

H/02/27/02

**Meeting of the Senatus Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)
to be held online on Thursday 26 May 2022 at 2.00pm**

A G E N D A

1.	Minutes of the previous meeting held online on 31 March 2022 (enclosed) & 17 May 2022 (to be circulated shortly)	APRC 21/22 5A
2.	Matters Arising <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support for Study• Industrial Action & relaxation of regulations Standing Items: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approved concessions	Verbal Update
3.	Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities - Implications for Taught Assessment Regulations For discussion and approval	APRC 21/22 5B
4.	Coursework Extensions – update on interim change for 2022-2 For discussion and approval	APRC 21/22 5C
5.	Review of Coursework Extension and Special Circumstances Policies For discussion and approval	APRC 21/22 5D
6.	Proposed amendments to the Code of Student Conduct For approval	APRC 21/22 5E
7.	Programme and Course Approval Policy Update For approval	APRC 21/22 5F
8.	Programme and Course Handbooks Policy Update For approval	APRC 21/22 5G
9.	Taught Assessment Regulations For discussion and approval	APRC 21/22 5H
10.	Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees For discussion and approval	APRC 21/22 5I
11.	Student Discipline Officers For approval	APRC 21/22 5J
12.	Academic Policy and Regulations Membership and Terms of Reference 2022/23 For noting	APRC 21/22 5K
13.	Annual Report of the Senate Standing Committees For noting	APRC 21/22 5 L

14.	Annual Review of Effectiveness of Senate Standing Committees For noting	APRC 21/22 5M
15.	Senate Presentation and Discussion themes for 2022/23 meetings For discussion	APRC 21/22 5N
16.	Deadlines for Submission of Late Special Circumstances. Applications for the 2022/23 academic year For approval	APRC 21/22 5O
17.	Election of APRC Convener and Vice-Convener for 2022/23 For discussion and approval	Verbal update
18.	Any Other Business	

**Meeting of the Senatus Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)
held online on Thursday 31 March 2022 at 2.00pm**

DRAFT MINUTES

<p>Present: Dr Paul Norris (Convenor)</p> <p>Professor Judy Hardy (Vice-Convenor) Professor Jeremy Crang Professor Patrick Hadoke</p> <p>Professor Antony Maciocia Professor Jamie Davies Dr Adam Bunni Alexandra Laidlaw Sarah McAllister Rachael Quirk Tara Gold Charlotte MacDonald Dr Deborah Shaw</p> <p>In attendance: Olivia Hayes Dr Winston Kwon Professor Andrew Steven</p> <p>Apologies for absence: Kirsty Woomble Stephen Warrington Dr Cathy Bovill</p> <p>Rebecca Shade Lisa Dawson</p>	<p>Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval (CAHSS) Dean of Learning and Teaching (CSE) Dean of Students (CAHSS) Director of Postgraduate Research and Early Career Research Experience (CMVM) Dean of Postgraduate Research (CSE) Dean of Taught Education (CMVM) Head of Academic Policy and Regulation, Academic Services Head of Academic Affairs (CSE) Student Systems and Administration Head of Taught Student Administration & Support (CAHSS) Vice President Education, Students' Association The Advice Place, Deputy Manager Dean of Students (CMVM)</p> <p>Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services Programme Director, MSc in Global Strategy and Sustainability. Convenor of Board of Examiners, School of Law</p> <p>Head of PGR Student Office (CAHSS) Dean of Student Experience (CSE) Senior Lecturer in Student Engagement, Institute for Academic Development (IAD) Policy and Projects Officer – Student Experience Interim Deputy Secretary of Students</p>
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Thanks were extended to Ailsa Taylor for her support of APRC, Ailsa's role has changed and she will no longer be supporting APRC.

Welcome to Olivia Hayes who will be taking over support of APRC.

1.	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting held online on 27 January 2022</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 January 2022 were approved as an accurate record, subject to clarification of a point made about item 4 of the previous meeting. This point indicates that similar proposals related to Master's Dissertations would not be subject to the same level of scrutiny at APRC, this clarification would be addressed under Matters Arising.</p>	Enclosed
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2.	Matters Arising	
	<p>Masters/Dissertations</p> <p>At the previous meeting of APRC a general discussion on the number of non-standard dissertation proposals being seen by the Committee was had. It was agreed that proposals similar to those seen previously do not need to be subject to the same level of scrutiny in the future.</p> <p>The previous discussion did not conclude how APRC would like to manage MSc proposals that do not meet the current degree model, and it is being raised again for the Committee to agree a clear approach. It was acknowledged that any agreed approach may shift once the Curriculum Transformation project has concluded.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the options available and noted that as APRC has already approved a broad range non-standard approaches, it is unlikely that the Committee would refuse similar requests to those already seen. It was agreed that the Convenor and Vice-Convenor are aware of the boundaries of what has been approved and it would be reasonable for similar cases to be considered by Convenor’s action in the first instance.</p> <p>There is value in retaining central records on what deviations have been approved, and this may be useful for the Curriculum Transformation project. These records will continue to be maintained by Academic Services.</p> <p>The Committee agreed that any deviation from the regulations must still be submitted to APRC for formal approval. Requests which are similar to those which have already approved by the wider committee will be considered by Convenor’s action in the first instance, with circulation to the wider committee as required.</p> <p>Action: the note on the 40/20 split would be recirculated to confirm that cases like this do not need to be submitted to APRC for formal approval.</p>	
	<p>Support for Study</p> <p>At the previous meeting the Committee agreed to amend wording in the Support for Study Policy, with the exception of the proposed change in section 7.4 where it referred to “making clear reference to the relevant section of this policy with regards to the case”. This change was not to be made at this time, but would be kept under review. The mandatory nature of 7.4 was reiterated to be of specific concern to the Committee.</p> <p>Lisa Dawson and Rebecca Shade intend to return to the May meeting of APRC to discuss the Support for Study policy. Lisa Dawson requested that members please identify specific aspects of the policy which are deemed to be of concern at least two weeks in advance of the May meeting. Members are asked to send any specific concerns to the APRC Secretary, Olivia Hayes, for these to be collated and shared with Lisa Dawson and Andy Shanks in advance of the next meeting</p> <p>Action: APRC Secretary to circulate reminder to members to send any concerns through. These will be collated and shared with Lisa Dawson and Andy Shanks two weeks prior to the next APRC meeting.</p>	

	For discussion	
3.	<p>Response to Senate Questions</p> <p>Dr Paul Norris, Convenor of APRC, introduced this item. The paper details two questions received from Senate members after the Senate meeting held on 9 February 2022. The paper is provided to ensure committee members are aware of the questions raised, and the concern put forward about the status of “closed papers”.</p> <p>Members were asked to provide any observations on the paper and invited to discuss their views on closed papers. The Committee agreed that APRC has a very limited number of closed papers and there is generally good reason for papers being closed, which may include but is not limited to, data protection or commercially sensitive reasons. The position of the Senate Education Committee is that papers are open by default, and if a paper is to be closed then rationale for this must be provided. The Committee agreed to adopt the same approach, with a rationale to be provided for any closed papers.</p> <p>Action: the Convenor will take forward APRC’s position with the secretary and other Senate sub-Committee Convenors.</p>	APRC 21/22 4A
4.	<p>Coursework Extensions regulation: proposals for interim amendments</p> <p>This item was introduced by Dr Adam Bunni (AB), Head of Academic Policy and Regulation, Academic Services.</p> <p>The paper proposed a range of short-term options for amending the Taught Assessment Regulations relating to coursework extensions for the 2022-23 academic year. It was noted that it was felt to be too late in the year for major policy changes to be considered and consulted on in time for next academic session. Members were asked to discuss the options put forward with further consultation to be carried out before a request for approval at the May meeting of APRC.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the options put forward. Members agreed that this was a complicated and challenging issue and, given the time left, the most viable option for Colleges to consult on was reducing the default time granted for coursework extensions from 7 to 3 days.</p> <p>Concern was raised, especially by EUSA members, around the positioning of changes to students and that a short-term change which reduced the default extension available may be perceived as a punitive, rather than supportive measure. Communicating changes to students would be of vital importance and positioning these changes as part of a longer-term review of coursework extensions, special circumstances and the expanding the support around these would be useful.</p> <p>Concern was raised around the viability of the ESC service to cope with changes to the coursework extension process. It was agreed that if evidence for extensions is introduced, this would impact on ESC’s ability to turnaround of extension requests within 2 working days.</p>	APRC 21/22 4B

	<p>The reduction of the default time granted from 7 to 3 days was agreed to be the most viable option and Academic Services would consult Colleges and EUSA on this interim measure ahead of a broader review in 2022-23.</p> <p>It was agreed that it would also be helpful to understand whether flexibility on feedback deadlines were expected from the current Assessment and Feedback Working Group so this information could be included alongside the proposal. Academic Services would confirm with the Convenor of the working group to clarify and include this information in the consultation paper which will go to Colleges and EUSA for consultation.</p> <p>Academic Services are committed to undertaking a wider review of coursework extensions and special circumstances in 2022-23.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>Management of Late Online Examinations</p> <p>This item was introduced by Ms Rachael Quirk, Head of Taught Student Administration and Support, CAHSS.</p> <p>A small number of Schools have raised the management of late online exams with the College Office and flagged their concern that the current approach is disproportionate given the weighting of exams and the sliding scale of penalties which is available for coursework submissions. This issue has arisen since the “silent window” (which permitted late submission by up to 10 minutes without penalty) was removed.</p> <p>During discussion, colleagues noted that there was varying concern and practice between Schools. It was noted that a clarification in the regulations may be useful, though guidance was produced for the most recent exam diet and there were still Schools which departed from the guidance.</p> <p>Academic Services agreed to review the regulations in relation to online exams to see if clarification was necessary to help distinguish between varying methods of assessment, for example, online exams, take home exams,</p> <p>ESC colleagues noted that one of the challenges in supporting late online examinations was the evidence that students were required to provide to support an application for special circumstances on these grounds. ESC received an increased number of applications though many with evidence which was inappropriate to support the circumstances.</p> <p>A number of options to address this point were considered however APRC agreed that in the short term, it is up to Colleges and Schools to advise students on how online examinations work and to manage their time appropriately, ensuring enough time is left to upload their exam. There is also additional information available from ESC, which clarifies what information or evidence is required if a student does encounter special circumstances at the point of submission.</p>	<p>Verbal Update</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Undergraduate Degree Regulations 2022/23</p> <p>This item was introduced by Dr Adam Bunni (AB), Head of Academic Policy and Regulation, Academic Services.</p>	<p>APRC 21/22 4C</p>

	<p>The key changes for APRC to consider are set out in the paper.</p> <p>There was one late addition, which was a minor change to Regulation 5 – Disclosure of Criminal Offences. The proposal removes reference to Schools and replaces this with ‘Student Conduct Team’. The Student Conduct Term determine whether disclosure of a criminal offence warrants further action, and this change minimises the number of people at the University who are aware of the disclosure. The same change has been proposed for the PG Degree Regulations. The student facing information on this would also be updated to reflect this change.</p> <p>A number of practical concerns were raised on the disclosure of criminal offences, and these would be taken forward separate from the DRPS approval.</p> <p>It was noted that there may be further amendments to the job titles and roles introduced under the Student Support and Personal Tutor model may occur before the start of the 2022-23 academic year. It was agreed that if there were changes to the role titles, these would be incorporated where possible and if known by the start of the 2022-23 academic year. Academic Services would raise a note with Court Services about the job titles within the DRPS and the possibility that these may change over the coming months.</p> <p>APRC approved the Undergraduate Degree Regulations for 2022-23 and approved the change to Regulation 5- Disclosure of Criminal Offences.</p> <p>APRC was also supportive of role titles related to the SSPT model being updated in the DRPS as these were confirmed ahead of the 2022-23 academic year.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Postgraduate Degree Regulations 2022/23</p> <p>This item was introduced by Dr Adam Bunni (AB), Head of Academic Policy and Regulation, Academic Services.</p> <p>There was one late addition, which is a minor change to Regulation 7 – Disclosure of Criminal Offences. Further information about this is provided under item 6, above.</p> <p>There was one addition raised during the meeting, which is a minor change to Regulation 31 – Withdrawal and Exclusion. The committee discussed removing the word permanently from the regulation and agreed that this stipulation was not appropriate as students may apply to return to their studies at a later date after having previously withdrawn. APRC agreed to remove ‘permanently’ from Regulation 31.</p> <p>Concerns were raised about Regulation 45 and the rights offered to students when they have been excluded. The Committee agreed that any changes to this regulation require further consideration and no change was made.</p> <p>It was flagged that there is no mention of Distance Learning PhD’s in the Postgraduate Degree Regulations. It was suggested that these programmes require clarity from a regulations perspective for the purposes of immigration and fees.</p> <p>Programme-specific situations would not usually be covered by the DRPS and these would generally cover all programme types, however there are programme specific regulations in the DRPS which may indicate a departure from the main regulations.</p>	<p>APRC 21/22 4D</p>

	<p>It was suggested that this be taken forward with the Doctoral College and the Student Immigration Service for clarity. If a change to the regulations is required to support these programmes, this can be reviewed by APRC.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to minor changes to job titles and roles which have been introduced under the Student Support and Personal Tutor model. They agreed that further changes to job titles would be permitted if agreed in time for the next academic year. Further information about this is provided under item 6, above.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to changes to Regulation 7 – Disclosure of Criminal Offences. Further information about this is provided under item 6, above.</p> <p>APRC approved the Postgraduate Degree Regulations for 2022-23 and approved the change to Regulation 5- Disclosure of Criminal Offences and Regulation 31 – Withdrawal and Exclusion.</p> <p>APRC was also supportive of role titles related to the SSPT model being updated in the DRPS as these were confirmed ahead of the 2022-23 academic year.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>CAHSS – Business School – Joint Challenge Dissertations</p> <p>This paper was presented by Dr. Winston Kwon, Programme Director of the MSc in Global Strategy and Sustainability.</p> <p>As part of the new MSc in Global Strategy and Sustainability (GSS), the Business School propose a new format for the dissertation to be available to students (as an alternative to the 60-credit individual dissertation) that allows students to engage with complex topics within the time constraints of their MSc programme. The proposed Joint Challenge Dissertation would combine 20 credits of joint study project with 40 credits of individual work.</p> <p>Students would receive a group mark for the 20 credit component and an individual mark for the 40 credit component.</p> <p>Concern was raised around how the group work component would be managed in a range of circumstances, such as where a member was impacted by special circumstances, needed to withdraw, or where there was conflict between group members. It was confirmed that tools currently utilised in the Business School can mitigate these kinds of circumstances.</p> <p>It was confirmed that students who cannot proceed with the Joint Dissertation have the option of reverting to the traditional dissertation and relying on existing University systems such as extensions and special circumstances to mitigate any impact on the individual.</p> <p>APRC approved Paper E and advised the Business School to carefully consider the information which is provided to students on special circumstances, group work dynamics, and how issues within groups will be managed.</p> <p>It was also suggested that the Business School reach out to EFI for best practice as EFI have previously submitted similar proposals to APRC for approval.</p>	<p>APRC 21/22 4E</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>UCU Industrial Action – update</p>	<p>Verbal Update</p>

	<p>A brief update on UCU Industrial Action was given by the Convenor, Dr. Paul Norris. It was noted that there has been a very small number of external examiners resigning and there may be need to consider a concession to regulations due to resignations. The Committee agreed that these should be managed by Convenor’s action in the first instance.</p> <p>APRC will be the Committee responsible for deciding when industrial action has impacted on teaching and assessment to the point that further concessions may need to be considered. Members were reminded of this power under Regulations 70 and 71 of the Taught Assessment Regulations.</p> <p>There is a further UCU ballot which concludes in the coming weeks and following the outcome of the ballot, APRC may be required to meet and consider whether further mitigations are needed. This will depend upon the nature of any further action being called by UCU.</p> <p>The Academic Contingency Group (ACG) has met several times and has agreed that there is not currently a need to request concessions to regulations due to the impact of industrial action.</p> <p>If APRC receives such a request from ACG, members agreed that a live meeting held over Teams would be preferable to reach an agreed position. For members unable to join the live meeting, feedback can be submitted via email.</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>CAHSS – School of Law - Postgraduate Degree Regulations 85a 2022/23</p> <p>This paper was presented by Professor Andrew Steven, Convenor of the Board of Studies, School of Law.</p> <p>An anomaly in Regulation 85a of the Postgraduate Degree Regulations has been picked up and the paper is to rectify this change for the 2022-23 academic year, and ahead of a broader review of the Diploma of Legal Practice being undertaken in the 2022-23 academic year.</p> <p>It was flagged that there was an additional ‘in’ in paragraph 2 of the regulation. APRC approved the change to Regulation 85a in 2022-23, subject to the deletion of the additional “in” from paragraph 2 of the regulation.</p>	<p>APRC 21/22 4F</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>The APRC Convenor, Dr. Paul Norris has received a request to update number of policies as a result of the Student Support Model changes coming into effect. The vast majority of changes are to update job titles as a result of the Student Support Model changes. It was noted that job titles are still being confirmed and there may be some revisions to those policies received so far.</p> <p>APRC has received the first tranche of changes, and the revisions received thus far are to update job titles, and replace ‘Tier 4 student’ with ‘International student’. Policies received so far include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorised Interruption of Study • Course Organiser: Outline of Role (CSPC) • International Student Attendance and Engagement Policy • Performance Sport Policy 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postgraduate Degree Regulations • Programme and Course Handbooks Policy • Protection of Children and Protected Adults • Support for Study Policy • Taught Assessment Regulations • Undergraduate Degree Regulations • Undergraduate Progression Boards Policy • Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure <p>The Committee agreed that where changes were limited to updating role titles as a result of the Student Support Model changes, these could be approved by Convenor's action.</p> <p>The Advice Place noted that they are also considering updating job titles as a result of the Student Support Model changes. It was requested that this be flagged to the Student Support Model Project Team.</p>	
	<p>Next meeting</p> <p>The next formal meeting of APRC will be held on 26 May 2022.</p> <p>An additional meeting of APRC may be arranged subject to any further industrial action being called.</p>	

**Meeting of the Senatus Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)
to be held online on Tuesday 17th May, 11:30am**

Minutes

Attendees:

- Paul Norris (Convener)
- Judy Hardy
- Adam Bunni
- Kirsty Woomble
- Deborah Shaw
- Jeremy Crang
- Patrick Hadoke
- Heather McNeill
- Antony Maciocia
- Philippa Burrell
- Charlotte MacDonald
- Rachael Quirk
- Stephen Warrington
- Faten Adam (substitute member on behalf of Sarah McAllister)
- Stuart Lamont (substitute member on behalf of Tara Gold)
- Tina Harrison (Attending in her capacity as Convener of ACG)
- Lisa Dawson (Attending in her capacity as Acting Deputy Secretary)

Apologies received from Cathy Bovill, Sarah McAllister, Tara Gold, Jamie Davies.

1.	<p>UCU Industrial Action</p> <p>The Committee received a verbal update on the UCU Industrial Action from the Convener of APRC and the Acting Deputy Secretary.</p> <p>The University has been notified that there will be a marking and assessment boycott beginning on 23rd May. The exact details of the boycott are unclear, however this is being taken to include all aspects of the marking and assessment process, which include Boards of Examiners.</p> <p>A small number of external examiners have resigned from their roles with immediate effect. It was noted it is difficult to enforce the three month notice period for external examiners. External Examiner resignation is not being called as part of the industrial action.</p> <p>To date, a small number of concession requests have been approved by Convener's action to allow exam papers to be approved in the absence of external examiner approval.</p> <p>Human Resources have followed up with the Edinburgh UCU branch to confirm what action they expect to take. No update has been received as yet, though any updates will be shared with the Committee.</p>	Verbal Update
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	<p>This additional meeting of APRC has been called to discuss invoking regulation 70 and 71, and to consider possible concessions to regulations that may be required to mitigate the impact of industrial action. Academic Services are working on producing guidance for colleagues to support any concessions which are put in place by the Committee. Committee members were asked to also consider throughout the meeting specific areas where additional guidance alongside concessions would be useful.</p> <p>The Committee was informed that the Academic Contingency Group are continuing to meet and if there is an escalation of the industrial action, then further concessions to regulations can be considered if required.</p> <p>It was noted that Student Systems have reviewed the paper presented to APRC and have confirmed that the potential concessions referred to result in minimal or no changes to the Assessment and Progression Tools.</p>	
2.	<p>Invoking Regulation 70 and 71</p> <p>This item was introduced by Dr Adam Bunni (AB), Head of Academic Policy and Regulation, Academic Services.</p> <p>APRC was asked to consider whether it was appropriate to invoke Regulation 70 and 71. The Committee was asked to decide if there is a risk of significant disruption to our processes.</p> <p>The nature and scale of the action is not yet known, and APRC can only base their decisions on what the University has been formally notified of. The paper anticipates an impact on the return of marked work, the involvement of internal examiners in Boards of Examiners, and works on the assumption that an assessment boycott includes all parts of the assessment process.</p> <p>The Committee noted that, where concessions are approved, they are not active by default, but are only to be activated when they are required to mitigate the impact of industrial action on students.</p> <p>The guidance being prepared by Academic Services gives advice to colleagues on when to activate concessions and provides a hierarchy of actions to be taken when a concession is to be activated.</p> <p>The papers for this meeting were circulated to Senate members in advance and a small number of comments were received by the Convener, which were shared with the committee.</p> <p>Comments received queried how the outcome of the meeting would be shared with Senate. The Convener confirmed that Senate would be informed of the outcome of today's meeting by way of a verbal update at the next meeting of Senate on 25 May.</p> <p>APRC was asked to consider whether the marking and assessment boycott and prospective strike action represents a situation where significant disruption is anticipated.</p> <p>APRC Committee agreed that there is a risk of significant disruption and it is appropriate to consider activating Taught Assessment Regulation 70 and 71.</p>	APRC 21/22

Taught Assessment Regulation 70

The Committee agreed it is appropriate to activate Taught Assessment Regulation 70.

The Committee considered the regulations to be subject to a concession one-by-one.

General Undergraduate Degree Programme Regulations**Regulation 38: Minimum progression requirements**

The Committee confirmed that Regulation 38 of the DRPS would not be relaxed at this time. APRC will continue to monitor this and will revisit this decision if required.

Progression decisions should be made under normal timeframes if the information is available to do this.

There were some programme-specific impacts discussed, which require progression to be confirmed by the end of the current academic year, due to programme requirements. Specific examples raised include intercalated Medical Students and students going on a year abroad. It was recommended that CMVM, SWAY and the School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures be consulted on the potential impact to these students. If further decisions are required to relax progression regulations, these will be considered by APRC as needed.

Taught Assessment Regulations**1. Feedback Deadlines****Regulation 16: Feedback deadlines**

APRC agreed to relax Regulation 16.

2. Board of Examiners: quorum**Regulation 39: Board of Examiners: quorum**

APRC considered this regulation and noted that the Convener must be satisfied that the Board of Examiners will be competent to make the decisions, even if quorum cannot be reached. APRC agreed to relax Regulation 39, provided that the Board was still competent.

Regulation 39.2: In exceptional circumstances and by prior written agreement with the Head of the College and the Convener of the Board, representatives nominated and authorised by them may substitute for internal examiners.

APRC agreed to relax Regulation 39.2, empowering the Convener of the Board to substitute internal examiners, where this would support the operation of a Board with a quorum of suitable members.

APRC discussed the hierarchy of approaches to issues relating to quorum at Boards, and agree the following:

1. If alternate members can attend a Board of Examiners in lieu of the usual Board members and achieve quorum, then this action should be taken.
2. If the Board can practicably be held asynchronously and achieve quorum, this action should be taken.
3. The final option after all other options have been exhausted is to activate the concession to relax the regulation.

The Convener of the Board of Examiners would be responsible for making this decision.

3. Progression, classification and award decisions

Regulation 13: Passing assessment:

The Committee discussed these regulations and agreed that if the Learning Outcomes have been met, then grades can be considered to be final.

If subsequent information becomes available after the Board has ratified and confirmed marks, and this information is to the student's benefit, then the missing components should be included and updated grades considered by the Board of Examiners.

If a missing component becomes available after the grades have been ratified and confirmed by the Board of Examiners and this is to a student's detriment, the missing component should not be included.

The Committee noted that marks changing may impact on graduating students and may result in updated classifications. It was agreed that this is unavoidable though such changes can only result in a student's degree classification improving.

Regulation 13.3) APRC agreed to relax Regulation 13.3 and give Boards the flexibility to reweight assessment items, provided that the Learning Outcomes have been met. APRC agreed to relax the regulation for Boards to consult with College Committees.

Regulation 13 a) APRC agreed to relax Regulation 13.3a)

Regulation 13 b) APRC did not relax Regulation 13.3b).

If the external examiner is not in post, then a concession should be sought from APRC.

Action: The Committee requested that the guidance issued to Schools and Colleges include information on when Boards may be asked to revisit decisions based on missing information becoming available.

Regulation 51: Undergraduate progression: pre-honours and into honours & 52: Undergraduate honours assessment progression

The Committee confirmed that Regulation 51 and 52 of the TAR's would not be relaxed at this time. APRC will continue to monitor this and will revisit this decision if required.

Regulation 53: Award of undergraduate Ordinary and General degrees

The Committee discussed this regulation and noted that credit on aggregate is not available on Ordinary degrees as students have the opportunity to resit failed courses over the summer.

If activated, Boards would be asked to decide whether a student is eligible for credits on aggregate based on average calculation including the full 120 credits. If a course result is missing, this would be excluded from the calculation. Failed courses would be included in the calculation,

unless they had been excluded due to special circumstances, or due to exceptional impact from the industrial action.

The Committee considered programme-specific examples where this regulation cannot be relaxed. Medical programmes are classified as Ordinary degrees, and for professional purposes, credit on aggregate cannot be awarded for failed courses.

APRC agreed to relax Regulation 53, though Medical programmes would be excluded from this relaxation.

Action: The guidance will ensure that Medical programmes are excluded from this regulation and that it was clear that this relaxation was in relation to graduating students only.

APRC members expressed a desire to consider a permanent change to the regulations to allow the award of credit on aggregate for Ordinary degrees.

Regulation 56: Postgraduate assessment progression

The Committee discussed this regulation and agreed that due to timing of postgraduate progression decisions impacting on the period immediately following, this regulation should be considered by APRC now. This would mean that PGT students could potentially be allowed to progress on a provisional basis, pending a final decision when more information became available.

The Committee agreed that it was desirable for Boards of Examiners to meet as soon as possible once marks are available, rather than holding these over until students have completed their dissertation.

APRC agreed to relax Regulation 56.

4. Postgraduate Research Assessment Regulations 2021/22

Regulation 13: Progression Review

APRC agreed to relax Regulation 13 of the Postgraduate Research Assessment Regulations 2021/22.

Taught Assessment Regulation 71

APRC was asked to consider whether the guidance set out in TAR 71 is appropriate for Boards of Examiners to use, in the event that this is needed as a result of the industrial action

The Committee agreed it is appropriate to activate Taught Assessment Regulation 71.

It was noted that the guidance is unlikely to expand significantly on the advice that is outlined in the Regulation. Boards retain discretion to decide whether they have enough information to make decisions.

Action: it was requested that the guidance provide Schools with advice on who to contact if they have further queries.

<p>3.</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>External Examiners The Committee received a verbal update on the resignation of external examiners. Concessions required to regulations related to external examiners have been handled on a case-by-case basis to date. The number of resignations remain low and APRC does not believe there is a need for widespread relaxation of regulations.</p> <p>APRC agreed that the possible relaxation of regulations related to external examiners should continue to be considered on a case-by-case basis and, in the first instance, by Convener's action. APRC will continue to monitor this, and revisit this decision if the scale of impact changes.</p> <p>Action: Colleges to contact their Schools to ask them to get in touch with issues related to external examiner involvement in assessment processes</p> <p>The Committee was informed that a verbal update on the decisions taken by APRC would be given to Senate on 25 May.</p> <p>The University Contingency Group would also receive an update on the discussions had at ACG, and the decisions taken by APRC. APRC will be updated as information on the industrial action is received from Human Resources.</p> <p>There was a request to provide students with an update and reassurance as soon as possible, which would be taken forward by Acting Deputy Secretary.</p>	
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Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

26 May 2022

Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities - Implications for Taught Assessment Regulations

Description of paper

1. This paper proposes changes to the Taught Assessment Regulations - specifically the removal of Regulation 16 Feedback Deadlines and consideration of the potential modification of Regulation 11 Principles of assessment and Regulation 15 Provision of formative feedback – arising from the development of new Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities in response to the recent QAA ELIR.

Action requested / recommendation

2. APRC is asked to discuss and approve the proposed changes to the Taught Assessment Regulations for academic year 2022/23.

Background and context

3. Our recent QAA ELIR report made the following recommendation, urging us to put in place an institution-wide approach to addressing assessment and feedback within this academic year:

‘Over an extended period of time, the University has considered a broad evidence-base which has highlighted concerns about assessment and feedback and this remains an area of challenge for the institution. The University is asked to make demonstrable progress, within the next academic year, in prioritising the development of a holistic and strategic approach to the design and management of assessment and feedback’.

4. A Task Group of the Curriculum Transformation Programme was formed, co-led by Tina Harrison and Sabine Rolle, and was tasked with coordinating the University’s response to the ELIR recommendation within academic year 2021/22 and to do so with strategic alignment to the Curriculum Transformation Programme.
5. Following extensive research and consultation, Senate Education Committee approved the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities at its meeting on 12th May 2022 (link to paper).

