and Diversity

Research Policy Group (RPG) will carry out Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) of our policies and processes at various points in the REF cycle. The 2021 exercise, like its predecessor, will have an emphasis on ensuring that research staff are given equal opportunity to participate, which will be reflected in our Code of Practice. It will also have

a greater emphasis in the environment template on specifying what we are doing to support research staff of all characteristics. We have good template for EIAs to draw on from REF2014 but are keen to ensure we are drawing on the most up-to-date best practice.

4. **Freedom of information**

Open

Key words

Research, REF2021

Originator of the paper

Paper Pauline Jones, University REF Manager and Head of Strategic Planning and Research Policy

Coversheet Dr Susan Cooper, Senior Strategic Planner and Secretary to RPG
17 September 2018



REF2021 Draft Guidance – summary of key information

1. The key guidance documents for REF2021 were published in draft form for consultation on Monday 23 July 2018. The consultation will run to 15 October 2018, and the final guidance will be released in January 2019.
2. The key documents released at <http://www.ref.ac.uk/publications/> are:
 - [Draft guidance on submissions \(2018/01\)](#) [Referred to as GoS in this document]
 - [Consultation on the panel criteria and working methods \(2018/02\)](#) [PCWM in this document]
 - [Draft guidance on codes of practice \(2018/03\)](#) [GCoP in this document]
3. Supplementary guidance on independent researchers and metrics for impact and environment are available at <http://www.ref.ac.uk/guidance/>
4. Guidance to panels has also been published at <http://www.ref.ac.uk/publications/>
5. The document below summarises key new information in the published documents. As these are in draft for consultation, some details of this may change as the guidance is finalised. Document references in this document are followed by paragraph numbers.

Shape of the exercise

6. Similar to REF2014, **multiple submissions** will be permitted only in very specific circumstances, largely: mergers; to reflect the specific status of Celtic Studies; and if both the environment and the academic disciplines are significantly distinct. Main Panels A and B¹ are actively discouraging any multiple submissions, and C and D expect to see them only in limited UoAs. (GoS 75-79, PCWM 184-191)
7. Units can request publication of multiple output sub-profiles for UoA 12 Engineering but this will not be created for any sub-unit of any of the other UoAs. (GoS 78, PCWM 188)
8. **Joint submissions** are encouraged 'where this is the most appropriate way of describing research they have developed or undertaken collaboratively.' (GoS paras 80-86)
9. **Exceptions for small units:** we can request an exception to submission where a unit has fewer than 5 FTE eligible staff. This will need to meet specific criteria around the distinctiveness of the research environment, and where it is clearly in the scope of a UoA to which we would not otherwise submit (GoS 71-74)
10. Submissions to **UoA 4** Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience will be expected to identify outputs as being in high or low cost areas, to help in the award of funding. This will be piloted in autumn 2018. (GoS 267-271)
11. **Interdisciplinary research** outputs should be identified, and a clearer definition of what is meant by interdisciplinary research is given than in previous exercises. (GoS 105, 263)

Staff

12. The key points relating to the submission of all eligible staff, and eligibility for inclusion in REF, remain much as outlined in the Decisions on Staff and Outputs in November 2017.
13. The **annual HESA returns in 2018-19 and 2019-20** will be used in monitoring numbers of staff expected to be submitted. These returns will be amended to collect information on UoAs and Early Career Researchers to facilitate the verification of the returns and equality monitoring. (GoS 55, 69, 91, 145).

¹ Thereafter Main Panel A (CMVM, Biol Sciences and Psychology); Main Panel B (CSE except Biol Sciences), Main Panel C (Social Sciences disciplines in CAHSS) and Main Panel D (Humanities and Arts disciplines in CAHSS) are referred to as MPA, MPB, MPC or MPD respectively.

14. The funding bodies will also carry out post-REF analysis of **changes to staff contracts**. (GoS 44)
15. For any eligible academic employed on **minimum fractional contracts** (0.20 to 0.29 FTE) on the census date, we must provide a short statement (up to 200 words) evidencing the clear connection of the staff member with the submitting unit. In some cases, where the fractional appointment reflects normal discipline practice, caring responsibilities, other personal circumstances (e.g. ill-health, disability), reduced their working hours on approach to retirement - this can be replaced with identifying the circumstance, but evidence would be required if audited. (GoS 123-137)
16. It is proposed (for consultation) that staff based in discrete units outside the UK are not returnable. (GoS 122)