Discussion

6. The principles are set out fully in Appendix 1. In summary, assessment and feedback will be:
 - a. fit for purpose
 - b. involve conversation with students
 - c. inclusive, equitable and fair
 - d. reliable, robust and transparent
 - e. proportionate to the amount and level of credit
 - f. constructive, developmental and timely

- g. make appropriate use of learning technologies
 - h. developed and monitored at the programme level
7. The paper proposes amendments to the following Taught Assessment Regulations: Regulations 11, 15 and 16.
 8. Regulation 11 – Principles of Assessment. These principles require updating to reflect the new principles approved by SEC. APRC is invited to discuss and consider whether Regulation 11 should be updated to take account of the new principles or whether Regulation 11 should be removed, allowing for the development of a stand-alone policy containing the new assessment and feedback principles.
 9. Regulation 15 - Provision of formative feedback and Regulation 16 - Feedback deadlines are both covered by the new principle that feedback will be constructive, developmental and timely and it is proposed that both these regulations are removed. The 15-day feedback deadline in particular has been identified as problematic over several years.
 10. At its meetings in September and December 2019, Senate Quality Assurance Committee considered the outcomes of annual and periodic review, and recommended to University Executive that the 15-day feedback deadline be reconsidered in light of student feedback and challenges staff had in meeting this blanket deadline for different cohort sizes and types of assessments. Prior analysis of NSS data (Paper LTC [16/17 1 E](#)) had shown that there was no clear correlation between feedback turnaround times and student satisfaction scores in the National Student Survey. The most important factor is that feedback is useful, and timeliness is important insofar as it affects the usefulness of the feedback.
 11. The new principles propose an expectation of 3 weeks (rather than 15 days) as this seems to be used across the sector and more accurately reflects the time from a students' perspective. However, the new principle proposes a softening of the strict 15-days to an indicative standard that allows flexibility to schools to vary this where 15 days is not achievable, or where shorter turnaround times are the norm. In such cases (and in accordance with the principle of conversation with students) students will be given clear expectations regarding when they will receive their feedback on assessed work.

Resource implications

12. There are likely to be some implications for staff time in the implementation of the Assessment and Feedback principles, particularly in cases where the principles currently are not being met. The principles provides a framework and reference point that can be used in course and programme approval processes and in annual course and programme review.

Risk management

13. The recommendations within the paper are aimed at reducing the risks associated with poor performance in assessment and feedback and the likelihood of an unsatisfactory outcome in a future ELIR from not taking action.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

14. N/A

Equality & diversity

15. One of the core principles directly addresses inclusive assessment practice and equality in assessment outcomes. An EqlA has not yet been carried out on the principles and should be taken forward in the event that these become a new policy.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

16. Any changes to the regulations will be communicated as normal as part of an annual update to the regulations.

17. Separately, a series of communication and implementation activities are being developed to embed the principles, including a teaching Matters blog series and the establishment of an assessment and feedback community of practice/network to share practice and provide ongoing support in the implementation.

Authors

Professor Tina Harrison (Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance)

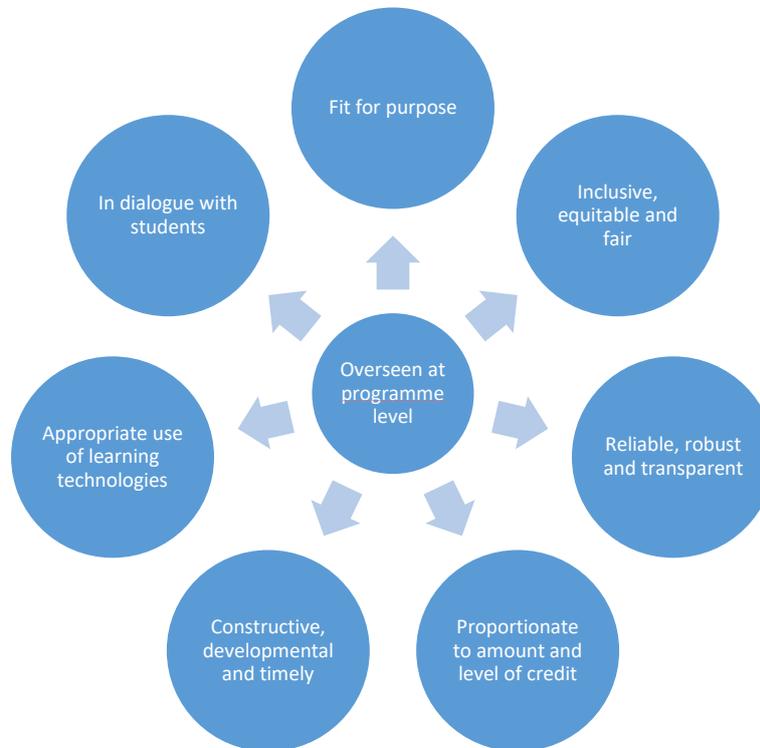
Date 18th May 2022

Presenter

Professor Tina Harrison (Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance)

Freedom of Information (*Is the paper 'open' or 'closed'*) *Open*

Appendix 1: University of Edinburgh
Assessment and Feedback Principles



- **Our assessment will be fit for purpose**
 - a. Assessment shall prepare students to become practitioners in their discipline;
 - b. Assessment shall be for and of learning;
 - c. Assessment shall contribute towards the Edinburgh Student Vision;
 - d. Assessment methods shall be appropriate to, and align with, the programme and course learning outcomes.
- **Our assessment and feedback practices will involve conversation with students**
 - a. Students, teaching staff and markers shall develop a shared understanding of the purpose of assessment;
 - b. Students, teaching staff and markers shall develop a shared understanding of the marking criteria (and expectations);
 - c. Students shall be supported to undertake assessments and to develop assessment and feedback literacy;
 - d. Students and teaching staff shall develop a shared understanding of academic integrity in general and expected academic practices in relation to specific assessments.

- e. Students shall have the opportunity to engage in dialogue (with teaching staff) and contribute to the development of assessment and feedback practices.
- **Our assessment and feedback will be inclusive, equitable and fair**
 - a. Assessment shall be developed taking into account diverse student learning needs and approaches;
 - b. As far as possible, assessments shall be designed to minimise the need for individual learning adjustments;
 - c. Students shall have the opportunity to experience a range of assessments across their programme;
 - d. Assessment outcomes should be equitable; where outcomes are unequal assessment methods shall be reviewed and revised accordingly.
- **Our assessment and feedback will be reliable, robust and transparent**
 - a. Assessment design should support and encourage good academic practices and minimise opportunities or incentives for academic misconduct;
 - b. Marking criteria (and any marking rubrics) shall be provided to students along with the assessment task;
 - c. Where multiple markers are involved, the marking and moderation process shall support consistency in standards and feedback.
- **Our assessment and feedback will be proportionate to the amount and level of credit**
 - a. Assessment load shall be manageable for students and staff, while providing sufficient breadth and depth to maintain standards and facilitate student learning;
 - b. Assessment workload shall be comparable across courses at the same level and credit weighting;
 - c. The format and volume of feedback shall vary according to the type and scale of assessment ensuring feedback is targeted appropriately.
- **Our feedback on assessment will be constructive, developmental and timely**
 - a. Feedback shall be provided on all assessed work;
 - b. All feedback shall facilitate student learning by helping students evaluate and develop their performance;
 - c. Students shall be given sufficient time to reflect and act upon feedback between assignments, where this is practical;
 - d. Feedback on all assessed work shall normally be returned within three weeks of submission. Where this is not possible, students shall be given clear expectations regarding the timing and methods of feedback.

- **Our assessment and feedback will make appropriate use of learning technologies**
 - a. Learning technologies shall be used to facilitate efficient and user-friendly assessment, marking and feedback for students and staff;
 - b. Learning technologies shall be used in ways that respect and support the development of students as data subjects and data citizens;
 - c. Learning technologies shall be used with due consideration of the effects of potential biases and limitations of algorithmic systems and/or automated components on which the technology may be based.

- **Our assessment and feedback approaches will be developed and monitored at the programme level to ensure:**
 - a. Overall fitness for purpose of assessment and alignment with programme learning outcomes;
 - b. Alignment with and development of the Edinburgh Student Vision;
 - c. Variety in assessment across a programme;
 - d. Appropriate challenge for the level of study, enabling students to develop and improve during their degrees;
 - e. Assessment timing is suitably coordinated and sufficiently flexible affording students appropriate time to undertake each assessment;
 - f. An appropriate balance of formative versus summative assessment across a programme;
 - g. Consistency in assessment load relative to credit (to protect against over-assessment);
 - h. Enough time for feedback to be provided by staff and used by students.

Assessment and Feedback Priorities

The principles (above) set the baseline expectations for assessment and feedback. For each principle, we propose a priority to encourage enhancement in assessment and feedback, aligned with and supporting Curriculum Transformation. The priorities are included for information, but are not intended to be included in the Taught Assessment Regulations. The relationship between principles and priorities is outlined in the table, and with further details on the priorities below.

Principles (Expectations)	Priorities (Enhancement)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fit for purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase authentic / sustainable assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversation with students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students as partners / co-creators in assessment and feedback
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive, equitable and fair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment and feedback inclusive by design
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliable, robust and transparent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic integrity in assessment design
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructive, developmental and timely feedback • Proportionate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased opportunity for formative assessment and feedback, and feedback as ongoing dialogue
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportionate • Appropriate use of learning technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased use of technology to support creativity, innovation and experimentation in assessment and feedback (including supporting increased inclusivity and academic integrity).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overseen at programme level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of programme level (compared with course level) assessment

Increased use of authentic assessment

The use of authentic assessment is not new and we have many excellent examples across the University, but there is scope to increase the opportunity for students to engage in assessments (where relevant) where they have to perform real-world tasks or that are analogous to the kinds of activities/issues/problems that are faced by citizens, consumers or professionals.

Students as partners / co-creators in assessment

As above, this is not new and we have many excellent examples of this across the University, but not enough. There are many benefits to working more closely in partnership with students in assessment and feedback and providing opportunities for co-creation or co-design of assessment/feedback with students (thanks to Cathy Bovill for the summary):

- Improved academic performance or higher quality of work from students (Bovill 2014; Deeley and Bovill 2017)
- Enhanced skills for future professional development including teamwork, critical reflection, and communication skills (Deeley 2014)
- Opening up of the assessment process to be more transparent (Deeley 2014)
- Shift from a focus on grades to a focus on learning (Delpish et al. 2010)
- Helps to promote academic integrity (Egan 2018)
- Increased autonomy, self-regulation, and responsibility (Deeley and Bovill 2017)
- Creation of a learning community (Deeley and Bovill 2017)
- Increased experience of negotiation and development of associated skills (Bovill 2014; Deeley 2014)
- Enhanced assessment literacy (Andrews, Brown and Mesher 2018; Deeley and Bovill 2017)

Assessment and feedback inclusive by design

Inclusive assessment aims to tackle assessment at point of design to ensure the ways in which we assess do not exclude students. It includes looking at all aspects, from the design of assessment tasks to the development of marking criteria to the method and mode of feedback. This is not only about addressing the needs to our disabled students, but goes much further to ensure that as far as possible we take account of the different learning needs of all our students. It can also lead to increased assessment choice and flexibility not only across courses but within courses. Inclusive assessment practice can contribute to closing attainment/awarding gaps.

Academic integrity in assessment design

With the rise in academic misconduct, it is important that we consider ways in which we can strengthen academic integrity through assessment design and be more aware of the risks to academic integrity arising from different types of assessment, and the mitigations. Further work is needed to understand the academic integrity challenges inherent in written assessment and identify ways of addressing them, and consider the role and place of team working and collaboration. This links with other key priorities, since academic integrity can be strengthened by increasing partnership with students and increased use of authentic assessment.

Increased opportunity for formative assessment and feedback

Students learn more from formative assessment and feedback, but we need to do this in a way that does not increase workload for students or staff. It is not intended that this would lead to an increase in assessments, but a re-think in terms of the place of feedback in the assessment process. There are opportunities to increase feedback dialogue within existing assessments and shift the balance or emphasis of feedback from the end of the assessment (when students cannot change anything) to earlier in the assessment process, allowing students to learn from the feedback and improve their performance. Feedback becomes more valuable.

Increased use of technology for innovation and creativity in assessment

Learning technologies can be used to increase the scope for creativity, innovation and experimentation in assessment and support new kinds of assessment. Learning technologies can also contribute to addressing many of the other priorities, but particularly enhanced diversity, authenticity and choice of assessments.

Development of programme level assessments

A key principle is that assessment and feedback should be monitored at the programme level and coherence at the programme level, but this principle is based on the assumption that assessment occurs at the course or unit level. This priority encourages us to consider the development of assessment at a broader level than the individual course, at the wider programme level. There are some examples of this across the University, and innovation in this area in discussion at EFI, but scope for greater use. Careful placement of programmatic-level assessment can be useful in assessing broader programme-level learning outcomes, reducing over-assessment and managing assessment load. It can also free up space for more formative assessment to take place at appropriate points.

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**26 May 2022****Coursework Extensions regulation: outcome of consultation on interim amendments to policy for 2022/23****Description of paper**

1. The paper provides APRC with the outcome of the consultation on an interim amendment to the Taught Assessment Regulations relating to coursework extensions ahead of the 2022/23 academic year.

Action requested / recommendation

2. APRC is asked to note the outcome of the consultation on interim amendments, ahead of receiving a paper recommending a task group be formulated to undertake a wider review of the coursework extension and special circumstances policies in 2022/23.
3. APRC is asked to consider and approve the recommended approach for 2022/23.

Background and context

4. At its January 2022 meeting, APRC considered evidence from the Extensions and Special Circumstances (ESC) service regarding the huge increase in volume and proportion of coursework extensions being approved by the service. In some cases, up to 60% of a cohort were receiving extensions for the same assessment. This raised significant concerns among members about how far our current policy is supporting students to develop skills around time management and working to deadlines. Moreover, the sheer volume of extensions granted presents significant challenges in marking and moderating students' work timeously. At the January meeting, Committee members agreed that the existing policy regarding coursework extensions was unsustainable, and that changes should be considered during the 2022/23 session alongside a wider review of the Special Circumstances process. This review would take account of the outcomes from the ESC review, which is due to report in early summer, and from the Assessment and Feedback group, which reports to the Curriculum Transformation Board.
5. Following the January 2022 meeting, the Colleges sent a joint communication to Lisa Dawson, Interim Deputy Secretary Students, and Academic Services, requesting an urgent review of the coursework extensions policy, in view of the concerns raised.
6. At the March 2022 meeting of APRC, a paper ([APRC 21/22 4B](#)) outlining options for interim changes to the policy regarding coursework extensions was presented. Members agreed that given the time available in the 2021/22 academic year, the most viable option was for Colleges to consult on the proposal to reduce the default time granted for coursework extensions from 7 to 3 days.

7. A consultation paper (Appendix 1) was circulated to the Colleges and EUSA in early April, outlining the proposal for the default time granted for a coursework extension to be reduced from 7 to 3 days. In line with the current policy, Schools would still be able to offer up to 7 days, where they regard this as appropriate. The Colleges and EUSA undertook consultation with stakeholders and their collated feedback was returned to Academic Services.
8. The existing policy regarding coursework extensions is set out in Taught Assessment Regulation 28. Students can request an extension of up to 7 days via the ESC service, based on one of the accepted reasons set out in regulation 28.6. Students are not required to submit supporting evidence alongside their applications, though they are expected to explain how their circumstances meet one of the accepted reasons.

Discussion

9. A total of fifteen responses were received from Colleges, Schools, Deaneries and EUSA. Of the fifteen responses, five constituents were in support of implementing the interim change in 2022/23. Nine constituents were not in support of implementing the interim change. One constituent did not give a clear stance.

Points made in favour of the interim change

10. Academic staff are in favour of the proposal and it was believed that this interim change would make marking turnaround times more achievable for markers. It was believed that this measure would make marking deadlines more realistic and allow the full marking and moderation process to be completed once. In some areas, markers undertake moderation more than once to adhere to the fifteen working day turnaround for feedback, for example, completing moderation of submissions received on-time with an extended deadline and late submissions.

Points made against the interim change

11. The interim solution will not address the core issue, which Schools identified as a high volume of accepted coursework extensions. A number of Schools noted that it was the proportion of students on a course with an extension as being problematic, rather than the duration of the extension granted. For example, in a course of 200, 10% of the students on the course being granted an extension is manageable, whereas 50% of the students on the course being granted an extension is problematic.
12. Many Schools believed that the high volume of applications was as a result of students being able to self-certify when applying for a coursework extension, coupled with the wide range of acceptable reasons for a coursework extension. Some Schools also believed that the ease of application contributed to the high volume, with students able to submit an application without having to speak with a staff member within the School before applying.
13. It was suggested that the proposed change would result in an increased workload and would shift the bulk of work from managing coursework extensions to

consideration of valid special circumstance applications. Schools believe that a 3 day extension would do little to mitigate the majority of reasons that students apply for a coursework extension, which would force students to apply for both a coursework extension and special circumstances. A 7 day extension may appropriately mitigate impact alone without requiring further support from special circumstances.

In addition to increasing the volume of valid special circumstance applications, this may require Schools to hold rolling Special Circumstances Committees to agree extended deadlines beyond 3 days, and/or an increase in alternative assessments being produced.

14. There was concern that the interim change may result in students being unable to submit coursework by the specified deadline, and therefore less work being submitted for marking. It was noted that missing coursework may mean Boards of Examiners are unable to determine a fair or accurate grade at the end of a semester as there may be a higher percentage of missing coursework leaving Schools unable to finalise results and to set alternative assessments.
15. EUCLID and APT cannot support different lengths of time for coursework extensions and extra time adjustments. This means that students who have an extra time adjustment would not be able to apply for a 7 day extension via the ESC system. The interim change would result in additional manual work out with the ESC system to manage extensions for students with an extra time adjustment.
16. A number of Schools noted their concern at the default extension being reduced to 3 days, and no longer having the option to specify a 7 day extension as the default period available. The existing policy sets 7 days as the maximum permitted extension offered under the regulations (though longer extensions can be offered under Special Circumstances), but TAR 28.3 explains that Schools can reduce the period of extension to less than 7 days for some assessments. If the default period were to be reduced to 3 days, it is intended that Schools would continue to retain the option to specify a 7 day extension as the default period available.
17. Other general points raised include:
 - Concern regarding the impact on students and their reaction to the change. This could be perceived as a punitive measure and may be difficult to justify to students and result in an increase in student complaints. One School suggested this may be seen as 'changing the goal posts' mid-way through a programme, particularly for part-time and continuing students;
 - Deadlines were more likely to fall on a weekend, when support was not available to students;
 - ESC capacity to maintain a timely turnaround and consider requests before the assessment deadline if the extension granted is reduced;
 - Concerns regarding the consistency of approach between Schools within a College. For example, differing practice may make it difficult for Schools to

justify when a course permits a 3 day extension, when others permit a 7 day extension.

- Appropriateness of a 3 day extension versus a 7 day extension for different courses or assessments. For example, should a dissertation or large research projects permit a 7 day extension, and what determines whether a 3 day versus a 7 day extension is appropriate;
- Concern regarding the timing of the interim change coinciding with changes to be introduced under the new Student Support model.

18. There was a general sense among responses that an interim change would not be “worth it” and this was likely to generate additional workload for a short-term measure, ahead of potential bigger changes that may come out of the review to be undertaken in 2022/23.

Approach for 2022/23

19. The majority of feedback received indicates that the interim measure proposed would either be potentially detrimental, or not beneficial, and would not address the key concern raised, which is the volume of coursework extensions granted.

20. The existing policy sets 7 days as the maximum permitted extension offered under the regulations (though longer extensions can be offered under Special Circumstances), but TAR 28.3 explains that Schools can reduce the period of extension to less than 7 days for some assessments. Should a School wish to set a shorter default extension for a course or assessment, they are able to do this under the current regulations. As is standard practice, any deviation from the norm should be clearly communicated to students via the relevant course documentation.

21. A paper will be presented to the May meeting of APRC proposing a task group be set up to undertake a full review of the coursework extension and special circumstances policies with any changes to be introduced in 2023/24.

22. It may be appropriate for APRC to wait for the results of the task group’s work before considering any changes to the coursework extension policy.

23. The Assessment and Feedback working group will present a paper to the May meeting of APRC on managing of feedback deadlines in 2022/23. It is hoped this paper will address the concerns raised on managing the return of feedback and colleagues ability to meet feedback deadlines.

Suggestions received from Schools for 2022/23:

24. There were a number of suggestions put forward by Schools, some of which have been included for APRC’s consideration below. A number of the suggestions put forward are substantive changes and would require further consultation ahead of 2022/23. These include, but are not limited to:

- Reducing the range of acceptable reasons for a coursework extension
- Altering the default extension from 7 to 5 days

Based on previous discussions at APRC, there is not sufficient time to appropriately consult on these issues in order to consider potential changes ahead of 2022/23, however suggestions will be shared with the task group once formulated for their consideration. Schools also noted their desire to be consulted by the task group on any changes made ahead of 2023/24.

25. Suggestions for APRC's consideration include:

- A shift in the central communications to students around coursework extensions, pitching use of extensions as the exception, not the norm.
- Introduction of a threshold percentage of coursework extensions within a course, which allow markers to extend the return of marking.
- Management of student expectations around the return of feedback, and the ability of markers to return feedback if there is a high volume of coursework extensions for an assessment
- The 15 working day turnaround for marking to start from the extended deadline, instead of the main submission deadline.
- Permit Schools to manage turnaround times locally

Resource implications

26. The potential resource implications are considered in the discussion section of the paper.

Risk management

27. The possible risks are considered in the discussion section of the paper.

Equality & diversity

28. The equality and diversity implications are considered in the discussion section of the paper.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

29. The paper does not propose a change to policy at this stage.

Author

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May 2022

Presenter

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May 2022

Freedom of Information

Open

Appendix 1: Proposal and consultation on interim changes to the coursework extension policy for 2022-23

Background and context:

At its March meeting, the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) considered options for interim changes to the University's policy relating to coursework extensions for the 2022/23 academic year, following a joint request from representatives of the three Colleges. The Colleges had expressed urgent concerns about the high volume of coursework extensions granted, which was making it difficult to complete marking and moderation processes and meet the 15 working day turnaround that the Taught Assessment Regulations stipulates.

APRC discussed a range of options, taking account of the time available to consult and make meaningful, considered change ahead of the 2022/23 academic year. The Committee agreed that while there is appetite for significant change, given the importance of such a policy on the student and staff experience and the limited time available, a short-term interim change was the only option available at this stage. However, Academic Services have committed to undertaking a wider review of the Special Circumstances and coursework extensions policies during the 2022/23 academic session. APRC will consider a paper proposing the scope of this review at its May 2022 meeting.

In a related development, at its May 2022 meeting, APRC will consider a proposal from the Assessment and Feedback working group to change the existing regulation regarding feedback deadlines, putting greater control in the hands of Schools to manage timely return of feedback in conversation with students

APRC agreed to consult Colleges, Schools and students on a proposed change to the default length of coursework extension granted ahead of the May meeting of APRC. The Committee acknowledged that this interim measure alone will not resolve the issues that the current policy present, but may serve to mitigate these issues in advance of the planned wider review.

Proposal:

It is proposed that the default time granted for a coursework extension be reduced from 7 to 3 days. In line with the current policy, Schools would still be able to offer up to 7 days, where they regard this as appropriate. As currently, there will remain some assessments for which Schools do not offer extensions, where it would be impractical to do so (e.g. for weekly assessments with a short turnaround).

It is expected that for any individual, substantive item of coursework, three days ought to give a student sufficient time to complete the work. Students will continue to retain the option of submitting a Special Circumstances application where a 3 day extension is inadequate to their circumstances.

Students who are entitled to longer extensions as part of a Schedule of Adjustments would continue to be able to access these, as normal. Under the Expedited Decisions provision of the Special Circumstances Policy (7.6), Conveners of Special Circumstances Committees (or their delegate) can make prompt decisions about extension requests which go beyond the length permitted under the coursework extensions regulation.

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**26 May 2022****Review of Coursework Extension and Special Circumstances Policies****Description of paper**

1. This paper proposes to set up a task group to review the University policies on coursework extensions and special circumstances and propose changes to these, as appropriate. The task group will review the existing policies, benchmark policy changes against other UK institutions, take account of the student and staff experience and changes in student behaviour.

Action requested

2. APRC approval for a task group to be set up to review the coursework extension and special circumstances policies with the view to bringing policy changes to the March 2023 meeting for implementation in the 2023-23 academic year.
3. APRC comments on, and approval of, the proposed remit and membership of the task group.

Background and context

4. The University policies on coursework extensions and special circumstances were last reviewed prior to the launch of the ESC service. The launch of ESC coincided with the pandemic and Covid mitigation policies and there has been significant demand for the service since its inception. In 2021-22 the University has made moves to return to pre-Covid practices for considering extensions and special circumstances, however the ESC service has still seen a significant demand and applications remain high. An ESC Review is currently underway and the outcomes from this Review are expected in early summer of 2022. The centralisation of the service has provided an opportunity to reflect on the type and volume of coursework extension and special circumstances applications received, the challenges that the existing policies present and provided opportunities to target and develop support for students in areas they find difficult.

5. In January 2021, APRC received a paper ([APRC 20/21 Paper D](#)) from ESC proposing changes to the policy on handling coursework extension requests, and a request to undertake further consultation on the proposals. APRC agreed it was not appropriate to take the proposals forward in January 2021, though committed to returning to the item in 2021/22.

6. Schools are required to nominate the maximum coursework extension available for an assessment at the beginning of the teaching term. Schools generally permit a 7 day extension, which is the standard and maximum time available under the coursework extension policy. ESC consider the application and, if approved, grant an extension up to the maximum available as specified by the School. The high volume of extensions granted on many courses has led to Schools having to manage two key deadlines for each assessment, one on-time, and one for students with an extension.

7. Schools and Colleges have cited challenges in managing the marking and moderation process in line with the Regulation 16 of the Taught Assessment Regulations (TARs). In some cases, up to 60% of a class have a coursework extension which impacts on the ability to complete marking and moderation to a required standard and by the deadlines specified in the TARs. Anecdotally, some staff have reported having to complete the moderation process twice to meet the deadlines stipulated in the TARs, once for on-time submissions, and again for extended submissions, having a direct impact on staff workload and posing a potential risk to the consistency of marking.

8. A working group set up to consider Assessment and Feedback as part of the Curriculum Transformation Board is considering the University's approach to assessment, which will also encompass the University's approach to deadlines. It is expected that this group will present policy changes to the May 2022 meeting of APRC, and it is hoped that the results from this group will be available to be considered in determining policy changes required as a result of the review.

9. There is evidence from ESC data that students may be using coursework extensions in a way which departs from the intention, which is to support students who experience *"unexpected short-term circumstances which are exceptional for the individual student, beyond that student's control, and which could reasonably be expected to have had an adverse impact on the student's ability to complete the assessment on time"*. ESC has begun working with IAD to develop resources to support students to manage this area of their studies, however it is worth reflecting if adjustments to the coursework extensions policy are also necessary to support this shift.

10. The ESC Review process¹ has highlighted significant differences in practice between Schools in the handling and approach to decision making regarding special circumstances applications. For example, there is variation among Schools as to whether severity of the circumstances is taken into account at the point that outcome decisions are being made, and in the use (or not) of algorithmic decision trees when making outcome decisions. The current breadth of approaches are compatible with the existing Special Circumstances policy, due to its current lack of prescription in these areas, but pose a risk to the consistency of the student experience.

Discussion

10. We are asking APRC to discuss the remit and membership of the proposed task group. We are also asking them to discuss the proposed timeline for the review and implementation of changes from the review.

a. Remit:

To review the University-wide policies on coursework extensions and special circumstances. The task group will look to amend the existing policies to ensure they provide supportive and appropriate outcomes for students, while making an efficient and proportionate use of staff time. It is intended that the task group will take a collaborative approach to the review, working closely with colleagues in ESC to

¹ A final report on the ESC Review with relevant recommendations is due in June 2022.

ensure that recommended policy changes can be implemented by the service. The precise remit of the group may be amended in response to the outcomes of the ESC review. The task group aims to:

- Consider the existing distinction between the coursework extensions and special circumstances processes, and determine whether this remains desirable, or should be clarified, or removed;
- Consider and potentially refine the acceptable grounds for requesting a coursework extension or applying for special circumstances;
- Consider the approach to requiring evidence to support an application for coursework extensions or special circumstances;
- Provide clarity around the application, consideration and approval process, in relation to coursework extensions;
- Clarify the process for determining appropriate outcomes in the special circumstances process, including whether this should take account of the perceived severity of circumstances.

The task group will align its work with the outcomes delivered by the ESC Review and the Assessment and Feedback working group.

The group will not consider extensions and special circumstances policies related to research programmes. The group will not provide recommendations relating to student support required to support policy changes, though any insights gained into student behaviours or gaps in the provision of support will be shared with the relevant services.

b. Membership:

Convener & Chair. It is recommended this be a College Dean of Learning and Teaching, or Dean of Students

3 x Representative from each College, comprising of one College representative, one School academic representative such as a Director of Teaching or Convener of a Board of Examiners, and one School professional services representative such as a teaching administration or student support staff member.