Staff circumstances leading to reduction in outputs

17. REF2014 made extensive use of a 'special circumstances' process to reduce the number of outputs required for individuals. The original proposals for REF2021 removed most of these requirements, as the option to vary the number of outputs per individual was seen to reduce the requirements for this. The Draft Guidance on Submissions (GoS 149 to 193) consults the sector on proposals to reinstate much of the option to follow this route.
18. If the plans outlined in the Draft Guidance on Submissions are implemented in full, the circumstances that will lead to output reduction mainly operate at the level of submitted units: they reduce the number of outputs that an overall unit is required to submit based on the fact that individuals within these units have been unable to research productively for some or all of the REF2021 period. In these cases, the individuals are still required to have the 'minimum of one' output.
19. In some exceptional circumstances, where the circumstances are such that for the whole REF period an individual has been unable to research productively, we could request that this minimum be reduced to zero. We are still expected to return the individual but, if the circumstances are accepted, we can submit them with no outputs without penalty.
20. Universities will have to submit their request for reduction of outputs at unit or individual level in March 2020 and will be informed whether the request is successful before July 2020.

Code of Practice requirements

21. As part of a Code of Practice for decision making for REF2021, institutions will be required to outline their processes for identifying who is an **independent researcher**; this is *in addition to* the already anticipated requirements of defining processes for the selection of outputs, and (for institutions not submitting 100% of eligible staff) identifying staff with significant responsibility for research. (GoS 52 d, 128-133, GCoP)
22. A list of research fellowships funded by external bodies that have been judged to count as independent researchers has been published – this is available at <http://www.ref.ac.uk/media/ref,2021/downloads/List%20of%20independent%20research%20fellowships.pdf>
23. The deadline for submitting the Code of Practice for assessment by the funding bodies is 7 June 2019. (GCoP 5)
24. As discussed in para 17-20, there is much greater emphasis on **disclosure of staff circumstances as a route to reduction of outputs** and this must also be covered in the Code of Practice. (GCoP)

Outputs

25. The key points relating to changes to output numbers per staff member, changes to rules about portability, and partial decoupling of outputs from staff are as announced in the Decisions on Staff and Outputs in November 2017.
26. **Double weighting** of outputs will be allowed, though MPA and B are less likely to accept than C and D. The consultation asks whether books should automatically be double weighted. (PCWM

Consultation q3; 227-239). Reserve outputs will be permitted where a request for double weighting is made. (GoS 272-276)

27. **Citation data** will be made available and used only by the same panels, and in the same way, as in REF2014: UoAs1-9, 11 and 16; and used to inform peer-reviewed judgement of the academic significance of an output. (GoS 281-286; PCWM 263-270)

Open access

28. The guidance on **open access** in the Guidance on Submissions replaces all existing guidance from the funding bodies on the REF Open Access policy. (GoS 107-116, 213-245)
29. Units may return a maximum of 5% of in-scope outputs that neither meet the policy requirement nor have an exception applied. (GoS 221)
30. Some allowance is introduced for researchers who have met the spirit of the open access policy by sharing outputs on pre-print sites – ‘where the ‘accepted for publication’ text, or near final version, is available on the pre-print service, and the output upload date of the pre-print is prior to the date of output publication, this will be considered as compliant with the open access criteria.’ (GoS 228)

Co-authorship and additional textual information on outputs

31. The guidance is consulting on the question of whether co-authored outputs should only be able to be submitted once in each university’s submission to a unit of assessment. (GoS 258 – 262) For outputs with large numbers of co-authors, MPs A and B require evidence of author contribution – A where there are 10 or more authors, B where there are more than 25 authors (PCWM 216-226).
32. A summary of additional textual information on outputs – including statements about significance of research, the research process, contribution of authors and requests for double weighting - required across each Main Panel is given in PCWM Annex B.

Impact

33. The key points relating to impact are as previously announced in the Initial Decisions on REF2021 and the Decisions on Staff and Outputs: impacts on teaching in institution will be accepted; the rules on numbers of case studies per staff member have been adjusted; and impacts continuing from REF2014 can be returned.

Continuing impact case studies

34. In relation to impacts continuing from REF2014, we may submit both impact case studies that relate to case studies that were returned to REF2014, and those which developed from impact that occurred prior to the REF2021 period but which were not submitted to REF2014. We will be required to identify case studies that were submitted to REF2014. (GoS 306, 308-310)
35. However, MPA encourage case studies that are continuing only where they ‘describe significant and developing impact within the current assessment period’. (PCWM 282).

Template requirements

36. The template requirements for case studies have been tightened, with specific meta-data requirements mandated in specific parts of the form. (GoS 320-328 and Annex G) This includes details of funders of the research underpinning the impact, where relevant. (GoS 322)
37. We must submit all corroborating evidence by 29 January 2021, rather than producing it when requested on audit. (GoS 323)
38. Suggested indicators and categories of impact have been consolidated across the four main panels and presented as a single table. (PCWM Annex A)
39. When providing quantitative indicators in the case study narrative we should refer to the following guidance:

<http://www.ref.ac.uk/media/ref,2021/downloads/Guidance%20for%20standardising%20quantitative%20indicators%20of%20impact.pdf>

Environment

Environment statements (REF5)

40. We will be expected to submit both an institutional level statement covering the environment in which research is carried out and impact is supported; and a unit level statement.
41. The institutional level statement (known as REF5a) should cover (GoS251):
 - Context and mission: an overview of the size, structure and mission of the institution.
 - Strategy: the institution's strategy for research and enabling impact (including integrity, open research, and structures to support interdisciplinary research) in the assessment period and for the next five year period.
 - People: the institution's staffing strategy, support and training of research students, and building on the information provided in codes of practice, evidence 98 about how equality and diversity in research careers is supported and promoted across the institution.
 - Income, infrastructure and facilities: the institutional-level resources and facilities available to support research, including mechanisms for supporting the reproducibility of research as appropriate to the research focus of the HEI, and to facilitate its impact.
42. The unit level statement should cover (GoS 358):
 - Unit context, research and impact strategy.
 - People, including: – staffing strategy and staff development – research students – equality and diversity.
 - Income, infrastructure and facilities.
 - Collaboration and contribution to the research base, economy and society.
43. The unit-level statement, known as REF5b, 'should not duplicate information about the institutional-level environment that is provided in REF5a.' (GoS 359)
44. The Panel Criteria outline detailed requirements for the unit-level statements. (PCWM 334-352)
45. The institutional level statement will not be scored separately: it will be appended to the unit-level statement and the sub-panels will take it into account in assessing the unit-level statement. (GoS 354). However, a pilot will run concurrently to the REF assessment scoring the institutional environment statements separately. (GoS 255)
46. MPA, B and C will weight each component of the environment statement the same in awarding a profile for environment; MPD will weight 'people' more highly at 30% and 'income, infrastructure and facilities' lower at 20%. (PCWM 322-323)
47. Guidance on use of quantitative indicators in the environment statements has been provided. <http://www.ref.ac.uk/media/ref,2021/downloads/Guidance%20on%20environment%20indicators.pdf> Most of the metrics are not mandatory but there are a few panel specific metrics:
 - Separate disclosure of professional and doctoral degrees for all of MPC (PCWM 344);
 - peer reviewed facilities time not funded by Research Councils in SP8 and 9 (PCWM 346);
 - funding received from sources other than those reportable to HESA that contribute to research in MPD (PCWM 347);
 - Numbers Cat C staff in MPA (PCWM 349)
48. The People section will be reviewed by the Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel to inform the panel's assessment. (GoS 364)

Environment data (REF4)

49. Data requirements are very similar to REF2014, with data required to be returned on doctoral degrees awarded, research income, and research income in-kind, and. These will cover the period 2013-14 to 2019-20. (GoS 329-350)

50. There are some changes to the data sets:

- For doctoral degrees awarded, the role of each institution in supervision of a joint PhD through a formal collaborative programme for research degrees will be recognised (GoS 335-337)
- Income from 2015-16 to 2019-20 will be presented to panels as an average over five years to modulate the dynamic effects of the FRS102 reporting changes. (GoS 341)
- Income passed on to other institutions will be excluded. (GoS 343)

51. Standard analyses of the data will be presented to the panels. (GoS 330; Annex J) The data will be used alongside the statements to inform an overall judgement of the quality of the research environment (GoS 329).

REF2021 Timetable

Guidance published	23 July 2018
Edinburgh consultation event	14 September 2018
Consultation closes	15 October 2018, noon
Publication of final guidance	January 2019
Details of verification and audit process published	Summer 2019
Submit Code of Practice	7 June 2019
Submission system pilot	Autumn 2019
Request submissions exemptions for small units	December 2019
Survey submission intentions	December 2019
Multiple submission request deadline	December 2019
Submit requests for individual and unit reductions	March 2020
Formally invite to make submissions	Early 2020
Launch submissions system	January 2020
Nominate and appoint additional panel members and assessors	Mid 2020
Census date for staff, and end date for environment, impact	31 July 2020
Submission deadline	27 November 2020
Cut off period for outputs to be in public domain	31 December 2020
Physical output submissions	December 2020-January 2021
Deadline for providing versions of case studies requiring redaction for publication	29 January 2021
Provide corroborating evidence held for submitted impact case studies	29 January 2021
Provide details of any outputs pending publication in November 2020	29 January 2021
Assessment and audit process	2021
REF2021 results	December 2021
Publication of submissions, panel overview reports and sub-profiles	Spring 2022s
Results used in funding	From August 2022

Pauline Jones, University REF Manager, 24 July 2018