1 x Representatives from Academic Services (also acting as secretary to the group)

2 x Representatives from Student Administration, including a representative from ESC

2 x Representatives from Wellbeing Services, including colleagues from SDS or IAD

2 x Representatives from the Students' Association

c. Methodology:

4 task group meetings and consideration of e-business via a dedicated Microsoft Teams site.

d. Deliverables

- Revised University policy and regulations relating to coursework extensions
- Revised University policy and regulations relating to special circumstances
- New guidance for students and staff regarding coursework extensions to be formulated following any revisions to policy and regulation as appropriate.
- New guidance for students and staff regarding special circumstances to be formulated following any revisions to policy and regulation as appropriate.

e. Timelines:

The task group will meet around four times over the course of the 2022-23 academic year.

The first meeting will take place in early August, following the release of the ESC Review outcomes. A schedule for further meetings will be agreed at the first meeting of the task group.

A final report is to be prepared for the March 2023 meeting of APRC for implementation in the 2023-24 Academic Year.

Resource implications

11. Availability of staff to participate in the review.

Risk Management

12. The proposal does not present any significant risks. There are potential risks relating to the consistency of students' experience of the special circumstances process, should this work not be undertaken.

Equality & Diversity

13. Equality and Diversity has been considered and the proposal does not carry likely impacts for student in any particular characteristic groups.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

14. The task group will report to APRC on its progress, with final proposed changes to be presented at the March 2023 meeting of APRC for approval.

Author

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Presenter

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Freedom of Information

This paper is open

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**26 May 2022****Proposed amendments to the Code of Student Conduct****Description of paper**

1. The paper proposes amendments to the Code of Student Conduct, which is the University's student disciplinary process.

Action requested / recommendation

2. APRC is asked to approve the proposed amendments to the Code of Student Conduct. Appendix 1 includes a summary of the proposed amendments to the Code, with a rationale for each. Appendix 2 includes an updated version of the Code, showing the amendments.

Background and context

3. The Code of Student Conduct ("The Code": <https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/codeofstudentconduct.pdf>) provides the University's policy and procedure for handling allegations of misconduct raised against students of the University. The current version of the Code came into effect in 2019. Since the last review of the Code, the volume of cases handled under the procedure has grown exponentially, with a particular increase in the number of cases involving allegations of serious and potentially criminal misconduct, especially those relating to sexual violence.
4. Allegations of misconduct are generally received via complaints from students or members of the public, or reports from University staff. Most allegations¹ are investigated under the Code by members of the Student Conduct Team within Academic Services, acting as Conduct Investigators. Where the Conduct Investigator finds that it is more likely than not that there has been a breach of the Code, they refer the case for disciplinary action by a Student Discipline Officer (in less serious cases), or to the Student Discipline Committee for further consideration (in more serious cases). Where students are found to have breached the Code, Student Discipline Officers and the Student Discipline Committee can apply penalties in line with those specified in the Code, the most significant of which is immediate, permanent exclusion from the University.
5. Academic Services monitor the application of the Code on an ongoing basis, taking account of learning from individual cases, including feedback from students involved in the process. The next scheduled review of the Code is not due until 2023/24. However, experience gained of using the process since 2019 has led to a number of recommendations which would bring potential benefits to students and staff, were they to be introduced sooner. It was on this basis that the Deputy Secretary (Students) proposed that the review of the Code be brought

¹ Except for those relating to less serious misconduct in University-managed accommodation, which are generally handled by the Residence Life team.

forward. The standard review cycle for the Code is every five years. We are proposing that the next review take place in four years' time, on the understanding that this could be brought forward in the event that significant enhancements are proposed.

6. Senate has formal responsibility for student discipline within the University, but has delegated responsibility for the Code to APRC. However, any changes to the Code are subject to approval by a Resolution of University Court, which would include consultation with Senate and the General Council.

Discussion

Consultation

7. Academic Services consulted relevant stakeholders regarding a set of proposed amendments to the Code. Feedback received during the consultation has been incorporated into the proposals appended to this paper. The consultation included the following individuals and groups:
 - Edinburgh University Students' Association and the Advice Place
 - Edinburgh University Sports Union
 - Equally Safe Team
 - Residence Life
 - Student Counselling Service and Student Disability Service
 - Colleges (Deans and Academic Administration)
 - Convener, Vice-Convener, and members of the Student Discipline Committee
 - Student Discipline Officers
 - Vice-Principals with responsibility for approving precautionary suspension under the Code.

Proposals

8. A summary of the proposed amendments to the Code, with a rationale for each, is provided in Appendix 1. A version of the Code showing the wording of the proposed changes is provided in Appendix 2. **APRC is asked to approve the proposed amendments to the Code.** Should APRC approve the amendments, the proposals will be taken forward to University Court for approval by Resolution.
9. There are ongoing discussions with colleagues in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences who are responsible for programmes which are subject to Fitness to Practise requirements about the interactions between the Fitness to Practise process and the Code. In the event that these discussions prompt a request for any further amendments to the Code around this issue, APRC will be asked to approve these amendments, which would then be incorporated into the final version of the Court Resolution.
10. Academic Services consulted stakeholders on a proposal to reduce the quorum for meetings of the Student Discipline Committee from five members to three members. Feedback from the Students' Association and members of the Student Discipline Committee in particular raised concerns about this proposal, citing the

following reasons: that it would reduce the range of perspectives available to the Committee when reaching decisions; and, that it would increase the likelihood that members of the Committee were held individually responsible for decisions, which could expose them to unreasonable scrutiny. Based upon this feedback, we therefore elected not to proceed with this proposal.

Other enhancements to the disciplinary process

11. The consultation process yielded helpful feedback regarding aspects of the disciplinary process which do not relate directly to the Code, or which can be more appropriately addressed through guidance or other resources. The Student Conduct team, with input from the Advice Place, intend to redevelop existing guidance for students involved in the disciplinary process. In particular, EUSA and the Advice Place have expressed a need for more comprehensive information for Reporting Parties in cases about how they can engage with the process, what information will be provided to them (and not), etc. Providing this guidance will help to better support and manage the expectations of Reporting Parties in cases, and explain the University's approach to decision-making, where there is legitimate case-by-case variation (for example, in terms of what information can be shared with parties other than the Respondent in the case).

Resource implications

12. The proposed amendments to the Code do not carry any significant resource implications.

Risk management

13. Any risks relating to the proposed amendments to the Code are addressed in Appendix 1.

Equality & diversity

14. Any equality and diversity implications of the proposed amendments are addressed in Appendix 1.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

15. Should APRC approve the proposed amendments to the Code, these will proceed for approval by Resolution of University Court, with possible final approval anticipated in December 2022. If the Resolution passes, Academic Services will publish the revised version of the Code on the University website for use from **1st January 2023**. The current version of the Code will remain published on the University website for a period, as any cases initiated before 1st January 2023 will continue to operate under the current version where relevant. However, where aspects of the updated version of the Code offer benefits to students involved in cases, without unreasonable detriment to other parties in the case, Academic Services may implement these where appropriate in an individual case.
16. In addition to this, Academic Services will communicate the changes to the Code in the following ways:

- Include content regarding the changes in an all-student eNewsletter to go out in Semester 2, 2022/23;
- Include content regarding the changes in an email to relevant staff in Schools, Colleges, and support groups;
- Provide information regarding the changes to the Code as part of face-to-face briefings with staff within the Colleges, where relevant;
- Add content regarding the key changes to the Code to the Academic Services web pages.

Author

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Freedom of Information

Open

Appendix 1

		<p>95</p> <p>118</p>	<p>be confidential to the Respondent, or to other witnesses, and there may also be no need (from an evidential perspective) for the Reporting Party to comment on such evidence. However, the principle must be that the Reporting Party is given enough information to respond to any evidence which, for example, calls into question their own evidence. The Code makes clear the requirement for the Reporting Party, like all other parties involved in the case, to avoid sharing such confidential information, except where this is necessary for the purposes of seeking professional advice. This will be emphasised by the Student Discipline Committee whenever such information is shared with the Reporting Party.</p> <p><i>iii) Asking questions of the Reporting Party and other witnesses at the hearing</i></p> <p>At Student Discipline Committee hearings, the Committee can withdraw from the Respondent the right to cross-examine, or question directly, the Reporting Party, or other witnesses. This is the standard approach in cases relating to sexual and gender-based violence, where the Reporting Party and Respondent are also not normally present in the same (physical or virtual) space. However, it remains crucial to a fair process in all cases that the Respondent has the right to challenge any evidence against them put to the Committee. We have therefore amended section 95 to clarify that the Respondent or their representative can suggest questions for the Student Discipline Committee to put to the Reporting Party, or other witnesses (regardless of the nature of the allegations against the Respondent). The Committee will retain discretion not to refer these questions to the Reporting Party, or other witnesses, where it considers doing so would not be necessary to help them reach a decision in the case. Giving the Reporting Party the opportunity to respond to challenges raised to their evidence by the Respondent is consistent with the approach set out in sections 55 and 81, above. It remains incumbent upon the Committee, however, to put questions to the Reporting Party in a trauma-informed manner, and the Reporting Party would retain the right to decline to answer such questions.</p> <p><i>iv) The right to complain about the process</i></p> <p>We have added clarification to section 118 to explain that the Reporting Party, at the conclusion of the process under the Code, has the right to make a complaint, if they feel that the process has not been followed appropriately. It remains the case that only the Respondent has the right to</p>
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			<p>submit an appeal against penalty decisions taken under the Code, as they are the subject of the decision being taken.</p> <p>In making this decision, we have had regard to advice from Legal Services that, in the context of regulatory decision-making and allegations of misconduct, and in particular in relation to complaints raised by students in the context of higher education, the courts have underlined the distinction between (i) the practice and procedures for the review and resolution of a wide range of student complaints under an independent scheme operated free of charge and largely as an inquisitorial process on a confidential basis (i.e., the Code) as against (ii) civil proceedings in a court of law which have been the product of rigorous adversarial judicial process and the application of legislation to proven facts and awarding legal remedies, such as damages (where a claimant would anticipate having the right to appeal against a decision of the court that they did not agree with).</p> <p>Depending on the circumstances of the particular case, there may be alternate legal remedies set out in legislation and at common law which might allow a Reporting Party or complainer to take a legal challenge to any decision of the University to the lower courts or by way of judicial review in the Court of Session. However, it would not be appropriate to reference these in the Code as they exist independently of the Code and will be heavily fact-specific.</p>
<p>B.</p>	<p>Clarifying the nature of the decision taken by the Conduct Investigator</p>	<p>60</p>	<p>The previous wording of the Code stated that the Conduct Investigator, at the end of their investigation, can “conclude that the allegation (of misconduct) is proven”. This has led to confusion when cases proceed to the Student Discipline Committee, since it is the Committee which makes the ultimate determination in those cases as to whether the allegation is proven, and in some cases this has led to an impression that the Student Discipline Committee is ‘overturning’ a previous conclusive finding upholding the allegations. The revised wording clarifies that the Conduct Investigator will refer the case where they have concluded that it is “more likely than not that the Respondent has breached the Code of Student Conduct”. Conduct Investigators will continue to refer less serious cases to a Student Discipline Officer, and serious cases to the Student Discipline Committee.</p>

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C.	Notice period in advance of Student Discipline Committee hearings	74	We are proposing to amend the period of notice given to Respondents in advance of Student Discipline Committee hearings from seven days to ten working days. The revised notice period allows Respondents a more appropriate length of time to prepare for the hearing, given the seriousness of the allegations brought before the Committee. Allowing a longer mandatory notice period will also reduce the likelihood of hearings being postponed, which can be administratively and psychologically challenging for the parties involved.
D.	Calling of witnesses to the Student Discipline Committee	76	Section 76 has been added to clarify the role of the Student Discipline Committee in deciding which witnesses named by the Conduct Investigator during the investigation should be invited to the hearing. Although it remains the case that the Committee cannot compel witnesses to attend a hearing, it may be necessary to invite some witnesses to the hearing in order to ensure that the Respondent has sufficient opportunity to challenge their evidence, especially where this evidence is controversial, and also to allow the Committee to question any such witnesses.
		96	Section 96 clarifies that the Student Discipline Committee can adjourn a hearing to request evidence from a witness who is not in attendance, where this evidence may be relevant to a decision they are making.
E.	Arrangements for bringing forward new witnesses/evidence to the Student Discipline Committee; notification of procedural issues	82-3	<p>The Code currently offers Respondents in cases broad latitude to bring forward new witnesses or evidence to the Student Discipline Committee at a hearing, where they had not been named or presented during the conduct investigation stage. This can impose an unreasonable burden on the Committee by requiring them to carry out what is effectively a frontline investigative function on the day of the hearing. EUSA have also reported that this can leave Reporting Parties in cases feeling “ambushed” by the unexpected provision of new evidence at such a late stage in the process.</p> <p>While it remains necessary for procedural fairness to allow Respondents to bring forward new evidence in some circumstances, it is reasonable to place greater restriction around when this can happen to ensure that the Committee can properly discharge its function of reviewing evidence already presented and considered by the Conduct Investigator. The revised Code therefore encourages more active engagement by the Respondent in the conduct investigation stage by only admitting new witnesses or evidence at the hearing stage where there is a good reason the</p>

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		84	<p>witness/evidence was not brought forward during the conduct investigation, and the witness/evidence is likely to provide information of relevance to the allegations.</p> <p>To ensure adequate preparation for hearings, the deadline for Respondents to provide the Committee with details of any witnesses to be brought forward, or new documentary evidence to be submitted, has been amended to five working days in advance of the hearing, as opposed to the current two working days.</p> <p>The new section 84 adds provision for the Respondent to notify the Committee five working days in advance of the hearing of any procedural or preliminary issues they would like to raise. This will serve to prevent situations where procedural issues are raised on the day of the hearing, imposing pressure to make decisions more quickly than is reasonable and sometimes leading to a temporary adjournment in order for the Committee to seek legal advice, which can be to the detriment of all parties involved in the hearing.</p>
F.	Suspension of specified privileges as a penalty	101.3	<p>We are proposing that the Student Discipline Committee’s power to apply a suspension of specified privileges should not be limited to one year, except where they wish to apply a complete suspension from study. In some cases, it may be proportionate to suspend a student from accessing certain facilities for the remainder of their studies, rather than for an arbitrary period of one year or less. This may in some circumstances present the Committee with a reasonable alternative to applying a penalty of permanent exclusion to a student. Where a suspension of privileges is applied, this must not prevent a student from being able to engage with their studies at the University.</p>
G.	Requiring a written apology as a penalty	101.8	<p>We are proposing to remove “require the Respondent to write an approved apology to any wronged party” from the range of penalties available to the Student Discipline Committee, although it will be retained as a penalty for the Student Discipline Officer. Cases considered by the Student Discipline Committee relate to serious allegations, where requiring an apology is unlikely to be appropriate, and may lead to the University exposing the Respondent to unnecessary legal risk (for example where the apology may involve the admission of a criminal offence by the Respondent).</p>
H.	Relationship with Fitness to Practise procedures	106	<p>Where the Student Discipline Committee finds that a student who is studying on a programme which is subject to fitness to practise requirements has breached the Code of Student Conduct,</p>

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			<p>the Code currently allows the Committee discretion as to whether to refer the matter for consideration by the relevant Fitness to Practise Committee.</p> <p>We propose to amend the Code to state that, in these circumstances, the Student Discipline Committee will always refer the matter to the relevant Fitness to Practise Committee, and allow any Fitness to Practise process to conclude before the Student Discipline Committee reaches a decision on any penalty in the case. This is because it is not reasonable to expect the Student Discipline Committee to take an informed view on whether Fitness to Practise concerns may be raised by the misconduct, and this amendment ensures that these considerations will always be made by an appropriate Fitness to Practise panel.</p>
<p>I.</p>	<p>Minor amendments</p>	<p>Various</p>	<p>The following amendments are minor clarifications to ensure that the wording of the Code more accurately reflects existing practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3: proceedings under the Code are not as formal as court proceedings; • 13.3: violent/offensive/indecent/threatening behaviour can include behaviour which takes place on social media; • 13.9: added clarification that failure to comply with a precautionary suspension applied under the Code may be treated as a potential breach of the Code; • 22.1.1; 41: Conduct Investigators will normally be drawn from Academic Services, and may also be external to the University; • 28: clarification added regarding the need to avoid conflict of interest; • 37: added clarification at the screening stage to note that, where allegations are received for investigation, they may be referred back for possible frontline resolution, where frontline resolution may be appropriate and has not yet been attempted; • 75: clarification added that hearings can be held with a mixture of physical and virtual attendees; • 80: the Conduct Investigator will be notified of the identities of any witnesses whom the Respondent intends to call to a hearing of the Student Discipline Committee, and provided with any new documentary evidence submitted by the Respondent; • 86: added clarification that the reference to “medical evidence of a student’s fitness to study” relates specifically to the Respondent;

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 92: members of the Student Discipline Committee have the right to question the Respondent or their representative directly;• 98: clarifies that the reasons for the Committee’s decision must be given in writing to the Respondent;• 120: added clarification regarding where details of disciplinary penalties applied to individual students are held.
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Code of Student Conduct

THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

Purpose of Policy

The primary purposes of the University are the advancement and application of knowledge and the education of its members; its central activities are teaching, learning and research. These purposes can be achieved only if the members of the University community have mutual trust and confidence and can live and work beside each other in conditions which permit freedom of thought and expression within a framework of respect for the rights of other persons. The University expects all students to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner in their day to day activities, including in their dealings with other students, staff and external organisations. Students are expected to comply with University policies and regulations. Where they do not comply with these requirements, and where they disrupt University activities, then the University will follow relevant procedures to resolve matters, including this Code of Student Conduct. Failure to comply with this Code will be treated as misconduct for the purposes of paragraph 12 below. The University aims to deal with all disciplinary issues in a fair and consistent manner. It recognises that, for the student and staff concerned, involvement in disciplinary procedures can be difficult and stressful. The University will therefore ensure that those involved are made aware of available guidance and support, and that disciplinary issues are dealt with as quickly as the specific circumstances allow.

Overview

The Code of Student Conduct states the University's expectations for student conduct; outlines examples of misconduct offences; and states how the University will handle such offences. It outlines specific responsibilities and actions for staff who investigate alleged offences and who apply disciplinary penalties. The Senatus Academicus (Senate) has responsibility for the Code of Student Conduct, which is governed by University Court resolution.

Scope

The Code of Student Conduct applies to all students of the University.

Contact Officer

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Document control

Dates	Approved: 17.06.19	Starts: 01.08.19	Equality impact assessment: 14.06.19	Amendments:	Next Review: 2023/24 2025/26
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Approving authority

~~Senate, CSPC and the University Court for the associated resolution.~~

Consultation undertaken

~~The development of the Code was based on widespread consultation with the Discipline Committee, Authorised Officers, Standing Commission on Student Discipline, CSPC, EUSA, the University lawyers and those responsible for related procedures. Two senior judges commented as "critical friends". Benchmarking against other institutions. The University acknowledges, in particular, the relevant policies on student conduct and discipline of the Universities of Aberdeen, Glasgow and Sheffield.~~

Section responsible for policy

Academic Services

Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations

The operation of the Code of Student Conduct relates to other student regulations and general policies in the University. These relationships are clarified in guidance which supports the Code of Student Conduct. www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/discipline/code-discipline

UK Quality Code

n/a

Policies superseded by this policy

~~This Code supersedes the General Statement on Student Discipline and Code of Student Discipline, covered by University Court Resolution 3/2009 23.2.09. This version of the Code of Student Conduct supersedes the 24.4.14 version.~~

Alternative format

If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk or telephone 0131 650 2138.

Keywords

student conduct, student discipline, discipline officers, conduct investigators,



Code of Student Conduct

Scope

1. The Code of Student Conduct applies to all students of the University. It applies to
 - a. activities in which they engage in their capacity as students of the University; or
 - b. services or facilities they enjoy by virtue of being a student of the University; or
 - c. their presence in the vicinity of, or their access to, any premises owned, leased or managed by the University, the Edinburgh University Students' Association or the Edinburgh University Sports Union (EUSU); or
 - d. any activity not covered by a), b) or c) above, which is considered to affect adversely the safety, interests or reputation of the University, its students, employees or authorised representatives, as outlined in this Code.

Basis of Jurisdiction

2. Under the Universities (Scotland) Acts all students of the University are subject to the jurisdiction of the Senate, for their studies and for their conduct. The Senate has primary responsibility for student discipline and recommends to the University Court the University's disciplinary procedure¹.

3. The processes set out in this Code of Student Conduct are internal processes and they do not have the same degree of formality as proceedings in a court of law. They are not adversarial in nature, but rather involve examination of available evidence as set out in this Code of Student Conduct. They task various members of the University community with responding to misconduct, including by investigating, determining and imposing penalties in respect of such misconduct.

3.4. For students on programmes of study which are provided jointly between the University of Edinburgh and another institution, misconduct alleged to have been committed on the premises of either institution shall be dealt with under the relevant institution's discipline regulations. When the alleged misconduct is committed elsewhere, the University Secretary of the University and of the other institution, or their nominees, shall consult and decide whether the case shall proceed under the Code of Student Conduct of the University of Edinburgh or that of the other institution. Any alternative arrangements will be agreed in writing between the institutions.

Student Conduct

4.5. The primary purposes of the University are the advancement and application of knowledge and the education of its members; its central activities are teaching, learning and research. These purposes can be achieved only if the members of the University community have mutual trust and confidence and can live and work beside each other in conditions which permit freedom of thought and expression within a framework of respect for the rights of other persons.

5.6. All students of the University are required at all times to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner in their day to day activities, including in their dealings with other

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1966/13>



Code of Student Conduct

students, staff and external organisations. Students are required to comply with University policies and regulations.

~~6-7.~~ By matriculating, or by enrolling on any University course or programme, a student becomes a member of the University community and is subject to University discipline. The University may also take action under this Code when the individual concerned is no longer registered or enrolled at the University.

~~7-8.~~ Students' behaviour may be affected by some health conditions or disabilities. However, the University has a duty to ensure that members of the University community are not subjected to unacceptable behaviour and any allegations of inappropriate behaviour will be investigated. Where health conditions or disabilities may be a contributing factor, reports or evidence of these will be taken into account. Where student conduct is found to be unacceptable as a result of a health condition or disability, the University will endeavour to offer appropriate support to assist the student but may take action under the Code of Student Conduct.

University responsibilities

~~8-9.~~ The University aims to deal with all disciplinary issues in a fair and consistent manner. It recognises that, for the students and staff concerned, involvement in disciplinary procedures can be difficult and stressful. The University will therefore ensure that those involved are made aware of available guidance and support, and that disciplinary issues are dealt with as quickly as the specific circumstances allow.

~~9-10.~~ Considering and using disciplinary action at an early stage can prevent more serious offences or issues arising. The University views the Code of Student Conduct and discipline procedures as a part of a welfare approach: misconduct may be the first indicator of underlying problems. The process can provide students with an opportunity for reflection and learning.

~~10-11.~~ The University will:

~~10.1.1-11.1.1.~~ Make this Code and associated guidance material available to all students and staff

www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/discipline/code-discipline

~~10.1.2-11.1.2.~~ Deal with student disciplinary issues in a proportionate and transparent way, as soon as issues become apparent

~~10.1.3-11.1.3.~~ Respect the need for confidentiality in relation to disciplinary issues

~~10.1.4-11.1.4.~~ Implement the Code of Student Conduct in line with all data protection legislation.

~~11-12.~~ The Senate may devolve responsibility to relevant Senate committees, with appropriate student membership, for:

~~11.1.1-12.1.1.~~ Keeping the Code of Student Conduct under review, and proposing any amendments to the Senate and the University Court;



Code of Student Conduct

~~11.1.2.~~12.1.2. Discussing, reviewing and approving appropriate student disciplinary procedures and guidance;

~~11.1.3.~~12.1.3. Appointing members of the Student Discipline Committee and Student Discipline Officers (see paragraphs ~~24~~22 to ~~27~~28 for information about these roles; and

~~11.1.4.~~12.1.4. Considering an Annual Report about the number, types and outcomes of cases of misconduct found to have been committed.

Misconduct Offences

~~12.13.~~ Examples of student misconduct are provided below. This list is not exhaustive. The University may choose to investigate and take action on misconduct offences whether they take place on University, Edinburgh University Students' Association or EUSU premises or elsewhere, including online and in social media. Below, "Person", means any student of the University; any employee of the University; any visitor to the University; any subcontractor engaged by the University, or any other authorised representative of the University.

~~12.1.~~13.1. Disrupting, or interfering with any academic, administrative, sporting, social or other University activities;

~~12.2.~~13.2. Obstructing, or interfering with, the functions, duties or activities of any Person;

~~12.3.~~13.3. Violent, indecent, disorderly, threatening or offensive behaviour or language towards any Person (whether expressed orally, in writing or electronically), (including via social media), including sexual violence or abuse of any Person;

~~12.4.~~13.4. Harassment of any Person whilst engaged in any University work, study or activity, including bullying and sexual harassment;

~~12.5.~~13.5. Conduct which unjustifiably infringes freedom of thought or expression whilst on University premises or engaged in University work, study or activity;

~~12.6.~~13.6. Fraud, deceit, falsification of documents, deception or dishonesty in relation to the University or its staff or in connection with holding any office in the University or in relation to being a student of the University;

~~12.7.~~13.7. Behaving in a way likely to cause injury to any Person or to impair safety;

~~12.8.~~13.8. Harassing, victimising or discriminating against any Person on grounds of age, disability, race, ethnic or national origin, religion or beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, marriage or civil partnership, colour or socio-economic background;

13.9. Failing to comply with any University rule, regulation or policy, including conditions issued under paragraph 45 of this Code of Student Conduct;



Code of Student Conduct

~~12.9.~~13.10. Assessment offences, including making use of unfair means in any University assessment or assisting a student to make use of such unfair means;

~~12.10.~~13.11. Misconduct in research;

~~12.11.~~13.12. Damaging, defacing, stealing or misappropriating University property or the property of any Person, whether deliberately or recklessly;

~~12.12.~~13.13. Misusing or making unauthorised use of University premises or items of property, including IT facilities or safety equipment;

~~12.13.~~13.14. Deliberately doing, or failing to do, anything which thereby causes the University to be in breach of a statutory obligation;

~~12.14.~~13.15. Behaving in a way which brings the University into disrepute (without prejudice to the right to fair and justified comment and criticism);

~~12.15.~~13.16. Making false, frivolous, malicious or vexatious complaints;

~~12.16.~~13.17. Failing, upon request, to disclose name and other relevant details to an officer or employee of the University in circumstances when it is reasonable to require that such information be given;

~~12.17.~~13.18. Failing to comply with a previously-imposed penalty under this Code;

~~12.18.~~13.19. Any misconduct prior to a student's enrolment at the University of Edinburgh which was not previously known to the University, which: raises questions about the fitness of the student to remain a member of the University community; suggests that the student poses a threat to any Person or the discipline and good order of the University; or raises questions about the student's fitness to be admitted to and to practise any particular profession to which the student's course or programme leads directly;

~~12.19.~~13.20. Any other behaviour which: raises questions about the fitness of the student to remain a member of the University community; suggests that the student poses a threat to any Person or the discipline and good order of the University; or raises questions about the student's fitness to be admitted to and to practise any particular profession to which the student's course or programme leads directly.

~~13.14.~~ Detailed regulations and policies are published separately about, for example, University examinations, libraries, the use of computing facilities, the use of automatically processed personal data (in connection with academic work), academic misconduct, fitness to practise in a particular profession and University managed accommodation. Breaches of any of these or other University regulations or policies which amount to misconduct as outlined above, may be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct.

Misconduct and criminal proceedings

~~14.15.~~ The University may report to the police any allegation that a criminal offence has been committed.



Code of Student Conduct

- ~~15~~.16. The University encourages any student who has been the victim of an alleged criminal offence to report this to the police, and, if relevant, to the University.
- ~~16~~.17. Where alleged misconduct constitutes a criminal offence, the University may investigate or take disciplinary action whether or not the matter has been referred to the police and whether or not criminal proceedings have begun or been completed.
- ~~17~~.18. The University may, at its discretion, suspend any internal investigation or disciplinary action on alleged criminal misconduct to await the outcome of any criminal proceedings. The decision whether or not to suspend the University's disciplinary process is taken collectively by the University Secretary or a Deputy Secretary or their nominee taking action with a designated Vice-Principal. The University Secretary or a Deputy Secretary or their nominee will inform the Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee of the decision to suspend an internal investigation or disciplinary action.
- ~~18~~.19. The University may investigate and take disciplinary action on alleged misconduct whatever the outcome of any external proceedings about the same matter and irrespective of whether external proceedings have been concluded.
- ~~19~~.20. Where a student is convicted of or cautioned or warned for an offence, this may be relied upon as evidence in any University proceedings provided that the circumstances leading to that conviction are relevant to those proceedings.
- ~~20~~.21. Any sentence or order pronounced by a court may be taken into account in the imposition of any disciplinary penalty.

Members of the University community involved in dealing with alleged misconduct cases

~~21~~.22. Members of the University community involved in dealing with alleged misconduct cases are:

~~21.1.1~~.22.1.1. **Conduct Investigators.** Allegations of student misconduct are investigated by Conduct Investigators. ~~Each School, Service, College and Support Group may have one or more Conduct Investigators, who are appointed by their respective College or Support Group. Conduct Investigators will generally be members of staff from Academic Services staff but may also be appointed from the relevant School, Support or Professional Services Group. External Conduct Investigators may also be appointed.~~

~~21.1.2~~.22.1.2. **Student Discipline Officers and Student Discipline Committee.** University disciplinary action can be taken by Student Discipline Officers or by the Student Discipline Committee.

~~21.1.3~~.22.1.3. **Secretary of the Discipline Committee.** The University Secretary appoints a number of administrative staff to have the role of Secretary to the Discipline Committee, to support the Student Discipline Committee. A lead Secretary of the Discipline Committee, with responsibility for the student disciplinary process, is appointed by the Director of Academic Services.

~~21.1.4~~.22.1.4. **University Appeal Committee.** The University Appeal Committee deals with student appeals against a decision of a Student Discipline Officer or the Student



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Discipline Committee. The grounds for appeal are specified in the University's Student Appeal Regulations.

www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/appeals/overview

22-23. The lead Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee maintains lists of current Conduct Investigators, Student Discipline Officers and members of the Student Discipline Committee, which are published on the University website.

23-24. The **Student Discipline Officers** are:

23.1.1-24.1.1. The Heads of the Colleges and Heads of Support Groups;

23.1.2-24.1.2. One or more members of the senior management in each College and Support Group, or their nominated representatives, to be appointed by the [Curriculum and Student Progression Academic Policy and Regulations Committee](#) on behalf of the Senate.

23.1.3-24.1.3. The University Secretary, Deputy Secretaries and College Registrars, and any deputies they nominate to act on their behalf.

23.1.4-24.1.4. Designated Vice-Principals.

24-25. The **Student Discipline Committee** consists of at least six members of staff of the University and at least six matriculated students of the University, who are appointed to the committee by the [Curriculum and Student Progression Academic Policy and Regulations Committee](#) on behalf of the Senate. At least four of the staff members must be academics. The sabbatical officers of Edinburgh University Students' Association and current Student Discipline Officers are not eligible for membership of the Student Discipline Committee.

25-26. Student Discipline Committee members' period of office is three years. All members are eligible for re-appointment provided that no member serves for more than six years. The [Curriculum and Student Progression Academic Policy and Regulations Committee](#) appoints the Convener and Vice-Convener from the staff members.

26-27. Meetings of the Student Discipline Committee must consist of not less than five members, including at least two staff members and at least two student members. All meetings must be attended by a **Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee**. The Convener, or in their absence the Vice-Convener, presides at all meetings, and has on all occasions both a deliberative and a casting vote.

27-28. No member of University staff involved in this procedure, and no student members appointed to the Student Discipline Committee, should have any conflict of interest in the matter, and should not take part if there is any reasonable perception of bias; and if a member of the Committee has been involved in a case at an earlier stage, they will not serve on the Committee when it considers that case.

Information regarding student cases



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~~28-29.~~ The University may share information provided by students, staff and other witnesses with people involved in the case, including the student under investigation, for transparency and to provide a fair process. This may be done at any stage of the process, paying due attention to confidentiality and data protection requirements (paragraph 10 above).

Reporting student misconduct allegations

~~29-30.~~ With regard to reports of misconduct, these procedures distinguish between the following:

- a) **Respondent.** This refers to the student who is alleged to have committed an act of misconduct under investigation via this Code.
- b) **Reporting Party.** This is the individual (who may be a student, staff member, or member of the public) who has raised the allegation of misconduct against the Respondent.

Frontline resolution

~~30-31.~~ Students and members of the public may report allegations of student misconduct to any member of staff. Where students or members of the public are aware of misconduct occurring in a Service or Support Group, they may refer it to a relevant point, for example the Student Information Point, or a helpdesk.

~~31-32.~~ It is possible to resolve some misconduct allegations at an early stage. Staff who receive allegations may exercise their discretion on whether to seek to resolve matters locally, for example intervening to stop poor behaviour in University buildings. Where the staff member receiving the allegation considers local frontline resolution is not possible or appropriate, they should advise the student that they can request an investigation.

Requesting an investigation

~~32-33.~~ Staff may report allegations of student misconduct to their Head of School, Head of College or the Head of the relevant Service or Support Group (or their respective nominee). The relevant Head of School, Head of College, or the Head of the relevant Service or Support Group (or their respective nominee) will determine whether to pass the report to the University Secretary or a Deputy Secretary (or their nominee).

~~33-34.~~ A student or a member of the public who wishes to request an investigation into an allegation of misconduct is encouraged to use the Complaint Handling Procedure:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/university-secretary-group/complaint-handling-procedure>

~~34-35.~~ Alternatively, students may wish to report allegations of student misconduct to their Student Support Team or Graduate School and request an investigation. The member of staff receiving the report will raise this with the University Secretary or a Deputy Secretary (or their nominee).

Screening of reports of alleged misconduct

~~35-36.~~ On receipt of a report alleging misconduct, the University Secretary or a Deputy Secretary (or their nominee) will decide whether to initiate an investigation into the alleged misconduct.



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37. If the University Secretary or a Deputy Secretary (or their nominee) considers that the matter may be appropriately resolved under the frontline resolution process set out in paragraphs 31 and 32, and the matter has not already been considered under that process, they may refer that matter to frontline resolution rather than make a determination on initiating an investigation. Should frontline resolution fail to resolve the matter, the person who reported the allegation may subsequently request that the matter is re-considered for investigation under paragraph 36 above.

36-38. The University will initiate an investigation where:

- a) The report relates to an allegation which, if proven, could plausibly be regarded as a potential breach of the Code; and
- b) The information provided suggests that there is a realistic prospect that sufficient evidence will be available to determine whether or not the alleged incident has occurred.

37-39. Where the University Secretary or a Deputy Secretary (or their nominee) decides not to initiate an investigation, they will communicate the reasons for this to the Reporting Party.

Allocating the case to a Conduct Investigator

38-40. Where the University Secretary or a Deputy Secretary (or their nominee) decides to initiate an investigation, they will pass the report to a relevant Conduct Investigator and ask them to investigate the case.

39-41. The Conduct Investigator is usually a member of staff within Academic Services (but may also be a member of staff within the College in which the Respondent is a student, or of the relevant ServiceProfessional Services or Support Group-, or be external to the University). Where there are multiple Respondents in a case who come from different Colleges or where the alleged misconduct applies to more than one area, the Heads of the relevant Colleges and/or Support Groups agree which Conduct Investigator should be asked to investigate the case.

40-42. The University Secretary or a Deputy Secretary (or their nominee) may appoint two Conduct Investigators in particularly complex cases. Where two Conduct Investigators are appointed, one will be designated as Lead Investigator. In the event that either Conduct Investigator is unable to conclude the investigation, the University Secretary or a Deputy Secretary (or their nominee) will determine whether to appoint another Conduct Investigator, or continue the investigation with the one remaining Conduct Investigator. Where two Conduct Investigators acting in a case are unable to agree a finding, the decision of the Lead Investigator is final.

Precautionary suspension

41-43. When initiating an investigation into an allegation of misconduct, the University will consider whether it is necessary to take any precautionary action to suspend the Respondent pending the conclusion of proceedings under this Code.

42-44. Suspension pending the conclusion of proceedings under this Code is not used as a penalty. The power to suspend is used to protect the members of the University community or a particular member or members, or members of the general public, or to ensure that a full



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and proper investigation can be carried out. The power shall be used only where it is urgent and necessary to take such action. The University Secretary or Deputy Secretary (or their nominee) will record written reasons for the decision and send these to the Respondent.

43.45. In urgent situations, the University Secretary or a Deputy Secretary or their nominee, taking action with a designated Vice-Principal, may decide to immediately suspend a Respondent:

43.1.1.45.1.1. who is a danger to themselves or others; or

43.1.2.45.1.2. who is the subject of a misconduct allegation; or

43.1.3.45.1.3. against whom a criminal charge is pending; or

43.1.4.45.1.4. who is the subject of a police investigation.

The decision can be made at any stage of the University's student disciplinary process under this Code. This suspension may be a total or a selective restriction on attending the University or accessing its facilities or participating in University activities. It may also include a requirement that the Respondent should have no contact with named individuals.

44.46. Any Respondent suspended under the provisions of this section must be given an opportunity within five working days to make representations in person and/or through a member of the University community, including a member of Edinburgh University Students' Association staff, to the relevant University Secretary or Deputy Secretary (or their nominee) and the designated Vice-Principal. Where it is not possible for the Respondent to attend in person, they are entitled to make written representations.

45.47. Any decision to immediately suspend the Respondent is subject to review every twenty working days. Such a review will not involve a hearing or submissions made in person, but the student is entitled to submit written representations. Taking account of any written representations from the Respondent, and any other relevant factors, the University Secretary or Deputy Secretary or their nominee will decide whether it is reasonable and proportionate to retain the suspension, or to alter or remove it. The University Secretary or Deputy Secretary or their nominee will record their decision and inform the Respondent of the outcome in writing.

46.48. A decision to permit the Respondent's return following a period of suspension may be made subject to conditions. The University Secretary or Deputy Secretary or their nominee will provide the Respondent with information to support their reintroduction and any conditions which they need to meet.

Investigating student misconduct

49. The Conduct Investigator will investigate the alleged misconduct, in accordance with this Code.

50. As soon as practicable the Conduct Investigator will write to the Respondent to provide details of the alleged misconduct. The Conduct Investigator will give the Respondent the opportunity to respond to the allegations and will invite the Respondent to admit or deny responsibility.



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51. The Conduct Investigator will decide whether it is necessary to interview the Respondent and/or the Reporting Party (as applicable).
52. At the Conduct Investigator's discretion, the investigation may also include interviews with the Reporting Party, members of staff and students of the University and, if necessary, members of the public. ~~People may provide~~
53. The Conduct Investigator will normally invite the Respondent and, separately, the Reporting Party (as applicable) to identify any persons from whom they would wish the Conduct Investigator to seek evidence to the . The Conduct Investigator has a discretion as to whether to seek evidence from persons identified to them.
54. The Conduct Investigator will also normally invite the Respondent and the Reporting Party (as applicable) to submit any documentary evidence to them which they would wish the Conduct Investigator to consider.
- 47-55. Evidence may be taken by the Conduct Investigator in writing in addition to, or instead of, attending an by interview.- The Conduct Investigator may decide to interview or request evidence in writing from any individual on more than one occasion, where this supports the investigation. This may include speaking on more than one occasion with the Respondent and/or Reporting Party should the Conduct Investigator consider it is appropriate for them to comment on any new evidence obtained in the course of the Conduct Investigator's investigation.
- ~~48-1. As soon as practicable the Conduct Investigator will write to the Respondent to provide details of the alleged misconduct and, if appropriate, of the requirement to attend for interview. The Conduct Investigator will give the Respondent the opportunity to respond to the allegations and will invite the Respondent to admit or deny responsibility.~~
- 49-56. The Respondent is encouraged to contact Edinburgh University Students' Association, or the Secretary to the Student Discipline Committee for advice about the student discipline procedure.
- 50-57. Any person attending an interview as part of an investigation has the right to be accompanied and/or represented at any interview by a member of the University community, including a member of Edinburgh University Students' Association staff. A person attending an interview may in addition be accompanied by a specialist provider of health or wellbeing support with the agreement of the Conduct Investigator. The Conduct Investigator has the right to question the person directly, where necessary. Those accompanying or representing the person being interviewed will be given the opportunity to contribute at the Conduct Investigator's invitation. The Conduct Investigator invites the person being interviewed, or any representative, to make a statement. The Conduct Investigator may be assisted by a note-taker who will take a record of the meeting.
- 51-58. If the Respondent does not appear on the date appointed for their interview and the Conduct Investigator is satisfied that they have been given due notice to appear, the Investigator may deal with the alleged misconduct in their absence. However, the Investigator may not draw any adverse inference from the Respondent's failure to appear.
- 52-59. If the Respondent admits responsibility or if the Conduct Investigator is satisfied that the allegations are well-founded then disciplinary action may be taken.



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~~53-60.~~ After investigation, the Conduct Investigator decides whether the alleged misconduct has occurred, and whether it constitutes a breach of the Code of Student Conduct. The Conduct Investigator writes a report setting out the case and their decision on the alleged misconduct. The length and detail in the report is appropriate to the nature or gravity of the case. The Investigator may:

~~53.1.1-60.1.1.~~ Dismiss the allegation of misconduct, in which case the Conduct Investigator writes to the Respondent to confirm this and sends the Respondent a copy of the report; or

~~60.1.2.~~ Conclude that in relation to the allegation of misconduct that it is proven, more likely than not that the Respondent has breached the Code of Student Conduct and:

~~(i) where the Conduct Investigator assesses that the allegation relates to less serious misconduct,~~ pass the report to a Student Discipline Officer for any disciplinary action to be ~~taken~~ considered; or

~~Conclude (ii) where the Conduct Investigator assesses that the allegation of relates to serious misconduct is proven, and,~~ pass the report to the Secretary to the Student Discipline Committee ~~for in order that the Student Discipline Committee can determine whether the alleged misconduct occurred and constituted a breach of the Code of Student Conduct and, if so, take any disciplinary action to be taken.~~

~~61.~~ The Conduct Investigator will notify the Reporting Party of the decision they have reached under paragraph 60 after that decision has been communicated to the Respondent

Disciplinary action: Student Discipline Officers

~~54-62.~~ The Student Discipline Officer receives the report of the case from the Conduct Investigator and sends the Respondent the Conduct Investigator's report. The Student Discipline Officer does not reinvestigate the case.

~~55-63.~~ The Student Discipline Officer decides whether to take disciplinary action, and if so, what penalty to apply.

~~56-64.~~ The Student Discipline Officer may decide to take disciplinary action without meeting the Respondent. Alternatively, the Student Discipline Officer may invite the Respondent to attend a meeting. The Respondent has the right to be accompanied and/or represented at the interview by a member of the University community, including a member of Edinburgh University Students' Association staff. The Respondent may in addition be accompanied by a specialist provider of health or wellbeing support with the agreement of the Student Discipline Officer. The Student Discipline Officer has the right to question the Respondent directly, where necessary. Those accompanying or representing the Respondent will be given the opportunity to contribute at the Student Discipline Officer's invitation. The Student Discipline Officer will be assisted by a note-taker who will take a record of the meeting.

~~57-65.~~ The Student Discipline Officer will invite the Respondent, or any representative, to make a statement in explanation or extenuation of the misconduct or in mitigation of any possible penalty.



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~~58-66.~~ If the Respondent does not appear on the date appointed for the meeting and the Student Discipline Officer is satisfied that they have been given due notice to appear, the Officer may deal with the alleged misconduct and impose a penalty in the Respondent's absence. However, the Student Discipline Officer may not draw any adverse inference from the Respondent's failure to appear.

~~59-67.~~ The Student Discipline Officer may (notwithstanding that a matter has been referred to them under paragraph 60.1.2 (i)) decide that due to the nature or gravity of the case it is more appropriate for the Student Discipline Committee to take disciplinary action. They will discuss this with the Secretary to the Discipline Committee and, if this is agreed, will refer the case to the Student Discipline Committee for a hearing and will inform the Respondent. In this situation the Student Discipline Officer takes no disciplinary action. The Reporting Party shall also be notified that the matter has been referred to the Student Discipline Committee, but only after the Respondent has been so notified.

~~60-68.~~ Student Discipline Officers may impose penalties in line with those established by the relevant Senate committee. In deciding what penalties will apply, the Student Discipline Officer will consider the Respondent's disciplinary record. The penalties are some or all of:

~~60.1.1-68.1.1.~~ a fine;

~~60.1.2-68.1.2.~~ a reprimand;

~~60.1.3-68.1.3.~~ suspension of specified privileges for a specified period that does not exceed three months (this may include suspension from the University Library, computing facilities, particular premises, placements);

~~60.1.4-68.1.4.~~ require the Respondent to make good in whole or in part, the cost of any damage caused;

~~60.1.5-68.1.5.~~ rescind the result of an assessment or examination diet, for academic misconduct offences;

~~60.1.6-68.1.6.~~ impose an academic penalty in the case of an academic offence;

~~60.1.7-68.1.7.~~ terminate the occupancy of University managed accommodation by any resident on giving a month's notice in writing. In the case of gross misconduct or misdemeanour, the Student Discipline Officer may order the termination of occupancy within 24 hours;

~~60.1.8-68.1.8.~~ require the Respondent to write an approved apology to any wronged party;

~~60.1.9-68.1.9.~~ place the Respondent "on probation" for a specified period not exceeding three months with relevant stated conditions (e.g. the requirement to attend specified training, which may be provided by the University).

~~64-69.~~ If the Student Discipline Officer places the Respondent on probation, they will provide the Respondent with a statement outlining the conditions and length of their probation, and



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assign them to a key contact within the University, who will monitor their compliance with these conditions during the period of probation.

~~62-70.~~ The Student Discipline Officer will inform the Respondent of the penalty decision within three working days of the decision and will remind them of their right of appeal (see paragraphs ~~95-99~~112-116).

~~63-71.~~ The Student Discipline Officer will send a record of the offence and the penalty to the Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee. Any assessment penalty under paragraph ~~60~~68 is reported to the relevant Boards of Examiners.

Disciplinary action: Student Discipline Committee

Arrangements for Student Discipline Committee hearings

~~64-72.~~ The Student Discipline Committee receives cases from Conduct Investigators under paragraph 60.1.1 (ii) and Student Discipline Officers under paragraph 67. The Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee must agree that the nature or gravity of the case justifies action by the Student Discipline Committee.

~~65-73.~~ The Conduct Investigator provides the Student Discipline Committee with a report on the case, which includes copies of any documents referred to in, or pertinent to, the case. The Conduct Investigator also provides the Student Discipline Committee with the names and contact details of witnesses who may be called in support of the alleged misconduct.

~~66-74.~~ The Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee writes to the Respondent, providing at least seventen working days' notice, requiring them to appear at a hearing before the Student Discipline Committee at a specified time and place. At the same time, the Secretary to the Student Discipline Committee sends the Respondent a copy of the Conduct Investigator's report, and a list of the witnesses that the Conduct Investigator plans to call to the hearing. Contact details of witnesses are not sent to the Respondent.

~~67-75.~~ The Student Discipline Committee may hold physical hearings or virtual hearings (or a mix of both). The Convener and Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee will make a decision about the nature of hearings with due consideration of fairness, accessibility and the ability of all involved to participate fully. Where the Respondent waives the right to a hearing, the Student Discipline Committee may decide a case based on written representations without holding a hearing.

76. Following receipt of the report provided by the Conduct Investigator, the Convener of the Student Discipline Committee will determine which, if any, of the witnesses identified by the Conduct Investigator as persons who may be called in support of the alleged misconduct, ought to be invited to attend the hearing. Where the Student Discipline Committee decides to invite witnesses named by the Conduct Investigator, the Secretary to the Student Discipline Committee will contact those witnesses to invite them to attend the hearing.

~~68-77.~~ If the Respondent wishes to admit the alleged misconduct in advance of the hearing, they may do so in writing to the Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee. They may then be required to appear before the Committee for the imposition of a penalty.



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~~69.~~78. The Respondent may request a postponement of the hearing where they are unable to attend for good reason. Where possible, the Respondent should make their request for postponement at least one working day in advance of the hearing, providing their reasons and any relevant evidence to support their request. The Convener of the Student Discipline Committee will decide whether to postpone the hearing, taking account of the following factors:

- i) Whether there is evidence that the Respondent will be unavoidably unable to participate appropriately in the hearing on the appointed date due to ill health, lack of availability, or some other reason;
- ii) The likelihood that the Respondent will be able to participate appropriately in a hearing on a subsequent date; and
- iii) Whether it is likely to be possible to reschedule the hearing for a time at which the Respondent, the members of the Student Discipline Committee, the Conduct Investigator, and all witnesses (including the Reporting Party, where relevant) would be able to attend.

~~70.~~79. The Respondent may call witnesses to attend the hearing and, if intending to do so, must inform the Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee, at least ~~two~~5 working days in advance of the hearing, of the names and contact details of their witnesses. The Respondent must also submit any documents which they wish to present to the Student Discipline Committee at least ~~two~~5 working days in advance of the hearing.

80. The identities of any witnesses whom the Respondent intends to call, and copies of any documents submitted by the Respondent will be shared with the Conduct Investigator.

81. Documents submitted by the Respondent will not be shared with the Reporting Party. However, where the Student Discipline Committee considers that the Respondent has provided evidence which it considers the Reporting Party should have the opportunity to respond to, or they wish to question the Reporting Party about such evidence, they will provide as much information as is reasonably required in order to facilitate this. Any evidence provided to the Reporting Party under this paragraph 81 is provided on a strictly confidential basis and the Reporting Party must not share it with any third party (other than for the purposes of seeking professional advice or as may be required by law).

71.82. Where the Respondent seeks to call a witness to attend the hearing who was not identified by them to the Conduct Investigator as a person from whom the Respondent would wish the Conduct Investigator to seek evidence pursuant to paragraph 53, that witness will not be permitted to attend the hearing, or to submit evidence to the Student Discipline Committee unless the Student Discipline Committee is satisfied that:

- (i) the Respondent could not reasonably have been expected to identify that person to the Conduct Investigator during the Conduct Investigator's investigation as a person who could provide potentially relevant evidence; and
- (ii) the evidence which the witness can be expected to provide is relevant to the issues to be considered by the Student Discipline Committee.

83. Where the Respondent seeks to submit documentary evidence to the Student Discipline Committee which they did not submit to the Conduct Investigator pursuant to paragraph 54 :



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that documentary evidence will not be accepted or considered by the Student Discipline Committee unless the Student Discipline Committee is satisfied that:

- (i) the Respondent could not reasonably have been expected to submit that documentary evidence to the Conduct Investigator during the Conduct Investigator's investigation; and
- (ii) the documentary evidence is potentially relevant to the issues to be considered by the Student Discipline Committee.

84. The Respondent must give at least 5 working days' written notice to the Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee of any procedural or preliminary issue (e.g. any issues relating to the procedure to be followed at the Student Discipline Committee) they wish to raise before the Student Discipline Committee.

72-85. The Student Discipline Committee may extend the time for intimating names of witnesses or submitting documents, and may adjourn, continue, or postpone a hearing at its discretion.

73-86. The Student Discipline Committee may request additional information, for example medical evidence of ~~a student's~~ the Respondent's fitness to study.

74-87. The Respondent, the Reporting Party, or any witnesses (where they are in attendance) may be accompanied and/or represented at the hearing by another member of the University community, including a member of Edinburgh University Students' Association staff. The Respondent, the Reporting Party, or any witnesses (where they are in attendance) may in addition be accompanied by a specialist provider of health or wellbeing support with the agreement of the Convener of the Student Discipline Committee.

75-88. The Convener of the Student Discipline Committee may agree to make special arrangements to allow witnesses to give evidence to the Committee from a separate location, e.g. via video link. Any evidence provided to the Committee via special arrangements will also be made available to the Respondent.

Student Discipline Committee: Procedure at hearings

76-89. The Respondent (and any person accompanying or representing them) is entitled to attend for the duration of the hearing, except where the Convener of the Student Discipline Committee asks the Respondent to withdraw while the Committee deliberates. The Convener will invite any witnesses called, including the Reporting Party (where they are in attendance), to attend part of the meeting in order to give evidence, but they will not normally attend the duration of the hearing.

77-90. The Convener of the Student Discipline Committee will open the hearing by outlining the procedure at the hearing. The Convener will then read out the allegation(s) against the Respondent and will invite them to state whether they admit or deny the charges.

78-91. If the Respondent does not admit the alleged misconduct, the case against them will be presented by the Conduct Investigator at the hearing. The Respondent, and the members of the Student Discipline Committee have the right to question the Conduct Investigator, where necessary. The Convener of the Student Discipline Committee will invite any witnesses named by the Conduct Investigator (including the Reporting Party, where they are in attendance) to comment on the allegation of misconduct.



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- 79-92. The Convener of the Student Discipline Committee will then invite the Respondent (or their representative) to present their evidence. The Convener of the Student Discipline Committee will invite any witnesses named by the Respondent to comment on the allegation of misconduct. The members of the Student Discipline Committee have the right to question the Respondent and/or their representative directly, where necessary.
93. The members of the Student Discipline Committee and the Respondent and/or their representative may examine, cross-examine, and re-examine witnesses.
94. The Convener of the Student Discipline Committee may withdraw from the Respondent or their representative the right to examine, cross-examine, and re-examine certain witnesses, where it is reasonable and proportionate in the circumstances of the case. In cases relating to allegations of sexual misconduct, the Respondent or their representative will not normally be permitted to cross-examine the Reporting Party.
- 80-95. Where the Convener of the Student Discipline Committee withdraws from the Respondent or their representative the right to cross-examine a witness or witnesses (including the Reporting Party), the Convener will make alternative arrangements in order to allow the Respondent or their representative to challenge the evidence presented by the witnesses. ~~The members of the Student Discipline Committee also have the right to question the Respondent and/or their representative directly, where necessary.~~ This can include, but is not limited to, inviting the Respondent or their representative to suggest questions that the Student Discipline Committee should put to a witness or witnesses (including the Reporting Party). The Student Discipline Committee, subject to its obligation to ensure the hearing is fair, retains a discretion not to put such questions as suggested by the Respondent or their representative, if it considers them unnecessary in deciding the issues before it.
96. Where, the Student Discipline Committee considers that it wishes to hear from a witness who has not attended the hearing, the Student Discipline Committee may adjourn the hearing in order that that witness can be invited to attend, or to submit evidence.
- 84-97. The Conduct Investigator and the Respondent or their representative may make a final address, the Respondent or their representative having the last word.
- 82-98. The Conduct Investigator, the Respondent and any person accompanying or representing them, and any witnesses withdraw while the Committee considers its decision. The Committee's role is to decide whether the alleged misconduct has occurred, and whether it constitutes a breach of the Code of Student Conduct. The Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee records the Committee's decision and its reasons for reaching this decision. Those reasons must be provided in writing to the Respondent.
- 83-99. If the Committee decides that the alleged misconduct is proved, the Respondent, or any representative, is invited to make a statement in explanation or extenuation of the misconduct or in mitigation of any possible penalty, before a penalty is imposed.
- 84-100. If the Respondent does not appear at the hearing on the date appointed and the Student Discipline Committee is satisfied that they have received due notice to appear, the Committee may deal with the alleged misconduct and, if it is found to be proved, impose a penalty in the Respondent's absence. However, the Student Discipline Committee may not draw any adverse inference from the Respondent's failure to appear.



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Student Discipline Committee: Penalties

~~85.101.~~ The Student Discipline Committee may impose penalties in line with those established by the relevant Senate committee. Penalties may be imposed on a “deferred” basis. In deciding what penalties will apply, the Student Discipline Committee will consider the Respondent’s disciplinary record. The penalties are some or all of:

~~85.1.1.101.1.1.~~ a fine;

~~85.1.2.101.1.2.~~ a reprimand;

~~85.1.3.101.1.3.~~ suspension of specified privileges for a specified period ~~that does not exceed one year~~ (this may include suspension from the University Library, computing facilities, particular premises, placements; a bar on registering, matriculating, or graduating; or, for a period of no longer than one year, a complete suspension from study, research and attendance at the University) – see paragraphs ~~85.102~~ and ~~86.103~~;

~~85.1.4.101.1.4.~~ require the Respondent to make good in whole or in part, the cost of any damage caused;

~~85.1.5.101.1.5.~~ rescind the result of an assessment or examination diet or diets, for academic misconduct offences;

~~85.1.6.101.1.6.~~ impose an academic penalty in the case of an academic offence;

~~85.1.7.101.1.7.~~ terminate the occupancy of University managed accommodation by any resident on giving a month’s notice in writing. In the case of gross misconduct or misdemeanour, the Student Discipline Committee may order the termination of occupancy within 24 hours;

~~85.1.8.~~ ~~require the Respondent to write an approved apology to any wronged party;~~

~~85.1.9.101.1.8.~~ in relation to research misconduct in a research degree, the Respondent may be deemed to have failed the degree where the misconduct applies and/or will not be permitted to submit work for this or any other research degree of the University;

~~85.1.10.101.1.9.~~ place the Respondent “on probation” for a specified period with relevant stated conditions (e.g. the requirement to attend specified training, which may be provided by the University);

~~85.1.11.101.1.10.~~ immediate permanent exclusion from the University with no eligibility for re-admittance to the University on any course or degree programme.

~~86.102.~~ Where the Student Discipline Committee imposes a suspension of specified privileges or a complete suspension, it may require the Respondent to meet specified conditions before the University ends the suspension. For example, in the event that medical circumstances formed part of the evidence of the case, the Student Discipline Committee may make it a condition of ending the suspension that the Respondent provide medical information confirming that they are fit to return to study. The Student Discipline Committee which imposes the suspension decides who (e.g. the University Secretary; a Deputy



Code of Student Conduct

Secretary and a designated Vice Principal; the Student Discipline Committee) will decide whether the Respondent has satisfied any conditions.

87.103. If the University considers it necessary to extend a student's suspension beyond a year then it is necessary to hold a new Student Discipline Committee hearing. This hearing does not need to take the same format as the original hearing, e.g. the membership could be different.

88.104. If the Student Discipline Committee places the Respondent on probation, it will provide the Respondent with a statement outlining the conditions and length of their probation, and assigning them to a key contact within the University, who will monitor their compliance with these conditions during the period of probation.

89.105. Any assessment penalty under paragraph 84.101 is reported to the relevant Boards of Examiners by the Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee.

90.106. ~~In disciplining~~ Where the Student Discipline Committee finds that the alleged misconduct is proved in relation to a student pursuing a course or programme leading directly to a qualification which confers authorisation to practise a profession (such as in Medicine, Nursing, Teaching or Veterinary Medicine) the Student Discipline Committee ~~may consider the relevance of the misconduct in relation to the student's fitness to practise that profession. The Committee may~~ will remit the case to the relevant Fitness to Practise Committee for action or advice. The Student Discipline Committee will notify the Respondent that they will adjourn the hearing for this purpose and will not determine the appropriate penalty (if any) for it to impose until the relevant Fitness to Practise Committee advises the Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee of its determination or advice.

91.107. The Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee informs the Respondent of the Committee's penalty decision, with a written statement of the reasons for the decision, within three working days of the decision and reminds them of their right of appeal.

92.108. A summary of the offence, proceedings and the evidence heard and the penalty decision is kept by the Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee.

Deferred Penalties

93.109. A deferred penalty is one which does not take effect immediately but which is postponed for a period of time during which the Respondent's conduct will continue to be monitored. When the Student Discipline Committee imposes a deferred penalty then the written statement informing the Respondent about the penalty will specify the period of the deferral and explain what will happen if the penalty needs to be put into effect. During the period of the deferred penalty, if the Respondent's conduct is called into question then they will receive a statement in writing that this conduct is being reported to the Student Discipline Committee. This statement may come from a Conduct Investigator, Student Discipline Officer or the Secretary of the Discipline Committee. Evidence of the misconduct is sent to the Student Discipline Committee and the Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee will offer the Respondent the opportunity to comment in writing on this evidence. The Secretary and Convener of the Student Discipline Committee decide whether the Student Discipline Committee needs to reconvene a meeting, with or without the Respondent, or whether the deferred penalty is put into immediate effect. If the penalty is put into immediate effect then the Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee will report this to the Student Discipline



Code of Student Conduct

Committee. If the Respondent's conduct is not called into question during the period of the deferred penalty then, at the end of the period, the Secretary of the Discipline Committee will confirm to the Respondent that the penalty will not be imposed.

Standard of Proof

~~94.110.~~ An allegation of misconduct can only be upheld if there is proof that the Respondent has engaged in the misconduct alleged.

~~95.111.~~ The standard of proof that shall be used in all discipline cases is the balance of probabilities, which is the standard of proof that is used in civil law. This means that a Conduct Investigator, Student Discipline Officer or Student Discipline Committee will be satisfied that an event occurred if they consider that, on the evidence available, the occurrence of the event was more likely than not.

Appeals

www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/appeals/overview

~~96.112.~~ If an allegation has been upheld, the Respondent may submit an appeal on the decision of the Student Discipline Officer or the Student Discipline Committee within ten working days of the decision being issued. The Respondent should submit any appeal to the Secretary of the University's Appeal Committee. The grounds for appeal are specified in the University's Student Appeal Regulations.

~~97.113.~~ The appeal is handled under the University's appeal procedures.

~~98.114.~~ The decision of the Appeal Committee is final and there is no further opportunity for appeal against that decision within the University.

~~99.115.~~ If an appeal is upheld then the Appeal Committee will refer the student discipline case to either the Student Discipline Officer or Student Discipline Committee to review their decision.

~~100.116.~~ Any penalties imposed by the Student Discipline Officer or Student Discipline Committee remain in force until the outcome of any review of the decision.

Communication with the Reporting Party

~~101.117.~~ The University will endeavour to provide the Reporting Party with as much information about the status and outcome of an investigation as is reasonably possible, including relevant information regarding any precautionary suspension imposed upon the Respondent. In determining what information to provide to the Reporting Party, the University will take account of the need to balance the interests of the Respondent, the Reporting Party, and any other witnesses, and the University's obligations under relevant data protection legislation.

118. If the Reporting Party is dissatisfied with the way the Code of Student Conduct procedure has been followed, they may be able to raise a complaint using the University's Complaints Handling Procedure. More information about this procedure is available at <https://www.ed.ac.uk/students/academic-life/complaints>



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Reporting and recording

~~102.119.~~ The lead Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee keeps a record of student misconduct offences and penalties and informs the relevant Senate committee annually of all cases considered by Student Discipline Officers and the Student Discipline Committee.

~~103.120.~~ Details of any discipline penalty imposed on a student are held ~~on the relevant student's record~~ by Academic Services and will not appear on the Respondent's EUCLID Student Record, except where the Respondent is subject to a complete suspension from study (under paragraph 101.1.3), or permanently excluded from the University (under paragraph 101.1.10).

Independent review

~~104.121.~~ Once the appeal has been completed, the Respondent is entitled to ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to look at their appeal. The SPSO considers complaints from people who remain dissatisfied at the conclusion of the appeal process. The SPSO looks at issues such as service failure and maladministration (administrative fault) as well as the way the University has handled the appeal. Information on how to complain to the SPSO will be provided to the student on completion of the appeal. Full information on the SPSO and on how it handles complaints can be found at the SPSO website: [Scottish Public Services Ombudsman](#).

~~24 January 2019~~

~~X (Month) 2022~~

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

26 May 2022

Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy Update

Description of paper

1. Presents minor updates to the Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy.

Action requested / recommendation

2. For approval.

Background and context

3. Academic Services conduct cyclical reviews of policies and procedures to ensure they remain fit for purpose.

Discussion

4. Minor changes have been made as requested, content updated to reflect known changes, and hyperlinks have been updated. Notable updates are:
 - The go-live date for the postgraduate degree finder has consistently been 1 October for the last several years. However, it has been requested that this be changed to “the first Monday in October” for when the 1 October date falls at the weekend.
 - Remove the requirement that one meeting of the Board of Studies must be in person. During the Covid19 pandemic many areas have developed highly effective methods of using digital tools to support the operation of Boards of Studies and facilitate meetings. This proposed change was discussed and supported by attendees of the last Board of Studies network meeting.
5. The Committee is asked to approve the minor changes to the Policy.

Resource implications

6. There are no potential resource implications indicated by the proposed amendments.

Risk management

7. The proposed amendments do not introduce any new risks.

Equality & diversity

8. None identified, no proposed change in policy or procedure.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

9. Academic Services will communicate changes in the annual email update to Schools and Colleges on regulations and policies.

Author

Nichola Kett, Academic Services

Presenter

Dr Adam Bunni, Academic Services

Freedom of Information

The paper is open.



Programme and Course Approval and Management

Purpose of Policy

This Policy outlines for staff and students the University's approach to programme and course approval and management (including design, development, approval, changes and closure, but not monitoring) and how Boards of Studies operate.

Overview

The Policy was initially developed following the publication of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education Chapter B1: Programme design, development and approval.

Scope: Mandatory Policy

Applies to staff and students who are involved in programme and course design, development, approval, changes and closure and to both taught and research programmes and all Boards of Studies and the staff and student members in every School/Deanery. This Policy covers all credit bearing provision, non-credit bearing online courses for external release, and non-credit bearing continuing professional development courses, including postgraduate research as well as taught courses and programmes, and online learning as well as on-campus provision.

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Document control

Dates	Approved: 24.11.16	Starts: 22.09.16	Equality impact assessment: 03.09.18	Amendments: 269.059.2248	Next Review: 2024/2025 2
Approving authority	Senatus Curriculum and Student Progression <u>Academic Policy and Regulations</u> Committee and University Court for the associated resolution				
Consultation undertaken	Staff in Schools, Colleges and support departments (including those who formed the Working Group), students, Project Board				
Section responsible for policy maintenance & review	Academic Services				
Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations	Curriculum webpages (Academic Services) Enhanced Course Descriptor Guidance Board of Studies Terms of Reference				
UK Quality Code	Chapter B1: Programme design, development and approval <u>Advice and guidance: Course design and development</u>				
Policies superseded by this policy	Draft University Level Principles for Programme and Course Design, Development, Approval, Changes and Closure Non-Credit Bearing Online Course Approval: Procedure for External Release				
Alternative format	If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk or telephone 0131 650 2138.				
	Programme, course, design, development, approval, changes, closure.				



Programme and Course Approval and Management

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Programme and Course Approval and Management

Introduction

The University is required to have strategic oversight of and to consistently apply effective processes for the design, development, approval, changes and closure of programmes and courses. Programmes and courses are defined in the University's [glossary of terms](#).

This Policy, and the [curriculum](#) pages of the Academic Services website, constitute the University's approach to and management of the processes for design, development, approval, changes and closure of programmes and courses. Supplementary College level guidance provides additional information on local practice such as timescales, specific roles and responsibilities, and templates.

Programme and Course Design and Development

Programme and course **design** is a creative activity which may result in innovative ideas for higher education provision. It is followed by a process of **development** which leads to the creation of a programme or course. This is where the content, modes of delivery, structure and components of the programme or course (including assessment and feedback methods and the means by which students will be engaged with the curriculum) are considered and, for programmes, developed into a coherent programme of study. This development process may also be used to enhance an existing programme, for example in response to the outcomes of programme monitoring and review. Programme and course design and development is carried out at the School or subject area level.

Key Issues to Address in proposals for Credit-Bearing Courses and Programmes

Programme and course proposals must demonstrate the following (please note: some aspects are not directly relevant for postgraduate research programmes):

Programmes	Courses
Purpose	
Learning outcomes (LOs) necessary to meet that purpose.	
Mechanisms by which students demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the LOs.	
Organisational aspects such as workload, volume and nature of assessment in order for students to meet LOs.	
Details of the level of award and credits	Details of the credit level and credits
The programme as a whole is coherent	The relationship of the course to programme(s) and how the course delivers and assesses the learning outcomes set out in the Degree Programme Specification (not applicable for standalone courses).
Minimum entry requirements for entry to the programme	
Where other Schools are involved and/or impacted: evidence of consultation; consideration; communication of impact; and support for the proposal. Confirmation of primary responsibility should be defined at the outset (there can only be one owning School).	
Consultation with relevant support services (e.g. Library, Information Services Group) and (where relevant) any external providers/contacts (e.g. employers, alumni, business, industry or professional contacts)	



Programme and Course Approval and Management

Programmes	Courses
Evidence of consideration of Internal Reference Points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course and programme proposals should take account of the relevant internal strategic context. This may include: a School strategy; a College strategy; the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy; and/or the University's Strategy including Strategy 2030 <u>ie Plan.</u> Degree and Assessment Regulations The Curriculum Framework The Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy The Graduate Attributes Framework Work-based and Placement Learning Policy (as appropriate) 	
Evidence of consideration of External Reference Points (as appropriate for courses): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> QAA Subject Benchmark Statements Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements Employers and Industry 	
Accessibility Design courses and programmes to be accessible to all students and to avoid any unnecessary barriers to students with protected characteristics	
Student involvement Students must be proactively involved at the earliest practicable point in programme and course design, development, approval, changes and closure processes. Their involvement should be proportional to the activity taking place and representative and could include student feedback from the quality assurance processes (course evaluations, student surveys, Staff Student Liaison Committee minutes etc.). The opportunity to be involved must allow for representation of students with a range of backgrounds and characteristics. Consultation should involve students academically closest to the proposed changes.	
Evidence of expertise from outside the programme In programme approval, the involvement of individuals external to the University is required to offer independence and objectivity to the decisions taken.	

Documentation for Proposals

Programme and course proposals must ensure a transparent and auditable 'paper-trail' providing a rationale for decisions. Documentary evidence must include the following:

Programmes	Courses
For taught programmes: Degree Programme Specification (the final version is posted on the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study)	Course creation, approval and maintenance information (EUCLID)
Details of the structure of the programme (informs the Degree Programme Table once the programme is approved)	More detailed documentation requirements will be in College Guidance.
Business case - Fee Strategy Group programme proposal template .	
Also needs to be submitted for approval to Fee Strategy Group for proposals for non-standard tuition fee arrangements and all taught postgraduate programmes	
More detailed documentation requirements will be in College Guidance	



Programme and Course Approval and Management

Following approval of a programme: (1) complete [New Programme Request Form](#) and (2) create [Degree Programme Table](#).

Business Case for New Programmes

All proposals for a new programme, at all levels of study, must be accompanied by a business case.

A Business Case should include all forecast student numbers, costs and income for the first year of the programme and four subsequent years.

The Business Case should include:

- Projected student enrolments for year one and four subsequent years
- Projected costs and income for these years, including proposed tuition fee arrangements (tuition fee arrangements not applicable for undergraduate programmes)

Factors to consider in preparing your Business Plan include:

- How the programme contributes to School(s)/ College(s) or University strategic Plans, ~~and/or the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy~~
- How does the programme fit within any existing School or College suite of programmes and how does it relate to active areas of research work?
- How many programmes have been launched within the school in the past 5 years within your subject area and how many existing programmes have been closed?
- Can any existing courses from current programmes be used and if so are there sufficient spaces to accommodate additional students?
- How do you intend on growing the programme over the coming years?
- How will the programme be sustainably resourced (e.g. staffing such as tutors including new and reallocation of existing staff (academic or professional services), additional teaching, laboratory facilities, Library and Computing service provision etc.?)
- Would students on the programme be eligible for any scholarships?
- Does the number of FTE staff per student ratio look realistic given the forecast student numbers?
- If the programme is shared across Schools/Colleges what mechanisms will be put in place to ensure suitable programme management (both academic and administrative)
- If the programme is a joint or collaborative programme with an external institution the case must include all relevant documentation such as the memorandum of understanding. Further advice for such partnerships can be sought from [contacts on the Collaborations wiki](#)

The Business Case should incorporate the outcomes of market insight, which should address at least some of the following:

- Who is the target market and how will the University specifically market the programme to them?
- What is the forecast market size - how many new students would this programme attract and on what basis are you estimating this?
- Where are these students likely to come from? UK/ EU / Overseas?
- What is the demand for graduates with the qualification?
- What competitor programmes exist, what is the going rate for their fees, what are their unique selling points, and what is the unique selling point of the proposed programme?



Programme and Course Approval and Management

The Business Case should also incorporate a marketing strategy. Factors to consider when writing your marketing strategy include:

- Which global and local markets do you think this programme will appeal to?
- What are the proposed tuition fees for both home and overseas students and how does this compare with your competitors?
- What are the possible career destinations for your graduates?
- Would employers be receptive to employing students who have completed this programme? Are there any opportunities for employer endorsements?

Communications and Marketing can provide assistance and support for conducting market research (market pulse and competitor analysis). <http://www.ed.ac.uk/communications-marketing/market-insight>

Colleges may provide additional guidance and support for developing business cases and conducting market research, and about how the review of Business Cases relates to the academic approval processes for new programmes.

Key Committees Responsible for Programme and Course Approval, Changes and Closure

School Boards of Studies

See below for information regarding the membership, remit and operation of Boards of Studies

College Committee

Each College should produce a clear Terms of Reference setting out the remit, membership and operation of their Committee(s) responsible for programme and course approval and management.

Senate ~~Curriculum and Student Progression~~ **Academic Policy and Regulations** Committee

The membership, remit and operation of ~~GSPC-APRC~~ are detailed in the [Committee's Terms of Reference](#).

School Boards of Studies

The constitution, composition, and number of Boards of Studies are regulated by Court Resolution No 18/2015. The following are the key points:

Remit

- Each School has at least one Board of Studies which considers proposals for new, changes to, and/or closure of existing courses, programmes and awards. They cover all credit-bearing provisions, non-credit bearing online courses for external release, and non-credit bearing continuing professional development courses. They also keep teaching, learning and assessment methodologies under review and offer advice on the School's portfolio of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.
- Boards of Studies ensure that proposals are academically appropriate and supported by evidence and documentation. They ensure that all interested parties in the University are aware of proposals.
- Boards of Studies annually approve UNISTATS (formerly Key Information Set) Learning, Teaching and Assessment course information and Degree Programme Accreditation information, recording this approval in the Board of Studies' minutes.
- Boards of Studies have responsibility for the formal oversight of programme and course handbooks. In practice the approval of handbooks can be delegated to members of staff within



Programme and Course Approval and Management

a School as part of an approvals process that ensures accuracy of information and all handbooks are approved prior to the commencement of a course or programme. Boards of Studies need to have formal oversight of the approvals process and would be expected to record that handbooks had been approved at the relevant Board of Studies meeting.

- Boards of Studies consider and report their views on any other academic matter to the appropriate College(s) and/or Colleges committee(s), whether independently or in response to a College or University request.

Composition

- The Head of the relevant School appoints a Convener and Deputy Convener, who must both be academic members of staff, for each Board of Studies in the School. The Convener and Deputy Convener are eligible for appointment for a period of three years and may be re-appointed. In the absence of the Convener at any meeting, the Board of Studies is chaired by the Deputy Convener. The Convener or Chair of the meeting shall have both a deliberative and a casting vote. The Convener of a Board of Studies cannot also convene the College committee to which the Board reports.
- Boards of Studies consist of academic and administrative staff in the University and other people appointed by the relevant College(s). All staff involved in the teaching of a degree programme should be a member of the relevant Board of Studies.
- Each Board of Studies is composed of the teaching members and student representatives of the relevant discipline areas.
- Each Board of Studies has at least one student member from a relevant discipline. Student members need to represent the range of subjects covered by the Board and to be linked to the appropriate School Representation structure. If student members are unable to attend, it is appropriate for them to send an alternate student representative or provide comments to the Board of Studies in advance. For student members, the School can invite the School Convener, School Undergraduate Vice Convener, and/or School Postgraduate Vice Convener who was elected in the Edinburgh University Students Association (the Students' Association) elections in the first instance. If they are unable to attend, other possible student members are other Student Representatives who have attended the Students' Association's representation training.
- Each Board of Studies has at least one external member from another Board of Studies within the University. This may be a representative or representatives from other Schools with subject areas with strong links to the Board of Studies' discipline areas.
- The Head of School and the Director of Teaching or equivalent in a School, are members of each Board of Studies in their School.
- The Head of College has the right to appoint an ex officio College member to every Board of Studies in the College.
- Boards of Studies can include members from other areas of the University, for example from other Schools or from relevant support services.
- At the beginning of each academic session each School produces an agreed list of the members of its Board(s).
- There is no formal quorum for the Board of Studies, but the minimum composition of Board of Studies meetings needs to provide effective academic oversight of the decisions made by the Board and therefore some roles may have to be represented for the Board to be considered robust.

Governance

- Boards of Studies may make nominations for representation of their members on relevant College committees.



Programme and Course Approval and Management

- Boards of Studies shall report direct to the relevant College committee(s) as necessary, but at least annually.
- Boards of Studies shall liaise with relevant School and College committees and with specific managers and offices in respect of issues or instances where matters of academic policy intersect with management issues.

Operation

- Boards of Studies must meet at least once in each academic year. ~~This meeting cannot be a virtual or electronic meeting.~~
- The timing of Board of Studies meetings should align with the School and College committees to which the Board reports, and any other key dates. Boards of Studies shall hold such meetings as the Convener may call, including electronic or virtual meetings.
- The Convener must call a meeting of the Board when at least one-fifth of its members request this meeting in writing.
- Boards of Studies may appoint sub-committees which at the discretion of the Board may report either to the Board or direct to the relevant College(s) or College committee(s).
- A College may nominate another committee to operate as a Board of Studies. All provisions of these Terms of Reference apply to that committee when it is functioning as a Board of Studies.
- The Head of School or their nominee will be responsible for ensuring the provision of secretariat support for the Board of Studies.

Key Issues to Consider when Scrutinising Proposals for Credit-bearing Courses and Programmes

When reviewing proposals, Boards of Studies and College Committees should consider:

- Whether the proposals adequately address the Key Issues set out above;
- Whether the proposals are academically rigorous and would lead to a high quality student experience;
- Whether the documentation is complete;
- Whether the business case is robust (Note that in some cases Schools / Colleges will consider the business case via a separate route to the Board of Studies / Committee).

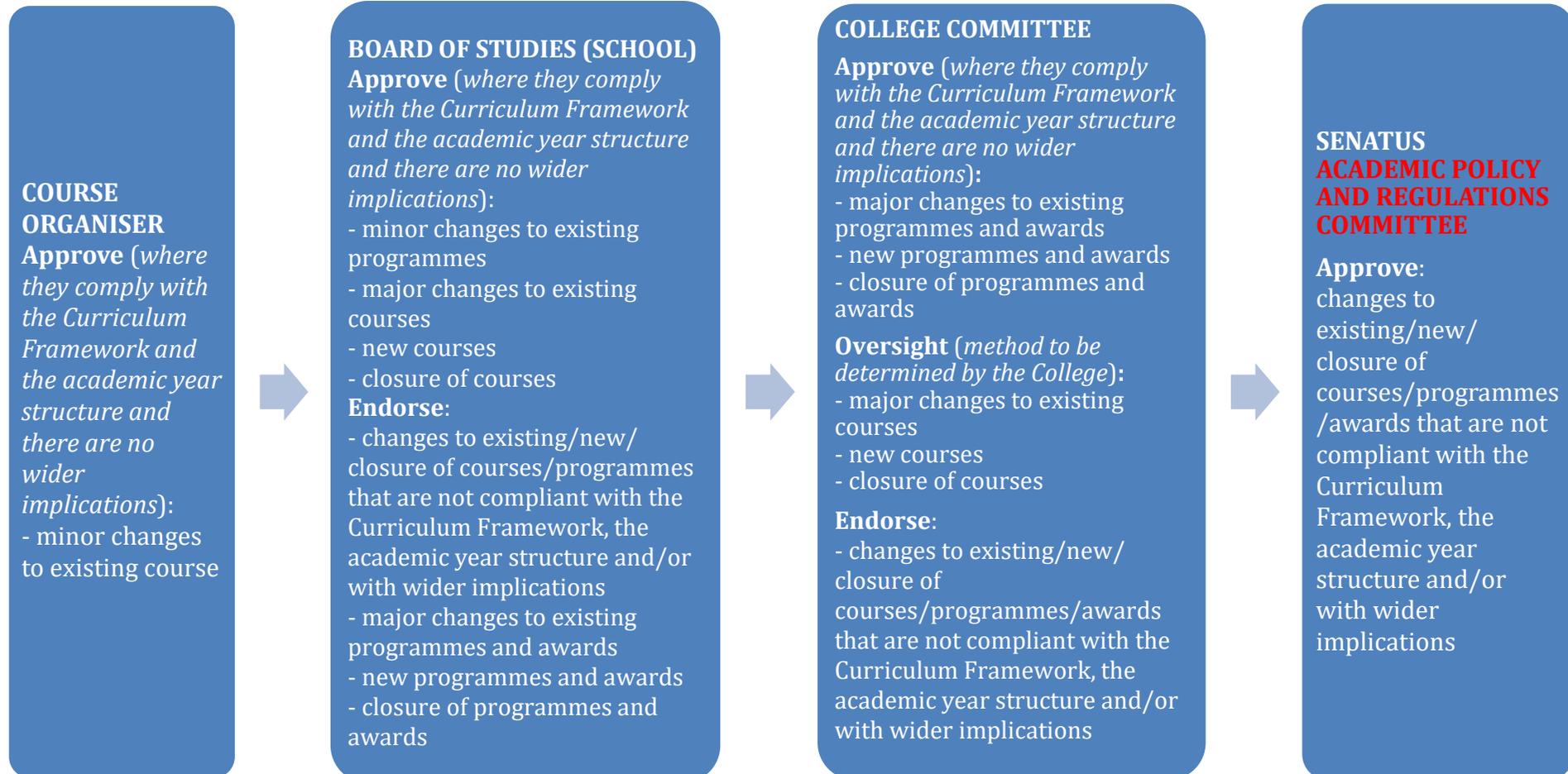
Credit-Bearing Programme and Course Approval, Changes and Closure – Levels of approval

The University programme and course approval, changes and closure processes ensure institutional oversight of standards and quality. Authority is delegated by the University, via the Senate ~~Curriculum and Student Progression~~ Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (CSPCAPRC), to Colleges and, where appropriate, to School Boards of Studies. Colleges may elect to wholly delegate the authority to approve all major changes to existing credit-bearing courses, proposals for new courses, and closure of courses to Schools but must retain a method of oversight, particularly to ensure that decisions are taken independently of the home subject area of the course. Colleges must retain authority to approve major changes to existing programmes and new programmes, and the closure of programmes. All programmes and courses are approved indefinitely unless otherwise stated.



Programme and Course Approval and Management

Minimum Levels of Approval (all stages prior to where a decision is approved should be completed)



Minor and Major Changes to Existing Programmes

Changes to any of the following are **major** and require College approval:

- The name of the programme: any change made to the name of a programme, other than to correct spelling or syntax, is considered a 'major change' and requires a new programme to be proposed and approved.
- The overall content of the programme: major change to the content of a programme is defined as the addition or closure of courses or major changes to existing courses (see below 'Minor and Major Changes to Existing Courses') comprising 20% of the total credit volume of the programme, or at least 50% of the credit volume in any single year of the programme.
- The overall approach to assessment for the programme.
- The structure of a programme: major change to the structure of a programme is defined as a change in the balance of credits between different components of the programme (e.g. between core/option courses or dissertation/taught courses) comprising 20% of the total credits of the programme, or at least 50% of the credits in any single year of the programme.
- The mode of study – part time, full time or intermittent
- The place of study - on campus or distance learning
- The period of study
- Collaboration or change of partner
- The home School or College

All other categories are regarded as **minor** change and therefore can be approved at School level.

Minor and Major Changes to Existing Courses

The categories outlined below are regarded as **major** changes:

- Name of the course*
- Level of the course*
- Credit value*
- Learning outcomes
- Balance of assessment types and their weightings (components of assessment)
- Home subject area*

* Will result in a new course being created

Changes to all other categories, which generally cover course content and administrative aspects, (e.g. course descriptions, transferable skills, reading lists/learning resources, Course Organiser and Secretary, and delivery information) are regarded as **minor**. As a minimum, Course Organisers can approve these changes (with the exception of changes to the Course Organiser and Course Secretary) although Schools may choose to add an additional level of approval for these changes, for example, to ensure programme coherence. Decisions regarding changes of Course Organiser and Course Secretary are management decisions made by the School in line with normal practices.

Timescales for approval of proposals for new/changes to existing for-credit courses and programmes

It is important that accurate information regarding programmes is available to applicants when they submit their applications, and to offer-holders when they decide whether to accept offers. As such, Colleges need to approve new programmes and significant changes to existing programmes sufficiently early that accurate and complete information can be included in the relevant corporate publications. Failure to meet these timescales will result in Schools / Colleges having to undertake

additional communications with applicants and offer-holders. It may also create additional obligations towards those applicants and offer-holders, and expose the University to reputational and financial risk.

It is also important that accurate information regarding courses is available well in advance of the academic session, to enable students to make informed decisions regarding their choices of courses and to prepare for their studies.

Schools / Colleges should therefore normally approve proposals within the following timescales.

	Undergraduate	Postgraduate
New programmes	November, for the admissions cycle starting the following September (ie 21 months in advance of entry of students onto the programme)	By April, for the admissions cycle starting in October, for entry the following September (ie 16 months in advance of entry of students onto the programme) – to allow for inclusion in Print School-level Brochures. In principle, if the programme is not to be included in the Print School Brochures, Schools could approve new programmes later than this (eg as late as July for programmes opening for applications in October). However, in practice, this is rarely advisable since it leaves little time for recruitment.
Major changes to existing programmes	Aim for same timescales as for new programmes, although it can be possible to approve changes as late as August, for the admissions cycle starting in September, as long as the Print Prospectus entry has anticipated these changes.	Aim for same timescales as for new programmes, although it can be possible to approve changes as late as September for the admissions cycle starting in October, as long as the entry in the Print School Brochure has anticipated these changes.
Programme closure to new entrants	Timescales as for new programmes. In exceptional circumstances, a programme may be closed later, providing no applications have been received.	Timescales as for new programmes. In exceptional circumstances, a programme may be closed later, providing no applications have been received.
New courses	By the end of March for the following session unless in exceptional circumstances and providing that students are able to take the course (e.g. the course can be resourced, timetabled and	By the end of March for the following session unless in exceptional circumstances and providing that students are able to take the course (e.g. the course can be resourced, timetabled and

	students are able to sign up), in which case prior to the Semester in which they are to run.	students are able to sign up), in which case prior to the Semester in which they are to run.
Changes to or closure of existing courses	<p>Where this would constitute a major change to published information about the future structure and content of a programme, the same timescales apply as for major changes to existing programmes</p> <p>Otherwise, Schools should aim to make changes by the end of March, for the following session (although minor amendments to the published course descriptors could be made subsequently between April and August, for example to take account of issues raised during the course review and monitoring)</p>	<p>Where this would constitute a major change to published information about the future structure and content of a programme, the same timescales apply as for major changes to existing programmes</p> <p>Otherwise, Schools should aim to make changes by the end of March, for the following session (although minor amendments to the published course descriptors could be made subsequently between April and August, for example to take account of issues raised during the course review and monitoring)</p>

Arrangements for publishing information on approved courses and programmes

Programme and course information is entered into EUCLID, which feeds information to the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study (DRPS), and forms the definitive record of programmes and courses. In addition to these publications, Schools / Colleges are responsible for publishing accurate, complete and up to date information on approved courses and programmes in other corporate publications for recruitment purposes. The timescales for publication are as follows:

Publication	Type of information	Timescales
EUCLID Course Descriptor	Detailed information regarding the course	Annual update to be complete by end of March, prior to publication of the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study (DRPS) for the next session. Minor amendments to the published course descriptors could be made subsequently between April and August.
Degree Programme Specification	Summary information including programme learning aims and objectives and how they are demonstrated and achieved	Annual update to be complete by end of March, prior to publication of the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study (DRPS) for the next session.
Degree Programme Table	Information regarding the curriculum structure for the programme	Annual update to be complete by end of March, prior to publication of the Degree

		Regulations and Programmes of Study (DRPS) for the next session.
UniStats Key Information Sets (UG only)	Information regarding aspects of programmes including types of assessment and contact time.	End June, for the UCAS applications opening in September that year with entry the following September
Undergraduate Prospectus (Print)	<p>General subject/discipline overview, year by year breakdown of courses studied (relevant to the whole subject area), additional costs, and approach to learning and assessment, along with careers outcomes.</p> <p>Details of any professional accreditation, placements and careers opportunities.</p> <p>Location of study.</p> <p>Any significant changes to programmes anticipated, the details of which cannot yet be confirmed.</p>	Annual update to be complete and returned to Communications and Marketing by December for publication in March – for UCAS applications opening in September that year with entry the following September
Undergraduate Degree Finder (Online)	<p>Subject information as above for print prospectus.</p> <p>In addition, for programmes:</p> <p>Overview of the programme.</p> <p>Details of courses studied each year.</p> <p>Details of any professional accreditations, placements and careers opportunities.</p> <p>Location of study.</p> <p>Approach to learning and assessment.</p> <p>Any significant changes to programmes anticipated, the details of which cannot yet be confirmed.</p> <p>Entry requirements.</p> <p>Additional costs.</p>	Timescales in line with Undergraduate (Print) Prospectus. Amendments approved after the December deadline can be made up to early August, before UCAS applications open.

Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS)	Brief summary regarding the reasons for studying the programme, along with brief information about career opportunities	Annual update to be undertaken by end of March for UCAS applications opening in September that year with entry the following September
Postgraduate School-Level Brochures (Print)	Programme level information including: summary description and structure; breakdown of compulsory and optional courses offered. Careers opportunities and additional costs Entry requirements	Annual update to be complete by July for publication in September to apply to applications for entry the following September.
Postgraduate Degree Finder (Online)	Programme title, award and study modes. Programme description (PGT only) Programme structure (PGT and PGR) Learning outcomes (PGT only) Career opportunities (PGT only) Online learning (PGT only) Work placements / internships (PGT and PGR) Research profile (PGR only) Training and support (PGR only) Facilities (PGR only) Entry requirements Additional costs Scholarships and funding	Annual update to be complete by the end of September for applications opening on <u>the first Monday in</u> October for entry the following September (note however that agreement for any changes to entry requirements must be secured early in line with Student Recruitment and Admissions policy)

Changes to programmes – responsibilities to students, offer-holders and applicants

If, after starting to accept applications for a programme of study, a School or College approves any changes to the programme or to courses within it which lead to a divergence from that described in the published information regarding the programme, the School or College owning the programme is responsible for amending the published information at the earliest possible opportunity. This applies irrespective of the School which owns the individual courses that are changing.

If the approved changes are significant the School or College is also responsible for:

- Informing all students, applicants and offer-holders about the changes at the earliest possible opportunity;
- Where students / applicants / offer-holders request this, seeking to offer a suitable replacement programme for which they are qualified at the University, or, if the University is unable to offer a suitable replacement programme, seeking to refer students / applicants / offer-holders to a comparable higher education institution offering a suitable replacement programme;

While it is not possible to provide a comprehensive definition of what may constitute a 'significant' change in a programme of study for these purposes, the following are examples of significant changes:

- 'Major' changes to the programme (in the terms set out in the section above)
- Any removal from the programme of courses that published information had indicated would definitely be available, and any introduction of new mandatory courses which reduces a student's choice
- The professional accreditation / recognition status of the programme changes
- The location at which the programme is taught changes significantly (for example, the location of the owning School changes from one campus to another)

In the event that students, offer-holders or applicants choose to withdraw as a result of significant changes to a programme, the University may also consider making an appropriate refund of tuition fees and deposits paid prior to notification of the change.

Student Recruitment and Admissions and Academic Services are able to provide Schools and Colleges with advice regarding whether any changes to a programme should be treated as 'significant' for these purposes.

Programme Closure – Responsibilities to Students

Only in the most exceptional circumstances may a programme on which students have applied for, been offered a place on, have been accepted on, or are matriculated on be closed. In the event of such a decision the situation must be resolved in line with the University's admissions [Terms and Conditions](#). No programme may be withdrawn until the University's obligations to those students have been reasonably and fairly fulfilled. In addition, the University can have obligations to applicants to programmes even if no offer has been made. These obligations should also be considered before making a decision regarding programme closure.

In the event of closure of a programme, Schools must ensure appropriate management and resourcing of the final student cohorts in the programme to be closed. Collaborative partners must also be informed in a timely manner.

Collaboration/Partnerships

In addition to following the normal development and approval processes for for-credit courses and programmes, all for-credit courses and programmes that involve collaboration with another institution require additional development and approval stages.

Details about the University's collaborative agreements and arrangements, and guidelines for developing and approving collaborative provision, are available from ~~the Governance and Strategic Planning website: Collaborative Activity~~ [the Collaborations wiki](#)

Introducing New Degree Qualifications and deleting Degree Qualifications

New degree qualifications, with degree titles not already used by the University, need to be approved by [CSPGAPRC](#), on the basis of a proposal from the relevant College committee. [CSPGAPRC](#) asks the University Court for any necessary degree Resolution and adds the degree qualification title to the list of degrees in the annual Court Resolution on undergraduate or postgraduate degree regulations. The Resolution to create the degree qualification needs to come into effect before the University opens the programme for applications. The Secretary to [CSPGAPRC](#) can advise on whether a degree needs a Court Resolution. For example, an MA or BSc for a new discipline does not need a Resolution. Colleges report the closure of degree qualifications

to [GSPG-APRC](#) for approval and reporting to the University Court, for the annual degree regulations Resolution.

Distance / Flexible PhDs

Guidance on what Schools can consider when developing proposals for Distance / Flexible PhDs is available at <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/curriculum>

Non-credit Bearing Provision – General Points

Boards of Studies are responsible for approving all new or revised non-credit bearing courses for external release and non-credit bearing continuing professional development courses. Approval processes are different to those for credit-bearing provision and are detailed below.

While the standard requirements and processes for credit-bearing courses and programmes do not all apply to non-credit provision, many of the principles do.

Non-credit Bearing Online Courses for External Release (including Massive Open Online Courses, MOOCs)

Course proposers must design and plan courses in consultation with Information Services Group, taking account of resourcing and establishing an appropriate timeframe.

Course proposers must complete documentation which includes course aims, purpose and estimates of teaching support required for each course instance. Course documentation must be signed off by the appropriate Head(s) of School to provide confirmation that adequate resources are in place for delivery. [Applications must include a letter of support from the relevant strategy owner \(usually an Assistant or Vice Principal\) and proposals should clearly link to the University Strategy 2030.](#)

Academic aspects of the course are considered by the appropriate Board(s) of Studies for approval. Timely consideration by the Board may be required to meet the established timeframe for release.

For Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs) only: a MOOC proposal form [Submit a MOOC Proposal | The University of Edinburgh](#)<https://www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/learning-technology/onlinecourse-production/about/submit-a-proposal> is also required for any new MOOC. The proposal form and course documentation is considered by the MOOC Strategy Group who must be assured that the School has adequate resources in place for the creation and delivery of the course, that adequate risk analysis has been carried out and that the relevant statutory requirements are met. The MOOC Strategy Group is authorised to trigger the release of the course, once all course materials have been developed and the appropriate Board(s) of Studies has approved the academic aspects of the course.

Non-credit Bearing Continuing Professional Development Courses

Boards of Studies are responsible for considering and approving proposals for new or revised non-credit bearing continuing professional development courses. Proposals should detail the course aims, purpose and resourcing requirements as a minimum.

Programme and Course Management – Responsibilities

Programmes

The Head of College is formally responsible for degree programmes. Within this overall responsibility each programme, and course within it, is owned by a particular School which

ensures its management. The Head of School or Director of Teaching delegates responsibility for the management of a degree programme to a Programme Co-ordinator or Director (or equivalent).

Courses

Course Organisers are responsible for individual courses within a School. The Head of School or Director of Teaching appoints Course Organisers to take responsibility for individual courses. The scope of the Course Organiser's remit varies according to local School organisation, but in outline the Course Organiser is responsible for:

- general course management
- assessment and feedback
- advising and supporting students on course-related matters
- monitoring and reviewing courses
- agreeing minor changes to courses

[Course Organiser: Outline of Role](#)

Staff Support and Development

Training and support is available for those involved in programme and course design, development, approval, changes, and closure from the [Institute for Academic Development](#).

26 May 20-September 202218

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

26 May 2022

Programme and Course Handbooks Policy Update

Description of paper

1. Presents minor updates to the Programme and Course Handbooks Policy.

Action requested / recommendation

2. For approval.

Background and context

3. Academic Services conduct cyclical reviews of policies and procedures to ensure they remain fit for purpose.

Discussion

4. Minor changes have been made to the core content section, in consultation with content owners, to ensure it reflects current policy and/or practice (including the updating of hyperlinks).
5. The Committee is asked to approve the minor changes to the Policy.

Resource implications

6. There are no potential resource implications indicated by the proposed amendments.

Risk management

7. The proposed amendments do not introduce any new risks.

Equality & diversity

8. None identified, no proposed change in policy or procedure.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

9. Academic Services will communicate changes in the annual email update to Schools and Colleges on regulations and policies.

Author

Nichola Kett, Academic Services

Presenter

Dr Adam Bunni, Academic Services

Freedom of Information

The paper is open.



Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Purpose of Policy

To confirm the status, purpose and core content of programme and course handbooks.

Overview

The main aim of this policy is to ensure that students know where to find particular information on their programmes and courses through the provision of core content in handbooks. Programme and course handbooks are part of the academic governance framework of the University. Additionally, there are external requirements in relation to the provision of information for students that the University must follow.

Scope: Mandatory Policy

This policy applies to all staff who are producing programme and course handbooks and applies to both taught and research programmes.

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Document control

Dates	Approved: 14.04.16	Starts: 01.08.16	Equality impact assessment: 25.05.15	Amendments: 2603.056.224	Next Review: 202 21 /202 32
Approving authority	Senatus Academic Policy and Regulations Committee				
Section responsible for policy maintenance & review	Academic Services				
Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations	Creating Accessible Handbooks Guidance				
Alternative format	If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk or telephone 0131 651 4490.				
Keywords	Programme, course, handbook				



Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Status of Programme and Course Handbooks

Programme and course handbooks are part of the academic governance framework of the University and are referenced in the Degree Programme Regulations. Therefore, as well as providing information for students on their programme and courses, they can be used to stipulate requirements. Once approved and published, the details set out in programme and course handbooks must be adhered to by students and staff for the academic session to which it applies.

A **programme** of study is the sum of all the elements leading to a defined graduating curriculum. A **course** is a unit of teaching and learning formally offered within the University, which carries credit expressed in credit points and which may contribute to a University award.¹

Requirements

It is the responsibility of Schools to determine how best to provide students with programme and course information. The “home” School must ensure that students are provided with all the necessary information to cover their programme and courses (of particular importance for joint awards). Additionally, consideration should be given to ensuring that students who are taking outside courses are provided with all necessary information. It is not a requirement that handbooks are created for all programmes and courses, but students must be provided with the core content detailed below using an appropriate combination of programme and course handbooks. It is of particular importance that formal agreed assessment and feedback activities (as detailed in the course descriptor) and any related requirements are explicitly communicated in written form at the outset of each programme or course. This does not preclude additional formative assessment and feedback opportunities.

Other types of handbooks are not part of the academic governance framework of the University and are not required to adhere to this policy. Additionally, other types of handbooks (e.g. School or year level handbooks) should not contain any regulatory or academic compliance requirements.

Programme or course handbooks do not need to be physical documents. It may be that information is held on a website, wiki or virtual learning environment and forms the equivalent of a programme or course handbook. Students should be made aware of which form(s) of media their course and/or programme handbooks are held. This policy applies to all forms of media.

The [Creating Accessible Handbooks guidance](#) should be followed for programme and course handbooks. There are no other design requirements in relation to programme and course handbooks.

The core content listed below must be included in programme and course handbooks and can be presented in any order. Core content can be supplemented with any other information the School wishes to provide.

Where information is owned and maintained by another area, links should be provided rather than cutting and pasting it into handbooks. This approach aims to reduce the risk of misinforming students and also to reduce the time taken by staff to produce handbooks. Particular examples include course and programme information on the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study (DRPS) and academic regulations, policies and guidance.

¹ [University Glossary of Terms](#)



Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Programme and course handbook content must align with the information on the DRPS (including the Degree Programme Specification, the Degree Programme Table and the course descriptor) which forms the definitive record of programme and course information.

Final versions of programme and course handbooks must be made available to students at the start of a programme or course. The Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy requires reading lists (at minimum indicative core texts) be made available at least four weeks before the start of the course (with additional reading that indicates priority/relevance provided nearer to the start date of the course). Therefore, if reading lists are only contained within handbooks, these need to be made available to students within this timeframe. Arrangements should be made to provide handbooks in an alternative format upon request.

Approval Process

Boards of Studies have responsibility for the formal oversight of programme and course handbooks. In practice the approval of handbooks can be delegated to members of staff within a School as part of an approvals process that ensures accuracy of information and all handbooks are approved prior to the commencement of a course or programme. Boards of Studies need to have formal oversight of the approvals process and would be expected to record that handbooks had been approved at the relevant Board of Studies meeting.

Changes

Exceptionally, changes may need to be made to a programme or course handbook after publication. In this case, all students who are affected by the change must be informed as soon as possible. Changes which differ from the approved programme and course information in the DRPS (including the statement of assessment) are not permitted.

Purpose

Programme Handbooks

- A source of information and guidance for students on a specific programme or group of programmes.
- Work in conjunction with degree programme tables, degree programme specifications, degree programme regulations, and assessment regulations to provide students with all the information they require for their studies.
- A collection of information and “signposts” to information that exists elsewhere.
- Contain core content.
- An information resource for staff, external examiners, and professional, statutory and regulatory bodies.

Course Handbooks

- A source of information and guidance for students on a specific course or group of courses.
- Work in conjunction with the course descriptor to provide students with all the information they require for a specific course.
- A collection of information and “signposts” to information that exists elsewhere.
- Contain core content.



Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

- An information resource for staff, external examiners, and professional, statutory and regulatory bodies.

Core Content

Core Content	Description/further information		Reference/Source
Session that the Handbook applies to	State the session that the handbook applies to and make it clear that the University may make changes to the course / programme for future sessions.		
Organisation (for accessibility)	Contents page Glossary ² Standard text (in Arial 14 bold): "If you require this document or any of the internal University Of Edinburgh online resources mentioned in this document in an alternative format please contact [name and contact details]" It is good practice to provide two methods of contact e.g. phone number and email or email and postal address		
Details	Programme Name, date of publication	Course Name, code, level and credits, date of publication	Path Course descriptor in the DRPS
Overview*	Programme Structure and core courses, aims, learning outcomes and graduate attributes	Course Timeline of activities: lectures; tutorials; laboratories; placements; syllabus; learning outcomes	Degree Programme Tables and Degree Programme Specifications in the DRPS Course descriptor in the DRPS
Assessment and feedback information[^]	To include: submission and feedback deadlines, extensions procedures, late penalties, word count, submission procedures, dissertation (or equivalent) arrangements (including supervision), information on good academic practice , and exam diet dates		Statement of Assessment in Taught Assessment Regulations

² Can assist with the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy requirement: Key technical words and/or formulae shall be provided to students at least 24 hours in advance of the class.



Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
PGT handbooks only Dissertation or research project supervision	<p>Standard text: “The dissertation/research project is an independent piece of work. You will be allocated a supervisor, who will provide you with advice and guidance in relation to the dissertation/research project, but you should remember that the sole responsibility for the academic quality of your dissertation/research project lies with you. You should research and develop your own ideas, and discuss your proposed approaches with your supervisor. Feedback you receive from your supervisor is intended as guidance, and must not be interpreted as an indication that your work will receive a particular final mark/outcome.</p> <p>You may be allocated a supervisor whose area of expertise is not a precise match for your chosen area of research, but who has the required expertise to supervise a dissertation/research project. All supervisors are experienced and knowledgeable regarding academic writing.”</p> <p>Provide information regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expected timelines relating to supervision, e.g. when supervision starts and ends; • The number of meetings students can expect with their supervisor; • Expectations regarding email contact with the supervisor; • How many draft chapters the supervisor will review and comment upon; • Whom students should contact if they experience problems with their supervision. 	
Referencing guidance	Add referencing guidance	
Marking scheme[^]		Extended Common Marking Scheme
Prioritised reading list^{3^}	<p>Or learning resources</p> <p>It is a requirement of the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy that reading lists shall indicate priority and/or relevance.</p>	Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy
Contacts	<p>Key programme staff contact details</p> <p>It is good practice to provide two methods of contact e.g. phone number and email or email and postal address</p>	
Dates+	Important dates not detailed elsewhere (including timescales for online distance learning students)	
Timetable[^]	Link to student-facing timetabling service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My Timetable • Course Timetable Browser

³ Please note the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy requirement: Course outlines and reading lists shall be made available at least 4 weeks before the start of the course. Reading lists at this stage may focus on the core texts only (where they are used). Additional reading may be provided nearer to the start date of the course.



Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
Lecture recording	If the course involves lectures, inform students which of their lectures will be recorded or not. An appropriate explanation should be provided to students where a lecture will not be recorded.	Lecture Recording Policy Virtual Classroom Policy
Key locations	Teaching Office, laboratories, online environments (VLE, etc.), etc.	
Progression requirements and award criteria		Degree Programme Regulations in the DRPS
“Local” requirements+	College, School, programme, or course-specific requirements	
Attendance requirements	Please note there are particular requirements for UKVI sponsored students: Schools should ensure that students are made aware of their attendance, engagement and on-campus obligations. Handbooks should include this information, together with guidance on how all students should submit requests for absences (special circumstances, interruptions of study, leave of absence, etc.).	Student Immigration Service
Reference to relevant University regulations	Add links to University regulations, policies and procedures	Academic Regulations Complaints Handling Procedure Academic Appeals Academic Misconduct (including plagiarism) Special Circumstances Dignity and Respect For general information on rules, regulations and policies: Student Contract webpage
Student Support	Including what happens when things go wrong	For Schools continuing to operate the Personal Tutor system : School Personal Tutoring Statements Otherwise: information on the new Student Support model



Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
Student Wellbeing	<p>Standard text: “As with all transitions in life, applying to and studying at university can be both exciting and challenging – whether it is your first time at university or you are returning to higher education, and whether you have a pre-existing mental health condition or not, it is important to look after yourself. University can be busy and stressful at times, this can in turn cause our state of wellbeing to fluctuate. We all have strategies for coping with ups and downs in life and it is important to continue using and revising these skills, to help support and maintain your wellbeing which is crucial to allow you to experience a positive and happy university journey. We provide a range of evidence-based resources, workshops and support which are available to you and can enable you to cope with the ups and downs of university life. These are provided by a number of different services, including the Centre for Sport and Exercise, Chaplaincy, Student Counselling & Disability Services and the Edinburgh University Students' Association.</p> <p><u>The new Student Wellbeing Service, sitting within Wellbeing Services (which already includes Student Disability Service, Student Counselling Service, Chaplaincy) will work collaboratively with colleagues across the University to provide proactive and reactive wellbeing support for students. This will include proactive preventative work as well as providing specialised support for high-risk students who have complex needs using a short-term case management model. Students will receive support tailored to their health, emotional and pastoral needs and as part of the ecosystem of support with the aim that no student falls between the cracks.”</u></p>	<p>Health and wellbeing student webpages</p>
Student Feedback	<p>Detail the opportunities available for students to provide feedback on their experiences and how they will be informed of action taken in response to feedback provided</p>	<p>Student Voice Policy</p>



Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
Student representative structure	<p>Standard text: “Student representatives – both Programme and Elected Representatives – work closely with staff to ensure your voice is heard on the issues that matter to you, from teaching and learning, to student support, key services, and your sense of belonging to the University community. Throughout the year, representatives will gather feedback from you, share that feedback with relevant staff and other student representatives including the five full-time Sabbatical Officers, and work to enhance your student experience. Your School will facilitate communication between you and your representatives, in-line with this guidance. Student representatives are trained and supported by staff within the Students’ Association.”</p> <p>Include the name only of the School Representative(s) as appropriate.</p>	<p>Students’ Association Your Voice</p>



Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
Peer Support+	<p>Standard text (edit as appropriate to course/programme): “Peer Learning and Support in the context of the University means a student with more experience sharing their knowledge, skills, abilities and expertise with a new or less experienced student. Peer Learning and Support Schemes may focus around advancing your academic work, providing 1-2-1 mentoring, or opportunities to socialise with other students within your School or offering additional support to ensure your wellbeing while at University. The Students’ Association, in partnership with Schools and University Services, provide some of these opportunities, facilitated by trained student volunteers, at both the undergraduate and postgraduate level of study at Edinburgh. Other peer support opportunities are also provided by the University. Peer Assisted Learning Schemes (more commonly known as PALS), involve trained volunteers in second year and above who plan and facilitate structured study sessions for other students. These academic sessions cover a variety of topics, including settling into university life, study skills, course content, module choices, assessment and the skills students need to excel in their degrees. Peer Support Schemes (e.g. academic families, buddies, clans or similar) aim to building a sense of community for students, enhance student well-being and enrich the university experience. Peer Support Schemes are based on a model where higher year’s students plan and run regular sessions to foster a sense of community and belonging through the integration of the year groups. Sessions can vary depending on the Scheme, but sessions usually have a specific well-being or academic focus, while others provide more social opportunities to facilitate meeting new people. Peer Mentoring Schemes are a form of peer support that take place in a 1-2-1 environment, whether this is in person or online. Peer Mentoring Schemes usually have a pastoral/welfare or academic focus, however we do also have some identity based Schemes available for example our LGBTQ+ Peer Mentoring Scheme.”</p> <p>Detail available Peer Support opportunities</p>	<p>Peer Learning and Support</p> <p>Peer Learning and Support schemes</p>
Reference to University and Students’ Association Support Services	Provide information via the thematic student website	<p>Students Students’ Association – Advice Place</p> <p>Link to A to Z of University Student Services</p>



Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
Accreditation to external bodies, discipline-specific career/industry information+	Detail here as appropriate	
Name, position and institution of External Examiner(s)^	Where an External Examiner is appointed to fulfil a role on behalf of a professional body, this will also be stated. Students must be informed in the handbook that they must not make direct contact with External Examiners, and that other routes exist for queries about the assessment process.	External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy
Health and safety	<p>Standard text: “The University has a duty, so far as reasonably practicable, to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all employees and students while at work, and the safety of all authorised visitors and members of the public entering the precincts of the University. The University Health and Safety Policy is issued upon the authority of the University Court and contains the Health and Safety Policy statement and summary of the organisation and arrangements of health and safety within the University. The successful implementation of the University Policy requires the support and co-operation of all employees and students - no person shall intentionally interfere with, or misuse anything provided by the University in the interest of health, safety or welfare.</p> <p>The University Health and Safety Policy The University Health and Safety Policy is supported by a Framework document published in two parts on the Organisation and Arrangements of health and safety within the University. Individuals are required to comply with any procedures or arrangements formulated under the authority of this Policy. Any questions or problems about matters of health and safety can be taken up initially with the School Safety Adviser. Further guidance on health and safety matters can be found on the Health and Safety Department website at http://www.ed.ac.uk/health-safety including contact details for all professional staff within the corporate Health and Safety Department.”</p> <p>Provide information on local health and safety arrangements (including for online distance learning students).</p>	Health and Safety Policy



Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
Data Protection	<p>Standard text: “Under Data Protection Law, personal data includes all recorded information about a living, identifiable individual. Students using personal data as part of their studies must comply with the University's data protection policy and the related responsibilities as outlined in the linked guidance. Before using personal data as part of their studies students must become familiar with the linked guidance, discuss implications with their supervisor and seek appropriate ethics approval. They must also obtain consent from the data subjects to take part in the studies. Failure to comply with the responsibilities under the policy is an offence against University discipline. A breach of the University policy can cause distress to the people the information is about, and can harm relationships with research partners, stakeholders, and funding organisations. In severe circumstances the University could be sued, fined up to £20,000,000, and experience reputational damage.”</p> <p>Provide information on local data protection arrangements (including for online distance learning students).</p>	Student responsibilities when using personal data
<i>PGR handbooks only</i>		
Supervision	Information on supervisory arrangements and expectations, including annual progression review.	
Thesis (or equivalent) requirements	To include local context on expected thesis length	
Training and development	To cover: research culture; professional development; research skills training; and teaching.	Policy for the recruitment, support and development of tutors and demonstrators
Code of Practice	Provide a link to the Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students	Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students

+ If applicable

* As applicable for research programmes

^ Taught programmes only

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

26 May 2022

Taught Assessment Regulations 2022/23

Description of paper

1. Draft Taught Assessment Regulations 2022/23 (proposed changes in Appendix 1). The key changes are included under “Discussion” below.

Action requested / recommendation

2. For discussion and approval.

Background and context

3. Academic Services conduct an annual review of the assessment regulations to ensure they remain fit for purpose. Colleges are asked to provide comments regarding any regulations which require necessary amendment or clarification and Academic Services then draft amendments.

Discussion

4. APRC is invited to discuss the draft Taught Assessment Regulations for academic year 2022/23. Following this meeting, Academic Services will amend the draft regulations to take account of any Committee comments. The current regulations are available at:

www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/taughtassessmentregulations.pdf

5. Changes to the regulations are attached as Appendix 1.

6. Key changes to the regulations for 2022/23

<p>Throughout</p>	<p>Hyperlinks updated as necessary.</p> <p>Note: The updated link for the Glossary of Terms is not yet available. This will be updated once available.</p> <p>Glossary of Terms for 2022/23 is listed as: Under review - to be published pending approval of by Senatus Curriculum and Student Progression Committee.</p>
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Throughout	Added reference to staff roles introduced under the new student support model, e.g. “Student Adviser”, “Cohort Lead”.
Throughout	Replaced Tier 4 with “Student visa” in line with revised language
Additional Guidance	Removal of reference to Edinburgh College of Art clarifying the use of mark and grade.
11 Principles of Assessment 15 Provision of formative feedback 16 Feedback deadlines	Removal of regulations 11, 15 and 16 pending approval of the paper presented to APRC on Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities - Implications for Taught Assessment Regulations
26.4 Conduct of examinations	26.4 added clarification that online examinations are not assessed coursework
30.3 Academic misconduct	Added clarification that proof-reading which involves rewriting or rewording of a student’s original work could constitute academic misconduct.
56 Postgraduate assessment progression; 57 Postgraduate degree, diploma and certificate award	56.4 and 57.3: added clarification that courses where credit has been obtained by recognition of prior learning are excluded from the average, except where the credit was awarded for the certificate or diploma associated with the masters

	degree. This reproduces wording at 59.6 and 60.6. 56.9: includes updated progression requirements for the Business School's EMBA and Online MBA programmes.
67 Unsatisfactory academic progress	Added clarification that students who do not meet the criteria for award on their programme may be excluded.

Resource implications

7. Any potential resource implications of the proposed changes are discussed in the key changes section.

Risk management

8. Any potential risks of the proposed changes are discussed in the key changes section.

Equality & diversity

9. Any equality and diversity implications of the proposed changes are discussed in the key changes section.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

10. Academic Services will communicate approved regulations in the annual email update to Schools and Colleges on regulations and policies. Academic Services will also cover any changes to regulations in Boards of Examiners briefings and other relevant briefing events for staff in Schools and Colleges.

Author

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Presenters

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Freedom of Information

The paper is open.

Taught Assessment Regulations 2022/23

Additional guidance

This document should be read in conjunction with University's Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study. These are available via: www.drps.ed.ac.uk/

The regulations apply to all forms of summative assessment, including examination, take home examination, coursework, electronic and online assessment, oral assessment and peer and self-assessment.

The regulations must be applied, unless a concession has been awarded by the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) on the basis of a case proposed by a College. The boxed "Application of the regulation" below must also be applied, unless the College has approved an exemption on the basis of a case proposed by a School. These concessions and exemptions are recorded by APRC and Colleges as appropriate.

The regulations operate in accordance with legislation and University policies on Equality and Diversity: www.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity/about/legislation

Members of staff who need additional guidance may consult their Head of College or their nominee, their College Office, Academic Services, or Student Administration. Student Administration oversees the procedure relating to the provision of question papers, registration for degree examinations, the receipt and notification of results, examination timetabling and the provision of examination accommodation.

Where reference is made to 'the relevant Dean' this should be taken as being the Dean with responsibility for undergraduate or postgraduate matters, depending on the circumstances. Where reference is made to 'the Head of College' or 'Head of School' this may also in some cases be a designated representative of that individual.

~~For Edinburgh College of Art (ECA) students on programmes that use the assessment grade scheme, the term "mark" in the regulations also includes "grade".~~

Definitions of key terms can be found in the glossary of terms: www.drps.ed.ac.uk/21-22/GlossaryofTerms.pdf

Section A. Roles and Responsibilities

Regulation 4 Convener of the Board of Examiners: appointment

The Head of School that owns the programme or course has responsibility for appointing the Convener of the Board of Examiners, the Convener of the Progression Board and the Convener of the Special Circumstances Committee.

Application of the regulation

- 4.1 The Head of School informs the College Office about the appointment of the Convener by the beginning of the relevant Semester for the Board of Examiners responsible for courses assessed in each Semester, and by the beginning of Semester 2 for the Board responsible for programme decisions for each programme.
- 4.2 For combined (formerly joint) degrees the “owning” Head of School liaises with other relevant Heads of School. In the case of any disagreement on the appointment of a Convener of a combined Board of Examiners, the Convener is nominated by the relevant Heads of College or their nominee.
- 4.3 Programme Directors, [Cohort Leads](#) and Course Organisers are not the Convener of the Board of Examiners for their programmes or courses. This is to ensure appropriate separation of roles. If the Convener is also a Course Organiser, formal chairing of the Board of Examiners is delegated to another member of the Board for discussion of that course.
- 4.4 Undergraduate Progression Boards Policy and Special Circumstances Policy:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/ug_progression_boards.pdf
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/special_circumstances.pdf

Section B. Conduct of Assessment

Regulation 17 Assessment deadlines: student responsibilities

It is a student's responsibility to ascertain and meet their assessment deadlines, including examination times and locations.

Application of the regulation

- 17.1 The examination timetable is based on students' course choices. To avoid examination timetabling clashes, it is students' responsibility to ensure that their record of courses is accurate by the end of week 3 of each semester.
- 17.2 Students who have a clash in their examination timetable need to contact the Examination Office, Student Administration, through their Personal Tutor or Student Adviser or Student Support Team, as soon as possible to allow alternative arrangements to be put in place.
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-administration/exams/overview
- 17.3 As examinations may be scheduled at any time during the semester, it is students' responsibility to be available throughout the semester, including the whole of the revision period, examination diet and the resit diet, if the student has scheduled examinations. Examinations will not be scheduled during winter or spring vacations. Occasionally assessments may need to be rescheduled with very little notice. If special circumstances mean that a student is unavailable for the rescheduled assessment, Boards of Examiners may consider using an alternative method to assess the relevant learning outcomes.

Regulation 19 Reasonable adjustments

Reasonable adjustments will be made to assessments for disabled students.

Application of the regulation

- 19.1 Reasonable adjustments must be determined in advance by the Student Disability Service (SDS). They are recorded in the student's Schedule of Adjustments by the SDS, which communicates the Schedule of Adjustments to the student, the student's Personal Tutor or Student Adviser, the School's Co-ordinator of Adjustments, Student Administration (if examination adjustments are recommended) and other relevant areas.
- 19.2 The School's Co-ordinator of Adjustments (CoA) has responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the Schedule of Adjustments. The Co-ordinator of Adjustments will liaise with academic colleagues who are responsible for putting the adjustments in place in the School.
- 19.3 The Co-ordinator of Adjustments will liaise with the SDS should any adjustments require further discussion, clarification or alteration. If there are any amendments to the Schedule of Adjustments the SDS will

communicate these and ensure that the student is informed.

- 19.4 The SDS provides examples of reasonable adjustments, deadlines and support: www.ed.ac.uk/student-disability-service/students/support-we-provide
- 19.5 Reasonable adjustments can be made for a variety of assessment methods, depending on the needs identified and recorded in the student's Schedule of Adjustments, e.g. assessed coursework, take-home examinations, online examinations, invigilated examinations. The SDS supports students in the preparation and review of their Schedule of Adjustments. It is a student's responsibility to ensure that their Schedule of Adjustments covers all types of assessment methods relevant to their courses. For example, if a student discovers that an aspect of their course is likely to have an impact on their support needs, they should contact the SDS as soon as possible in case any amendment is required to be made to their Schedule of Adjustments.
- 19.6 Arrangements can be made via the SDS for students with temporary injuries or impairments, e.g. broken arm or leg, on the submission of relevant medical information. Students should contact the SDS as soon as possible to allow the SDS to determine any relevant adjustments and support.

Regulation 25 Examination timetable

Students are only permitted to sit examinations at the times and in the venues that are detailed on the relevant examination timetable.

Application of the regulation

- 25.1 Examinations may be scheduled outside normal University teaching hours.
- 25.2 Students who believe that religious reasons or participation in elite-level sport prevent them from sitting an examination at the scheduled time or venue should contact their Personal Tutor or Student Adviser and Student Support Team. Their case is considered by the relevant Dean and Student Administration in consultation with the Convener of the Board of Examiners. Further information regarding flexibility which may be offered to students taking part in elite-level sport is provided in the Performance Sport Policy: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/performance_sport_policy.pdf
- 25.3 A student who is permitted to appear for examination at a time other than that prescribed may have to sit a specially prepared examination paper or alternative method of assessment.
- 25.4 If examinations are disrupted, for example due to adverse weather conditions, then Boards of Examiners may decide to use an alternative assessment method, rather than rescheduled examinations, to assess the learning outcomes.
- 25.5 Other than online assessment and assessment opportunities offered via Student Administration, students are not allowed to sit examinations away from Edinburgh.

Regulation 26 Conduct of examinations

Examinations scheduled by Student Administration are conducted in an invigilated environment in accordance with Examination Hall Regulations, which are publicised to students annually.

Application of the regulation

- 26.1 Student Administration has responsibility for the effective operation of examinations in accordance with the Examination Hall Regulations.
www.docs.sasq.ed.ac.uk/registry/exams/ExamHallRegs.pdf
- 26.2 All examinations which are in Student Administration's scheduled examination diet will be invigilated by authorised staff appointed by Student Administration. The Invigilator ensures compliance with the Taught Assessment Regulations in accordance with Invigilation Guidance.
www.docs.sasq.ed.ac.uk/registry/exams/Invigil_guide.pdf
- 26.3 Examinations that contain practical, oral or performance elements are invigilated by members of academic staff and may be conducted jointly with an External Examiner.
- 26.4 Take-home examinations and online examinations are subject to the provisions of the Taught Assessment Regulations which are related to examinations but are not subject to the Examination Hall Regulations. Take-home and online examinations are not assessed coursework, and are therefore not subject to extensions, although additional time may be offered to individual students in line with a Schedule of Adjustments.

Regulation 27 Resit assessment

The number of assessment attempts students are entitled to for each course depends upon the type of programme the student is taking and the SCQF level of the course.

Honours undergraduate students are entitled to:

- a maximum of four assessment attempts for courses at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework level 7 and 8;
- one assessment attempt for courses at SCQF level 9 to 11 unless Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements apply, in which case a maximum of four assessment attempts are permitted.

Non-Honours undergraduate students (excluding Visiting Undergraduate Students) are entitled to:

- a maximum of four assessment attempts for courses at SCQF level 7 to 11.

Visiting undergraduate students are entitled to:

- a maximum of two assessment attempts for courses at SCQF level 7 to 11.

Taught postgraduate students are entitled to:

- one assessment attempt for courses at SCQF level 9 to 12 unless specific Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements apply, in which case a maximum of four assessment attempts are permitted.

Application of the regulation

- 27.1 Boards of Examiners must publish the requirements for resits for those courses that they are responsible for. Boards must take the same approach to resits for all students on a particular course, except where a student's previous attempt is a null sit.
- 27.2 Boards of Examiners must set requirements at resit that are as demanding as those made of students at the first attempt.
- 27.3 Boards of Examiners will inform students who are required to undertake resit assessment of the format of their resit assessment. Resit methods need not be the same as those used to assess the learning outcomes at the first attempt, but all relevant learning outcomes must be assessed. Resit arrangements must give students a genuine opportunity to pass the course. Boards of Examiners choose between two options to achieve this:
- (a) Carry forward any component of assessment (coursework or examination) that has been passed already and require the student to retake the failed element;
 - (b) Set an assessment covering all learning outcomes for the course, and weight this as 100% of the course result.
- 27.4 Students are not allowed to resit a course or components of a course that they have passed, unless the relevant Board of Examiners has permitted this under Special Circumstances by granting a null sit for the attempt that the student has passed (see 27.9).
- 27.5 The four assessment attempts are the initial assessment and a maximum of three further assessment opportunities, of full assessment, examination or coursework only basis, at the next available opportunities. There may be PSRB requirements which mean that fewer than four assessment attempts are permitted.
- 27.6 The first sitting and subsequent attempts must take place over no more than two academic sessions, unless the relevant College grants an exemption.
- 27.7 Non-attendance or non-submission is considered an assessment attempt.
- 27.8 Some Honours programmes require students to pass specified courses at the first attempt in the first or second year in order to progress to Junior Honours. Any such requirements will be specified in the Degree Programme Table or Programme Handbook for the relevant programme.

- 27.9 Where an assessment attempt has been affected by special circumstances, a Board of Examiners may declare this attempt a null sit. Null sits do not count towards the maximum number of permitted attempts. Where a student receives a lower mark in a subsequent assessment attempt than that achieved in the attempt declared as a null sit, they may be awarded the higher mark for the relevant assessment.
- 27.10 Re-assessment attempts are not generally permitted for courses at SCQF level 9 and above for Honours and taught postgraduate students since Honours and taught postgraduate programmes permit the award of credit on aggregate (see Taught Assessment Regulations 52, 54, 56, 57). Where resits are permitted for Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirements, any classification decision must use the result obtained on the first attempt.
- 27.11 The Academic Policy and Regulations Committee decides whether a programme may offer resits which are required for Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirements for courses at SCQF level 9 and above for Honours and taught postgraduate students. This decision is based on a case proposed by the relevant College.
- 27.12 Students who are subject to immigration control have restrictions on their entitlement to resit as a result of being in the UK on a [Tier 4 General Student](#) visa. Students on a [Tier 4 Student](#) visa can only take a fourth assessment attempt where they have valid special circumstances (in line with the Special Circumstances Policy), and specific additional conditions are met (as outlined below).

If a [Tier 4-student on a Student visa](#) does seek a fourth assessment attempt, they should apply for this via the Special Circumstances process. Where the student has valid special circumstances, the relevant Board of Examiners will determine what action to take. Where the Board of Examiners decides to award the student a null sit for the affected assessment attempt, this will not count as one of the four assessment attempts; null sits for any previous attempts are also not counted towards the total permitted attempts. Where the Board does not award a null sit, but wishes to offer the student a fourth assessment attempt, they may only do so where:

- i) the student has provided satisfactory 'greater weight' evidence of their circumstances (in line with para 6.2 of the Special Circumstances Policy);
- ii) the circumstances that had disrupted the student's previous attempt(s) have been mitigated or no longer apply.

The Student Immigration Service provides advice and guidance to students and staff in relation to the immigration regulations. It is able to support [Tier 4-students on Student visas](#) should permission to undertake a fourth assessment attempt affect their visa status (for example, by requiring an extension), and can also support students to understand their immigration status in the event that they are not granted a fourth assessment attempt.

- 27.13 If repetition of the in-course assessed work is not possible outwith semester time, the student, with the permission of the relevant Head of School, may be allowed to

repeat any coursework on its own in the following year. Students who do not receive such permission may be permitted by the relevant Head of School to repeat the course, including examination, in the following year.

- 27.14 The full range of marks offered by the relevant Common Marking Scheme is available at resit assessment. Resit marks are not capped.
- 27.15 Where a degree programme's Honours classification is based on the final year only, students are permitted a maximum of four assessment attempts for courses in non-final years.
- 27.16 In the case of collaborative degrees, where not otherwise stipulated in the collaborative agreement, any permitted resit attempt must be within two years of the first attempt.

Regulation 30 Academic misconduct

It is an offence for any student to make use of unfair means in any University assessment, to assist a student to make use of such unfair means, to do anything prejudicial to the good conduct of the assessment, or to impersonate another student or allow another person to impersonate them in an assessment. Any student found to have cheated or attempted to cheat in an assessment may be deemed to have failed that assessment and disciplinary action may be taken.

Application of the regulation

- 30.1 Marks or grades can only be given for original work by students at the University. Plagiarism is the act of copying or including in one's own work, without adequate acknowledgement, intentionally or unintentionally, the work of another or one's own previously assessed original work. It is academically fraudulent and an offence against University discipline. Plagiarism, at whatever stage of a student's course, whether discovered before or after graduation, may be investigated and dealt with appropriately by the University. The innocent misuse or quotation of material without formal and proper acknowledgement can constitute plagiarism, even when there is no deliberate intent to deceive. Work may be deemed to be plagiarised if it consists of close paraphrasing or unacknowledged summary of a source, as well as word-for-word transcription, or if it involves the use of essays or answers produced by another individual or service. Any failure adequately to acknowledge or properly reference other sources in submitted work could lead to lower marks and to disciplinary action being taken.
- 30.2 It is academically fraudulent and an offence against the University's Code of Student Conduct for a student to invent or falsify data, evidence, references, experimental results or other material contributing to any student's assessed work or for a student knowingly to make use of such material. It is also an offence against University's Code of Student Conduct for students to collude in the submission of work that is intended for the assessment of individual academic performance or for a student to allow their work to be used by another student for fraudulent purposes.

- 30.3 Students need to be careful when asking peers to proof-read their work. Proof-readers should only comment on the vocabulary, grammar and general clarity of written English. They should not advise on subject matter or argumentation. Proof-reading may constitute academic misconduct where it includes rewriting or rewording of the student's original work.
- 30.4 Students need to be careful to avoid academic misconduct when submitting group projects and to be clear about their individual contribution to the submission.
- 30.5 Information on academic misconduct and plagiarism, and how such cases will be handled, is given on the Academic Services website.
www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/academic-misconduct
- 30.6 Exam hall regulations can be found at:
www.docs.sasq.ed.ac.uk/registry/exams/ExamHallRegs.pdf

Section E. Assessment decisions

Regulation 56 Postgraduate assessment progression

For programmes where there is an identifiable taught component followed by a project or dissertation component, students must pass the assessment requirements of the taught stage at an appropriate level at the first attempt before progression to the dissertation. In order to progress to the masters dissertation students must:

- (a) pass at least 80 credits with a mark of at least 50% in each of the courses which make up these credits; and
- (b) attain an average of at least 50% for the 120 credits of study examined at the point of decision for progression; and
- (c) satisfy any other specific requirements for the masters degree programme, that are clearly stated in respective programme handbooks.

When all the marks for the taught components of the programme (120 credits) are available, if the student has achieved PASS marks in at least 80 credits and has an overall average of 40% or more over the full 120 credits, then they will be awarded credits on aggregate for the failed courses.

For programmes where the taught and project or dissertation components are taken in parallel, or where there are not identifiable taught and research project or dissertation components, the requirements for progression are determined at programme level, stated in the Programme Handbook.

Application of the regulation

- 56.1 For programmes where there is an identifiable taught component followed by a project / dissertation component (e.g. 120 credits of taught courses in semesters 1 and 2, followed by a 60 credit project / dissertation component):

- (a) Postgraduate Boards of Examiners are normally convened at least twice during the year for full-time students. The initial meeting to decide matters relating to progression (to masters), or failure, is held at the end of the coursework component. A second meeting to consider the dissertation results and the final award of degrees (or diplomas) is held soon after completion of the programme. Both meetings are equally important.
- (b) The Postgraduate Board of Examiners has the responsibility to decide which students can progress to the dissertation required for candidature for the award of a masters degree; or, in the case of other awards, exit either directly or following satisfaction of any outstanding requirement.
- (c) Exceptionally, with the permission of the relevant College Committee, a student who has been unable to sit an examination because of illness or other extenuating circumstance may, if that circumstance is certified, be allowed to progress to the dissertation stage prior to completion of the coursework assessment on condition that the dissertation will subsequently be set aside if the student is eventually unsuccessful in the coursework element of the programme.

56.2 For MFA programmes (240 credits) where there is an identifiable taught component, in order to progress to masters dissertation/project the student must pass at least 120 credits with a mark of at least 50% in each of the courses which make up these credits, and attain an average of at least 50% for the 180 credits of study examined at the point of decision for progression to dissertation/project, and satisfy any other requirements as outlined in 56 (c) above.

56.3 For postgraduate taught programmes involving 360 credits, information regarding progression requirements is included in the relevant programme handbook.

56.4 The average for the courses is derived by calculating the mean of marks of the individual courses, weighted by the number of credit points of each course. Courses where credit has been obtained by recognition of prior learning are excluded from the average, except where the credit was awarded for the certificate or diploma associated with the masters degree.

56.54 In general failed courses are not included in the student's transcript, but any failed course for which the student has been awarded credits on aggregate must be shown in the transcript as a fail but with credit on aggregate. In reporting course marks, Schools are required to upload a fail but with credit on aggregate outcome on to the student record system, along with other final course marks.

56.56 In Regulation 56(a) above, where some of the 80 credits are pass/fail courses, then where these courses are passed, they can be included in the 80 credit total. However, a mark of 50% is the mark that is to be applied in calculations under Regulation 56 (b).

www.ed.ac.uk/timetabling-examinations/exams/regulations/common-marking-scheme

56.6–7 PASS marks are defined in the “PASS” section (A1 to PS) of “Recording of Course Assessment Results within EUCLID”
www.studentsystems.ed.ac.uk/Staff/FAQ/Assessment_Results.html

56.78 For MBA programmes (180 credits) where there is an identifiable taught component, in order to progress to the Capstone Project the student must pass at least 110 credits with a mark of at least 50% in each of the courses which make up these credits, and attain an average of at least 50% for the credits of study examined at the point of decision for progression, and satisfy any other requirements as outlined in 56 (c) above. If the student does not meet the progression criteria above, but is in a position to be able to meet the criteria based on the outcome of the outstanding credits, the progression decision will be deferred until the result of the outstanding credits are known.

56.8-9 For the EMBA programme and Online MBA programmes (180 credits) where there is an identifiable taught component, in order to progress to the 40 credit Capstone project the student must pass at least 100 credits with a mark of at least 50% in each of the courses which make up these credits, and attain an average of at least 50% for the credits of study examined at the point of decision for progression, and satisfy any other requirements as outlined in 56 (c) above. In order to progress to the 30 credit Capstone project, the student must pass at least 110 credits with a mark of at least 50% in each of the courses which make up these credits, and attain an average of at least 50% for the credits of study examined at the point of decision for progression, and satisfy any other requirements as outlined in 56 (c) above. If the student does not meet the progression criteria above, but is in a position to be able to meet the criteria based on the outcome of outstanding credits, the progression decision will be deferred until the result of the outstanding credits are known.

Regulation 57 Postgraduate degree, diploma and certificate award

In order to be awarded the certificate students must:

- (a) pass at least 40 credits with a mark of at least 40%; and
- (b) attain an average of at least 40% for the 60 credits of study examined for the certificate; and
- (c) satisfy any other specific requirements for the named certificate that are clearly stated in respective programme handbooks.

In order to be awarded the diploma students must:

- (a) pass at least 80 credits with a mark of at least 40%; and
- (b) attain an average of at least 40% for the 120 credits of study examined for the diploma; and
- (c) satisfy any other specific requirements for the named diploma that are clearly stated in respective programme handbooks.

In order to be awarded a masters degree students must:

- (a) have satisfied any requirements for progression, as laid out in taught assessment regulation 56 above, and

- (b) attain an additional 60 credits, by achieving a mark of at least 50% for the dissertation or project component (if the programme has a dissertation or project element) and
- (c) satisfy any other specific requirements for the masters degree programme, that are clearly stated in respective Programme Handbooks.

When all the marks for the taught components of the programme or diploma are available, if the student has achieved a mark of at least 40% in at least 80 credits and has an overall average of 40% or more over the full 120 credits, then they will be awarded credits on aggregate for the failed courses, up to a maximum of 40 credits. For a certificate, a maximum of 20 credits may be awarded on aggregate.

Application of the regulation

- 57.1 Boards of Examiners, including those involving subjects from two or more of the Schools, are required to establish guidelines in advance on how the results of individual papers or units of assessment are to be aggregated, averaged or profiled to produce the overall final result. These guidelines are an integral part of the disclosure process and must be published to students within one month of the start of the programme.
- 57.2 In line with the Postgraduate Degree Regulations, postgraduate taught programmes may include some courses at SCQF levels below 11. Where courses at SCQF level 9 or below are included in a programme, marks for these courses are disregarded for the purposes of calculating averages for the award of credit on aggregate, progression, award, and the award of Merit and Distinction.
- 57.3 The average for the courses is derived by calculating the mean of marks of the individual courses, weighted by the number of credit points of each course. Courses where credit has been obtained by recognition of prior learning are excluded from the average, except where the credit was awarded for the certificate or diploma associated with the masters degree.
- 57.43 In general failed courses are not included in the student's transcript, but any failed course for which the student has been awarded credits on aggregate must be shown in the transcript as a fail but with credit on aggregate. Exam Boards must make this distinction clear when reporting course marks.
- 57.54 The Board of Examiners should take account of any relevant special circumstances and of the student's general academic record, when determining the award of a degree. However, it is not within the power of a Board of Examiners to recommend the award of a degree without substantial evidence of attainment to at least the lowest level required for the award of that qualification. Boards of Examiners may not be generous in cases of failure other than within the limits already set out in these regulations.
- 57.65 The Postgraduate Degree Regulations permit a General Postgraduate Certificate or General Postgraduate Diploma to be attained by students who do not fulfil the requirements for a specific Certificate or Diploma award but who have attained the required volume and level of credits.

57.76 PASS marks are defined in the “PASS” section (A1 to PS) of “Recording of Course Assessment Results within EUCLID”
www.studentsystems.ed.ac.uk/Staff/FAQ/Assessment_Results.html

Regulation 67 Unsatisfactory academic progress

The University may exclude students who do not meet the criteria for progression [and award](#) on their programme.

Application of the regulation

- 67.1 Degree regulations, Degree Programme Tables, programme handbooks and/or course handbooks must contain details of the progress which students are expected to achieve within given periods. They must also include warnings that students are liable to be considered for exclusion if these expectations are not met.
- 67.2 Where a student fails to meet the published progression criteria, the Procedure for Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies will be used.
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/withdrawal_exclusion_from_study.pdf
- 67.3 Some degree programmes leading to a professional qualification include Fitness to Practise considerations. Any issues of unsatisfactory progress in relation to fitness to practise are dealt with according to the relevant College’s published Fitness to Practise procedures.
- 67.4 A student declared to have made unsatisfactory progress under professional Fitness to Practise requirements is normally excluded from all further attendance at classes and examinations leading to the professional qualification, but is entitled to apply to the College for permission to re-enter for assessment in a suitable alternative programme which does not lead to a professional qualification.

~~3 June 2021~~ 26 May 2022

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

26 May 2022

Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees 2022/23

Description of paper

1. Draft Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees 2022/23. The key changes are included under “Discussion” below.

Action requested / recommendation

2. For discussion and approval.

Background and context

3. Academic Services conduct an annual review of the assessment regulations to ensure they remain fit for purpose. Colleges are asked to provide comments regarding any regulations which require necessary amendment or clarification and Academic Services then draft amendments.

Discussion

4. APRC is invited to discuss the draft Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees for academic year 2022/23. Following this meeting, Academic Services will amend the draft regulations to take account of any Committee comments. The current regulations are available at:
https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/pgr_assessmentregulations.pdf
5. Key changes to the regulations for 2022/23:

Regulation	What has changed
Throughout	Hyperlinks updated as necessary.
51.2 MSc by Research degrees: examiner recommendation	NEW clarification added that corrections to MSc by Research dissertations or research projects are only permitted where the recommendation is (d) Offer resubmission for MSc by Research. Corrections are not permitted to MSc by Research dissertations or research projects where the recommendation is (a) award pass with distinction in MSc by Research, (b) award pass with merit in MSc by Research, (c) award MSc by Research.

Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees 2022/23

Regulation 51 MSc by Research degrees: examiner recommendation

The examiners may recommend:

- (a) **Award Pass with Distinction in MSc by Research.** See Regulation 52; or
- (b) **Award Pass with Merit in MSc by Research.** See Regulation 53; or
- (c) **Award MSc by Research.** The research project or dissertation satisfies the requirements for the award of the degree as laid down in the University's [Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study](#) as appropriate and that the degree should be awarded; or
- (d) **Offer resubmission for MSc by Research.** The dissertation or research project satisfies the requirements for the degree except that minor corrections are required or stated minor weaknesses as identified by the examiners must be remedied. In the opinion of the examiners, the student will be able to remedy these with minimal supervision and without undertaking any further original research; or
- (e) **Award exit award.** The research project or dissertation is substantially inadequate in one or more of the requirements for the MSc by Research. However, the work is of sufficient quality to merit the award of postgraduate diploma or certificate; or
- (f) **Fail.** The research project or dissertation is substantially deficient in respect of all or any of the requirements for the degree and does not meet the requirements for any award.

Application of the regulation

51.1 For those MSc by Research degrees assessed by a Board of Examiners within a School, the Board makes a single recommendation for each student directly to the Senatus.

51.2 Corrections to MSc by Research dissertations or research projects are only permitted where the recommendation is (d) Offer resubmission for MSc by Research. Corrections are not permitted to MSc by Research dissertations or research projects where the recommendation is (a), (b) or (c) above.

Resource implications

6. There are no potential resource implications indicated by the proposed amendments.

Risk management

7. The proposed amendments do not introduce any new risks.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

8. The proposed amendments do not contribute to the sustainable development goals.

Equality & diversity

9. Academic Services has not identified any equality and diversity implications associated with the proposed amendments.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

10. Academic Services will communicate approved regulations in the annual email update to Schools and Colleges on regulations and policies. Academic Services will also cover any changes to regulations in Boards of Examiners briefings and other relevant briefing events for staff in Schools and Colleges

Author

Dr Adam Bunni, Head of Governance and Regulatory Framework Team, Academic Services and Susan Hunter, Academic Policy Officer

Presenter

Dr Adam Bunni

Freedom of Information

The paper is open.

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

26 May 2022

Student Discipline Officers

Description of paper

1. This paper contains the current list of Student Discipline Officers. Members of APRC are invited to let us know if there are any changes to be made to the membership list.

Action requested / recommendation

2. For approval.

Background and context

3. The Student Discipline Officer list is approved by APRC on behalf of Senate, in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct.

www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/codeofstudentconduct.pdf

Discussion

4. The list is provided as an appendix.

Resource implications

5. There are no potential resource implications indicated by the proposed amendments.

Risk management

6. The proposed amendments do not introduce any new risks.

Equality & diversity

7. None identified, no proposed change in policy or procedure.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

8. Academic Services publish the Student Discipline Officer list on the Academic Services website.

www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/studentdisciplineofficers.pdf

Author

Ailsa Taylor, Academic Policy Officer

Presenter

Academic Services

Freedom of Information

The paper is open.



Student Discipline Officers

College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

Professor Dorothy Miell, Vice-Principal and Head of College
Dr Paul Norris, Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval
Dr Lisa Kendall, Director of Academic and Student Administration
Dr Sabine Rolle, Dean of Undergraduate Education
Dr Elizabeth Lovejoy, College Registrar
Professor Stephen Bowd, Dean of Postgraduate Education

College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine

Dr Paddy Hadoke, Director Postgraduate Research (Student Experience)
Dr Sarah Henderson, Director, Postgraduate Taught
Professor Jamie Davies, College Dean of Taught Education
Dr Anne-Marie Coriat, College Secretary
Ms Philippa Burrell, Head of Academic Administration

College of Science and Engineering

Professor Dave Robertson, Vice-Principal and Head of College
Professor Judy Hardy, Dean of Learning and Teaching
Dr Antony Maciocia, Dean of Postgraduate Research
Dr Linda Kirstein, Dean of Education, Quality Assurance and Culture
Mr Stephen Warrington, Dean of Student Experience
Professor Andy Mount, Dean of Research
Dr Bruce Nelson, College Registrar
Ms Heather Tracey, Deputy Head of Academic Affairs

Corporate Services Group

Mr Christopher Tucker – Director, Residence Life
Professor Paul Foster, Warden Holland House, Accommodation, Catering and Events
Ms Cheryl Hutton, Senior Residence Life Co-ordinator
Mr James Jarvis, Warden Grant House, Accommodation, Catering and Events
Mr Abdul Majothi, Warden Mylne's Court, Accommodation, Catering and Events
Mr Jim Aitken, Director, Centre for Sport and Exercise
Ms Louise Campbell, Depute Director, Centre for Sport and Exercise

Information Services Group

Mr Gavin McLachlan, Chief Information Officer and Librarian to the University
Mr Jeremy Upton, Director Library and Collections

University Secretary's Group

Ms Sarah Smith, University Secretary
Ms Lisa Dawson, Deputy Secretary Student Experience (interim)
Mrs Leigh Chalmers, Director of Legal Services

Designated Vice Principals

Professor Richard Kenway, Vice-Principal High Performance Computing
Professor Dorothy Miell, Vice-Principal and Head of College (CAHSS)
Professor Dave Robertson, Vice-Principal and Head of College (CSE)
Ms Sarah Smith, University Secretary
Professor Moira Whyte, Vice-Principal and Head of College (CMVM)

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)

26 May 2022

APRC Membership and Terms of Reference

Description of paper

1. Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) Membership and Terms of Reference for 2022/23.

Action requested / recommendation

2. The Membership and Terms of Reference are presented to APRC for noting and approval.

Background and context

3. The membership and terms of reference APRC were most recently reviewed and approved by Senate in [June 2021](#). This followed a detailed review of these committees in academic year 2018/19 (see [Senate paper C, 29 May 2019](#)).
4. Senate Standing Committees report to Senate annually. These committees feed into and out of College level committees (Undergraduate Education, Postgraduate Education, Quality Assurance) and specialist Support Services (the Institute for Academic Development, Careers Service, Student Recruitment and Admissions, Student Systems) via the committee members. In many cases, therefore, the committee roles are ex officio, to ensure that committee members have the appropriate knowledge, expertise and responsibility / accountability to fulfil the committee remit. All committees include student representation.
5. Senate members who are not included in APRC's membership may have opportunities to contribute to the work of these committees as co-opted members or as members of working groups.
6. Senate members receive notification via email when papers for Senate Standing Committees are available. Members are encouraged to feed into Standing Committee's by sharing comments or feedback with either their College representative, or in their absence, the relevant Standing Committee Convener.

Discussion

7. The Committee membership for Senate Academic and Policy Regulations Committee (APRC) will be shared with Senate in draft format for their meeting on 25 May 2022. The membership of APRC is to be confirmed at the final meeting of APRC, to be held on Thursday 26 May. The Convener and Vice-Convener will also be confirmed at the final meeting of APRC in line with 4.1 of the APRC Terms of Reference.
8. The APRC webpages will be updated with membership once all positions are confirmed.

Resource implications

9. No amendments with resource implications are proposed.

Risk management

10. Effective academic governance assists the University in managing risk associated with its academic activities.

Equality & diversity

11. The composition of the Senate Committees is largely determined according to defined role-holders (e.g. defined Assistant or Vice-Principal, Director of a defined Support Service or delegate) or as representatives of particular stakeholders (e.g. a College or the Students' Association). The membership of APRC is therefore largely a consequence of decisions taken elsewhere to appoint individuals to particular roles. Ensuring that appointment processes support a diverse staff body is part of the broader responsibility of the University.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

12. The APRC's Membership and Terms of Reference are communicated via the Academic Services website: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/academic-policy-regulations>

13. Senate Standing Committees are subject to an annual internal review process, and this is reported annually to Senate.

Authors

Olivia Hayes Academic Policy Officer
May 2022

Freedom of Information

Open

**The University of Edinburgh
Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee
Terms of Reference**

1. Purpose and Role

1.1. The Academic Policy and Regulations Committee is responsible, on behalf of Senate, for the University's framework of academic policy and regulation, apart from those aspects which are primarily parts of the Quality Assurance Framework.

2. Remit

2.1. Oversee the development, maintenance and implementation of an academic regulatory framework which effectively supports and underpins the University's educational activities.

2.2. Ensure that the academic regulatory framework continues to evolve in order to meet organisational needs and is responsive to changes in University strategy, and in the internal and external environments.

2.3. Scrutinise and approve proposals for new or revised academic policy or regulation, ensuring that policy and regulation is only introduced where it is necessary, and that all policy and regulation is suitably accessible to its intended audience.

2.4. Act with delegated authority from the Senate on matters of student conduct and discipline.

2.5. In taking forward its remit, the Committee will seek consistency and common approaches while supporting and encouraging variation where this is beneficial, particularly if it is in the best interests of students.

2.6. Consider the implications of the Committee's work and its decisions in the context of external initiatives and compliance and legal frameworks, particularly in relation to equality and diversity.

3. Operation

3.1. The Committee reports to Senate, acting with delegated authority to take decisions regarding the regulatory framework for the University's educational activities.

3.2. The Committee may bring matters to the attention of the University Executive as required.

3.3. The Committee will meet at least four times each academic year and will interact electronically, as necessary.

3.4. The Committee will follow a schedule of business set prior to the start of the academic year and which is agreed through consultation with Senate, the Conveners of the other Senate Committees, and other relevant members of the community.

3.5. The Convener, or Vice-Convener will have delegated authority, on behalf of the Committee, to make decisions on student concession cases, and this business may be conducted electronically where appropriate.

3.6. From time to time, the Committee will establish working groups or commission individuals to carry out detailed work under the Committee's oversight.

4. Composition

Role	Term	2021/22 membership
3 x senior staff members from each College with responsibility for academic governance and regulation, and maintaining and enhancing the quality of the student experience at all levels		<p>Dr Paul Norris, Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval (CAHSS)</p> <p>Dr Jeremy Crang, Dean of Students (CAHSS)</p> <p>Rachael Quirk, Head of Taught Student Administration and Support (CAHSS)</p> <p>To be confirmed, Dean of Learning and Teaching (CSE)</p> <p>Stephen Warrington, Dean of Student Experience (CSE)</p> <p>To be confirmed, Head of Academic Affairs (CSE)</p> <p>Professor Jamie Davies, Dean of Taught Education (CMVM)</p> <p>Philippa Burrell, Head of Academic Administration (CMVM)</p>
1 x senior staff member from each College with responsibility for postgraduate research		<p>Kirsty Woomble, Head of PGR Student Office (CAHSS)</p> <p>Dr Antony Maciocia, Dean of Postgraduate Research (CSE) (Senate member)</p> <p>Dr Paddy Hadoke, Director of Postgraduate Research and Early Career Research Experience (CMVM)</p>
1 x Edinburgh University Students' Association sabbatical officer	Ex Officio	Sam Maccallum, Vice-President, Education
1 x member of the Edinburgh University Students' Association permanent staff		Charlotte Macdonald, Advice Place Deputy Manager, Students' Association
1 x member of staff from Student Systems and Administration	Ex Officio	Sarah McAllister, Scholarships and Financial Support Team, Student Systems
1 x member of staff from the Institute for Academic development		Dr Cathy Bovill, Senior Lecturer in Student Engagement

1 x member of staff from Academic Services		To be confirmed, Head of Governance and Regulatory Framework
1 x member of staff from Information Services' Learning, Teaching and Web Services Division		Currently vacant
Up to 3 co-options chosen by the Convener	Up to 3 years	Stuart Lamont, Edinburgh University Students' Association Academic Engagement Coordinator

4.1. At the final meeting of the academic year, the Committee will identify a Convener and Vice-Convener for the Committee from amongst its membership, to serve in the following year.

4.2. The Convener can invite individuals for specific meetings or agenda items.

4.3. Substitutions of members (i.e. due to inability to attend) will be at the discretion of the Convener of the Committee.

5. Responsibilities and Expectations of Committee Members

5.1. Be collegial and constructive in approach.

5.2. Attend regularly and participate fully in the work of the Committee and its task/working groups. This will involve looking ahead and consulting/gathering input in order to provide the broad spectrum of thoughts and opinions that are necessary for proper consideration of the area being discussed.

5.3. Take collective and individual ownership for the issues under the Committee's remit and for the discussion and resolution of these issues. In taking ownership of the work of the Committee, members must take steps to ensure that they are empowered to take decisions on behalf of academic and managerial colleagues.

5.4. Be committed to communicating the work of the Committee to the wider University community.

Terms of Reference: Approved by Senate June 2021

Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

26 May 2022

Annual Report of the Senate Standing Committees

Description of paper

1. This is the annual report of the Senate Standing Committees: Education Committee; Academic Policy and Regulations Committee; and Quality Assurance Committee. It reports on the Committees' achievements and use of delegated powers in 2021-22. It also proposes outline plans for 2022-23.

Action requested

2. Members are invited to note the content included for Academic Policy and Regulations Committee noting in particular the priorities for academic year 2022/23.

Background and Context

3. The Senate Standing Committees provide an annual report setting out progress on activities in the past year and seeking Senate approval for their general strategic direction and priorities for the next academic year.

Resource implications

4. The proposed plans for 2022-23 will have some resource implications relating to time spent by members of the Committees and Policy Officers in Academic Services or staff invited to participate in working groups. Some of the resource requirements for wider work of the Committees will be met through existing resources or have agreed funding in place.

Risk Management

5. Each individual strand of proposed activity will be subject to risk assessment as appropriate.

Equality and Diversity

6. Where required, Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out for individual work packages completed next year. It is noted that following discussion of Committee effectiveness in the last academic year, all Senate Standing Committees undertook to place more focus on effective evaluation of E&D dimensions.

Next steps / implications

7. The report will be considered by Senate at their meeting on 25 May. The Senate Committees will progress the agreed strategic approach during 2022-23 as set out in the report. This report will also be shared with the University Court for information.

Authors

Sue MacGregor, Director of Academic Services
Brian Connolly, Academic Policy Officer
Olivia Hayes, Academic Policy Officer
Pippa Ward, Academic Policy Officer

Presenters

Dr Paul Norris, Convenor of Academic Policy
and Regulations Committee

May 2022

Freedom of Information Open

Annual Report of the Senate Committees 2021-22

1. Executive Summary

This report summarises the achievements of the Senate Committees, and their use of the powers delegated to them by Senate, for academic year 2021-22, along with their proposed plans for 2021-22.

2. Introduction

The three Standing Committees of Senate (hereafter referred to as the Senate Committees) are the Senate Education Committee (SEC), Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC), and Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC).

Senate has delegated to these Committees a range of its powers, and these powers are set out in the Committees' Terms of Reference. Links to the Terms of Reference and memberships of the Senate Standing Committees are below:

- [Education Committee](#)
- [Academic Policy and Regulations Committee](#)
- [Quality Assurance Committee](#)

Sections 3, 4 and 5 below provide information on the Standing Committees' activities in 2021/22.

Section 6 sets out proposals for future work. These proposals have arisen from Committee discussions, and discussion at the Senate Committee Conveners' Forum. The proposals are designed to assist the University in pursuing its Learning and Teaching agenda and wider goals and laid out in the University Strategy 2030:

- [Strategy 2030](#)

3. Key Committee and Task Group Activities in 2021-22*

Name of Committee	No. of meetings
Senate Education Committee	5 (one electronic)
Academic Policy & Regulations	7 (two additional, special meetings)
Senate Quality Assurance Committee	5

Name of Task Group	Task Group of:
Personal Tutor System Oversight Group	SQAC
Student Support Services subcommittee	SQAC
Data Task Group	SQAC
Exams Sub-Group	SEC

*Includes meetings scheduled for the remainder of the session.

The remits and memberships of any task groups are available within the relevant Committee pages at: www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees

4. Senate Committees' Progress in 2021/22

Section 4 provides information on progress against the activities proposed in last year's report to Senate. Section 5 provides information on other committee activity in 2021/22.

4.1 Education Committee

Progress with activities proposed in last year's report:

Activity
<p>1. Input into the Curriculum Transformation project</p> <p>Curriculum Transformation was a standing item on Education Committee agendas in 2021/22.</p> <p>Members received a presentation on Curriculum Transformation timelines and the draft 'Edinburgh Student Vision' at its March 2022 meeting, and an update on the Vision consultation at its May 2022 meeting.</p>
<p>2. Ensure effective responses to ELIR recommendations</p> <p>Members received and endorsed the ELIR response action plan at its September 2021 meeting.</p> <p>At its March 2022 meeting, the Committee commented on a paper outlining proposals to develop a holistic and strategic approach to the design and management of assessment and feedback in response to ELIR recommendations. This included consideration of the University's overall approach to assessment and feedback, and assessment and feedback principles aimed at providing a clear set of expectations to bring consistency across the University. An updated version of the principles was brought to the May 2022 meeting for final approval.</p> <p>Education Committee also received, for information and comment, copies of the student experience updates that were taken to University Executive throughout the year.</p>
<p>3. Other matters considered during the year</p> <p>Other key items considered by Education Committee during the year included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Progress with the Doctoral College- The University's involvement in the delivery of microcredentials- Digital Strategy- Academic integrity- Ongoing input into academic year planning in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic (capacity planning, exam diet planning etc.)

4.2 Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)

Progress with activities proposed in last year's report:

Activity

1. Input as required into Curriculum Transformation project (led by Education Committee, carried forward from 2019/20).

The Committee has not yet been required to provide detailed input to this project, although the Committee's experience with regards to the diversification of PGT degree models has been fed into the discussions of the Curriculum Transformation Project. The Committee expects to have greater involvement as at the detailed design and implementation stages, as these are where interaction with academic regulations will occur.

2. Review of Enhancement-Led Institutional Review outputs and take appropriate action as required. (Carried forward from 2019/20).

The committee has not yet been asked to consider any policy or regulation changes as a result of this work. Discussions with relevant colleagues have occurred when the regular work of the Committee has overlapped with points of the ELIR action plan. For instance, APRC discussions around possible changes around coursework extensions and the ELIR response on assessment and feedback

3. Monitor any requirement for longer term regulatory and policy changes as a result of Covid-19 and take appropriate action as required. (Continued from 2020/21).

The Committee has not needed to make any regulatory or policy changes as a result of Covid-19 in 2021-22. The Committee continues to monitor the requirement for longer term regulatory and policy changes as a result of Covid-19.

4. Other matters considered during the year

Other key items considered by Academic, Policy and Regulations Committee during the year included:

- The potential impact of industrial action
- Changes of terminology due to the implementation of the new model of student support
- Short-term adjustments to the policy around extensions and special circumstances
- Minor updates to the Support for Study Policy
- Arrangements for awarding credit to UG students who have a single semester overseas
- Mechanisms for approving courses and programmes offered by EFi

4.3 Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)

Progress with activities proposed in last year's report:

Activity

1. Develop and oversee the implementation of a plan of action in response to the 2021 Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR).

The Committee continues to receive regular updates on the ELIR Action Plan. The University is required to provide a follow-up report to QAA Scotland on actions taken or in progress to address the outcomes of the review one year after the publication of the ELIR reports (15 July 2022). A first draft of the report has been submitted to the University Executive (10 May 2022 meeting), and an update on ELIR actions will be presented to Senate (25 May 2022 meeting). The report will be developed in response to comments from the University Executive and Senate and the ELIR Oversight Group will approve the final version before it is submitted to QAA (with the

proviso that it will need to be endorsed by University Court in October 2022 before the final version can be published).

2. Implement the recommendations from the Digital Maturity report and consider how quality processes and the data that they produce can support the Curriculum Transformation programme.

The Committee is working with Academic Services to develop a SharePoint site to optimize the presentation of quality data/evidence to Schools/Deaneries and encourage greater engagement and traction with quality processes.

3. Continue to examine data and methodological options for the systematic monitoring of retention, progression, and attainment data in response to the recommendations from Thematic Reviews.

The Committee has driven work to identify awarding gaps across the University via the Thematic Review process (and the Data Task Group established to progress the recommendations of recent reviews) and the annual quality assurance (QA) processes. Schools and Deaneries have increasingly engaged with widening participation (WP) and equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) data to identify any gaps in attainment for different groups of students. However, they have struggled to understand the underlying causes of these gaps or what good practice should be encouraged and cultivated to address them.

The University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC) is now undertaking work to determine the underlying causes of awarding gaps and share good practice with Schools to help them address these gaps. The EDIC will explore options to establish a set of expectations or baselines in relation to WP and EDI data (based on the findings of the work to understand the causes of gaps and good practice) to allow Schools to gauge their relative performance. These expectations/baselines will in turn be monitored by the SQAC as part of the School annual reporting process.

The Convenor of EDIC attended the April 2022 meeting of SQAC to consider the roles both committees will have in overseeing the work to determine the underlying causes of the awarding gaps with the aim of establishing and sharing good practice with Schools and Deaneries to help them address these gaps.

4. Engage with quality assurance and enhancement-related aspects of the Scottish Funding Council review of coherent provision and sustainability.

The Committee's focus on the use of quality data (see above) will allow the University to address one of the core principles for the approach to quality assurance and enhancement in the Review report (building on feedback from stakeholders about what is valued in existing approaches): "Evidence-based: data and evidence should inform our understanding of practice and quality assurance, and our plans for enhancement" (page 70). The Committee will receive an update later in this session on the SFC Review and its implications for the University's Quality Framework

5. Implement the recommendations from the review of Course Enhancement Questionnaires (CEQs).

The Committee is monitoring the implementation of the new Student Voice Policy through annual monitoring, review and reporting processes. The Project Board is focused on developing a toolkit to support local collection of end of course feedback (e.g. question banks, different methods of collecting feedback).

5 Other Committee Activity in 2021/22

• Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) Accreditation Committee

The Committee continues to oversee the accreditation of the SRUC programme, 'Environmental Management (BSc)' and the outgoing 'Environmental Resource Management (BSc)'. The Accreditation Committee met in March 2022 and affirmed continued accreditation of the programmes. SRUC's application for Degree Awarding Powers (DAP) has been approved to progress to the scrutiny stage by the QAA Advisory Committee. SRUC has now entered a period of scrutiny which will continue for a minimum of a full year, and there may be an indication of the outcome in Summer 2023.

- The attached Annex sets out any new strategies / regulations / policies / codes that the Committees have approved (the more substantive of which are covered in Section 4 above), along with changes to existing documents.

6 Senate Committees' Priorities for 2022/23

6.1 Planning Context

The year will be planned in the post-Covid context and with continuing attention paid to Strategy 2030. Some ongoing need or preferences for hybrid working will influence the mode of operation and interaction between the Committees and their stakeholders and it is expected that the balance will shift substantially towards in-person/on-campus activity.

6.2 Education Committee

Activity
Curriculum Transformation
Student Experience – ongoing input into matters being taken forward by University Executive
Enhancement-led Institutional Review – ongoing response to outcomes of 2021 ELIR, particularly around assessment and feedback
Doctoral College developments
Academic Integrity

6.3 Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

Activity
Feed into the Curriculum Transformation Programme and support discussion around this.
Continue to support policy changes required as part of the new Student Support model.
Support the review of the Support for Study policy to ensure this remains fit for purpose, particularly in the context of changes resulting from the new Student Support model.
Support a review of coursework extensions and special circumstances policies, taking account of the recommendations of the ESC Review (conducted during 21/22).
Develop a timeline for undertaking the scheduled periodic review of policies which were delayed due to external factors.

6.4 Quality Assurance Committee

Activity
Oversee the implementation of a plan of action in response to the 2021 Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR).
Implement the recommendations from the Digital Maturity report and consider how quality processes and the data that they produce can support the Curriculum Transformation programme.
Continue to examine data and methodological options for the systematic monitoring of retention, progression, and attainment data.
Continue to monitor the implementation of the Student Voice Policy via annual quality assurance processes.
Engage with the QAA and Universities UK review focused on strengthening the external examining system.

Annex – new regulations/policies/codes, and reviews of and amendments to existing regulations/policies/codes, approved by Senate and its Committees during 2021/22

New and updated policies, regulations and guidance will be published on the Academic Services website in due course: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/policies-regulations/new-policies> (currently showing updates for 2021/22. 2020/21).

Senate Committee	Name of document	Type of change (New / Revision / Deletion / Technical Update / Reviewed and no changes made)
SEC	Open Educational Resources Policy	Revision
SEC	Policy for the Recruitment, Support and Development of Tutors & Demonstrators	Revision
SEC	Academic & Pastoral Support Policy	Review underway to take account of changes to the Student Support model
SEC	Virtual Classroom Policy	Minor revision to take account of changes to the Student Support model
SEC	Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy	Review (ongoing)
APRC	Undergraduate Degree Regulations 2022/23	Reviewed and approved at APRC in March 2022.
APRC	Postgraduate Degree Regulations 2022/23	Reviewed and approved at APRC in March 2022.
APRC	Support for Study	Reviewed and approved at APRC in March 2022.
APRC	Authorised Interruption of Study	Reviewed to take account of changes to the Student Support model.
APRC	Course Organiser: Outline of Role	Reviewed to take account of changes to the Student Support model.
APRC	International Student Attendance and Engagement Policy	Reviewed to take account of changes to the Student Support model.
APRC	Performance Sport Policy	Reviewed to take account of changes to the Student Support model.
APRC	Programme and Course Handbooks Policy	Reviewed to take account of changes to the Student Support model.
APRC	Protection of Children and Protected Adults	Reviewed to take account of changes to the Student Support model.
APRC	Undergraduate Progression Boards Policy	Reviewed to take account of changes to the Student Support model.
APRC	Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure	Reviewed to take account of changes to the Student Support model.

Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**26 May 2022****Annual review of effectiveness of Senate Standing Committees****Description of paper**

1. This paper notifies Committee members of plans for the annual review of Senate Committees' effectiveness.

Action requested / recommendation

2. Committee members are asked to **note and provide comments on the plans for the review, and to engage with opportunities to provide feedback on the committees' functioning and effectiveness.**

Background and context

3. 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."
4. In line with the requirements of the Code, during Spring/Summer 2022, Academic Services is conducting an annual review of the three Senate Standing Committees. The outcomes of this review will be reported to Senate in September / October 2022.
5. Actions identified in the previous annual effectiveness review, and progress against these actions, are noted in Appendix 2.

Discussion

6. The review process is intended to gather information on and evaluate effectiveness in terms of the:
 - a. Composition of the committee
 - b. Support and facilitation of committee meetings
 - c. Engagement of members and knowledge and understanding of their roles and committee remits
 - d. Impact and strategic relevance of Senate Committees' work

7. The review process will be primarily self-reflective and will gather information as described below:
 - a. Education Committee members are asked to submit written comments to philippa.ward@ed.ac.uk
 - b. Quality and Assurance Committee members are asked to submit written comments to Brian.Connolly@ed.ac.uk
 - c. Academic Policy and Regulation Committee members are asked to submit written comments to Olivia.Hayes@ed.ac.uk
 - d. Senate Committee members will also be invited to respond to an online questionnaire during summer 2022 (managed by Academic Services). Draft questions are appended below.
 - e. The Committee Convener and Secretary will review committee coverage of Postgraduate Research Student business.

8. Academic Services will collate the information above and produce a report on the findings.

Resource implications

9. The review will be conducted by Academic Services and any resource requirements will be met from existing budgets. The resource implications of any actions identified in response to the outcomes of the review will be considered at that stage.

Risk management

10. The annual effectiveness review process assists the University in ensuring that its academic governance arrangements are effective and enables the University to manage a range of risks associated with its academic provision.

Equality & diversity

11. The review provides an opportunity to identify any equality and diversity issues in the make-up of the Committees and the way they conduct their business.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

12. The report will be presented to Senate and the Senate Standing Committees in September / October 2022. If the review identifies required actions or enhancement opportunities, these will be taken forward by Academic Service (if directly related to the functioning and support of the Senate Committees) or referred to the appropriate body for consideration.

Author

Academic Services
10 May 2022

Freedom of Information

Open

Appendix 1**Senate Standing Committees: Internal Effectiveness Review 2021-22****Draft questions for Summer 2022 survey**

Members of the Senate Committees will be invited to fill in an online questionnaire during Summer 2022 and the draft questions for this exercise are set out below for comment. This is the same question set used in the 2019-20 & 2020-21 Senate committee review.

1. Committee remit

- 1.1. Is the Committee's remit clear? If not, what improvements would you suggest?
- 1.2. Is the scope of the remit appropriate?
- 1.3. Has the Committee adapted effectively to the challenges or changes in priority?
- 1.4. Are you happy with your Committee's use of task groups?

2. Governance and impact

- 2.1. Do you have a clear understanding of how the Committee fits into the academic governance framework of the University?
- 2.2. Do you feel that the Committee makes the desired impact based on its remit and priorities?
- 2.3. Are there clear links between Committee business and University strategic priorities?

3. Composition

- 3.1. Do you think that the current composition of the Committee enables it to fulfil its remit?
- 3.2. Is the size of the Committee appropriate in order for it to operate effectively?

4. Equality and Diversity

- 4.1. Is the composition of the Committee suitably representative of the diverse University population?
- 4.2. Are you satisfied that equality and diversity considerations are adequately addressed when discussing Committee business?

5. Committee members – Role clarity and participation

- 5.1. Are you clear on your role and responsibilities as a Committee member?
- 5.2. If this is not clear, do you have any suggestions on how to improve this?
- 5.3. If you were a new member in 2019/20, were you satisfied with the induction you were given to the Committee and its business?
- 5.4. Is lack of engagement by members ever an impediment to the Committee?
- 5.5. Does anything create a barrier to your engagement with the Committee?

6. Stakeholder Engagement and Communications

- 6.1. Does the Committee engage and communicate effectively with stakeholders? (For example, is the Senate Committees' Newsletter an effective vehicle?)
- 6.2. Do you have a clear understanding of your role on the Committee as a representative of your College or Group?
- 6.3. Do you have a clear understanding of your role in cascading information from the Committee to your College or Group?

7. Committee support

- 7.1. Do you feel that the Committee is supported effectively by Academic Services?
- 7.2. Does the information provided to the Committee (in format and volume) support effective decision-making by the Committee?
- 7.3. Do papers provide you with appropriate levels of detail on the background of issues brought to the Committee, and on how Committee decisions will be implemented?

Appendix 2

Due to the low number of respondents to the Effectiveness Review in 2020/21, a combined analysis of the answers to the review questions provided by all of Senate's Standing Committees suggested the following recommended actions:

Area Under Review	Recommended Action	Responsible	Date
Remit	1. Student Experience to be included as standing item for SEC	Secretary	Complete
	2. SQAC and SEC to consider triggers for escalation and relationship with University Executive	Conveners' Forum	Complete
Composition	3. Senate to receive discussion paper on this topic at a later date.	Academic Services will take this forward with Senate Convener.	Ongoing
Governance & Impact	4. Each committee to consider more effective use of short-life working groups	Convener/Secretary	Ongoing
EDI	5. Each committee to ensure proactive consideration of EDI for all papers/discussion and decision making.	Convener/Secretary	Considered at every meeting
	6. Senate to receive a discussion paper on 'composition' at a later date, to include EDI	Academic Services will take this forward with Senate Convener.	Ongoing
Role	7. Each committee to consider effective induction for members and implement revised approaches as required	Convener/Secretary	Start of new academic year and for any member appointed mid-year
Communications	8. Each committee to be more explicit at each meeting regarding how decisions will be communicated or implemented	Convener/Secretary	Considered at every meeting

Senatus Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**26 May 2022****Senate Presentation and Discussion themes for 2022/23 meetings****Description of paper**

1. A request to the Committee to suggest themes for the presentation and discussion section of next year's Senate meetings, and a note of recently presented topics.

Action requested / recommendation

2. The Committee is invited to make suggestions for themes for the presentation and discussion sections for Senate 2022/23. These will be collated by the Secretary to Academic Policy and Regulations Committee and passed to the Senate Clerk.

Background and context

3. Senate meetings are divided into two sections: an open presentation and discussion section, and a section for formal business open to Senate members only.
4. All members of staff are invited to attend the presentation and discussion section of the Senate meetings and this is an opportunity to hold open discussions on a key strategic theme.
5. From 2018/19, Senate also began to receive 'year-on updates' on selected topics presented in the previous year. In 2020/21, these updates were incorporated into the main presentation topics.
6. Suggestions for themes are being sought from the Senate Education Committee, the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee, the Senate Quality Assurance Committee, and the Research Policy Group.

Discussion

7. The themes below have been covered in recent years.

2021/22

- Freedom of Expression
- The Edinburgh Graduate Vision
- REF and ELIR Outcomes and Actions

2020/21

- Adaptation and Renewal: Students
- Adaptation and Renewal: Research and Innovation
- Adaptation and Renewal: Reshaping and Estates & Digital Infrastructure

2019/20

Main topics:

- Support for Early Career Researchers
- Student Support and Wellbeing: Review of Personal Tutoring and Student Support, and update on the Student Mental Health Strategy
- Enhancement-Led Institutional Review
- Curriculum Reform

Year-on updates:

- Student Experience Action Plan
- Research Excellence Framework

2018/19

Main topics:

- Teaching and Academic Careers
- Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy
- Enhancing the Student Experience – Approach and Action Plan
- Refreshing the University's Strategic Plan
- Research Excellence Framework
- Student Experience Action Plan
- Widening Participation

Year-on update:

- Careers and Employability

Resource implications

8. None relevant

Risk management

9. None relevant

Equality & diversity

10. Committees are encouraged to consider equality and diversity as a factor in their selection of suggestions, and equality and diversity implications will be considered in the final selection of presentation themes.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

11. Committee secretaries will collate suggestions and pass these to the Senate Clerk.

12. Collated themes will be passed to the Principal, who will make the final selection of presentation and discussion themes for 2022/23. Selected themes will be advertised via the [Senate website](#) and in advance of each meeting.

Author

Olivia Hayes, Academic Policy Officer
May 2022

Freedom of Information

Open

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

26th May 2022

Deadlines for Submission of Late Special Circumstances Applications for the academic year 22/23

Description of paper

1. Following APRC's approval of the amendment to the wording of the Special Circumstances Policy regarding the standard deadline of applications, and the decision of the committee to approve Special Circumstances late application submission deadlines on an annual basis, this paper sets out the suggested deadlines for the academic year 22/23. The service is seeking the committee's approval of the dates.

Action requested

2. APRC approval of the SC deadlines for late submission of Special Circumstances applications for the academic year 22/23.

Background and context

3. Following the committee's decision to not set a specific deadline for late applications within the policy but to approve deadlines on an annual basis, this paper sets out suggested deadlines for the academic year 22/23.

Discussion

6. Based on previous discussions with Colleges, we propose that the deadlines for late submission of SC applications are:

- 12 noon, Friday 13th January 2023 for courses completed in semester 1.
- 12 noon, Friday 2nd June 2023 for courses completed in semester 2.
- Two weeks after the end of August resit diet for assessments completed in the resit diet and PGT assessments.

7. The deadlines will be distributed to schools as part of the ESC SC Framework for 22/23.

8. The deadlines will be included in the Key Dates as well as on the ESC pages.

Resource implications

7. The shortening of the window for late submission of SC applications could lead to an increase in academic appeal submissions. However, we expect any such increase to be small, and manageable within existing resources within Academic Services.

Risk Management

8. The proposal does not present any significant risks.

Equality & Diversity

9. Equality and Diversity has been considered and the proposal does not carry likely impacts for student in any particular characteristic groups. The impact of disabilities

upon study are primarily addressed through Schedules of Adjustments, though students with disabilities may submit Special Circumstances applications in relation to unexpected or temporary flare-ups in their condition. Students who miss the deadline for late applications for Special Circumstances may still be able to have their application considered, where their School is amenable to this, and will always have the right to an academic appeal.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

10. If the deadlines are approved, ESC will amend the SC 22/23 Framework accordingly. The deadlines will be included in the Key Dates, the ESC pages and will be communicated to Schools.

Author

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Team

Presenter

Sarah McAllister
Head of Student Support Operations
Team

Freedom of Information

This paper is open.