

**Meeting of the Senatus Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)
Hybrid meeting held online via Teams and in the Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House
Thursday 25 May 2023 at 2.00pm**

Confirmed Minute

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| <p>Present: Dr Aidan Brown Dr Adam Bunni Professor Jeremy Crang Professor Jamie Davies Dr Murray Earle Professor Patrick Hadoke (Vice-Convenor) Clair Halliday Karen Howie</p> <p>Professor Antony Maciocia Sarah McAllister Sam Maccallum Dr Donna Murray</p> <p>Dr Kathryn Nicol Dr Paul Norris (Convenor) Callum Paterson Rachael Quirk Dr Deborah Shaw Professor Tim Stratford Dr Uzma Tufail-Hanif Stephen Warrington Kirsty Woomble</p> <p>In attendance: Afshah Dean Michelle Evans</p> <p>Sarah Harvey Olivia Hayes (Minutes) Roshni Hume Kate Orton-Johnson Dean Pateman</p> <p>Apologies: Philippa Burrell</p> | <p>Elected member of Senate Head of Academic Affairs (CSE) Dean of Students (CAHSS) Dean of Taught Education (CMVM) Elected member of Senate Director of Postgraduate Research and Early Career Research Experience (CMVM) The Advice Place, Deputy Manager Head of Digital Learning Applications and Media, Information Services Dean of Postgraduate Research (CSE) Head of Student Support Operations, Registry Services Vice President Education, Students' Association Head of Taught Student Development, Institute for Academic Development Head of Academic Policy and Regulation Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval (CAHSS) Academic Engagement Coordinator (Co-opted member) Head of Taught Student Administration & Support (CAHSS) Dean of Students (CMVM) Dean of Learning and Teaching (CSE) Elected member of Senate Dean of Student Experience (CSE) Head of PGR Student Office (CAHSS)</p> <p>Programme Manager, MSc in Clinical Trials Programme Director, MSc Data Science for Health and Social Care EFI Head of Education Administration Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services EFI Director of Education Academic Services Consultant</p> <p>Head of Academic Administration (CMVM)</p> |
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| 1. | <p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>The Committee welcomed Dean Pateman who is working with Academic Services as a consultant for the next six months.</p> |
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| 2. | <p>Minutes of the previous meeting - APRC 22/23 9A For approval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March e-business (enclosed) • 2 May 2023 (enclosed) <p>The Committee noted an amendment to the final paragraph of item 5 of the March e-business minutes made since publication. The Committee approved the minutes of the March e-business meeting.</p> <p>The Committee approved the minutes of the 2 May meeting as presented.</p> <p>The Convener shared observations received from members following the 2 May meeting on the approach taken to revising the temporary variations to regulations during the meeting. The Convener and Committee Administrator have reflected on these and will take steps to consider the format of future meetings to discuss temporary variations and where changes to the proposed wording is required.</p> <p>The Convener summarised a discussion held at Senate on 24 May regarding the Committee's responsibility to consider temporary variations to regulations. He noted the importance of Senate and Standing Committee members having confidence in the Committee and Convener and invited colleagues to raise comments on the running of the 2 May meeting, updates provided to Senate or broader handling of Committee business. The Convener offered to leave the meeting whilst discussion was held. No members raised comment.</p> <p>The Convener noted points raised following the 2 May meeting, and invited members to raise any further comments they wished to make at the 2 May meeting but which were not made at the time. The following points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a view among some staff that the temporary variations approved by the Committee do not maintain academic standards, and the Committee should take account of this in considering any variations in future. • Some professional accrediting bodies have issued statements insisting that Universities across the UK retain the standards required for professional accreditation. The guidance issued by ACG includes statements that the requirements of accrediting bodies take precedent over the application of temporary variations approved by the Committee. • Accrediting bodies often set standards which are more restrictive than those deemed sufficient by the university. This is the case during normal periods of operation and does not suggest that the University's normal regulations are not appropriate. • More robust consideration of EDI issues should feature during any items before the Committee. |
| 3. | <p>Matters Arising - Verbal Update & note attached</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on industrial action <p>The Convener noted that guidance was issued by Academic Services and Exam Board briefings held in CAHSS and CSE. The Committee will likely receive further variations for consideration, which aligns with the staged approach agreed on 2 May.</p> <p>The Committee agreed that fortnightly meetings of APRC should be scheduled to the end of the academic year (31 July) to allow timely consideration of these issues. Meetings would be held online and where members are unavailable to attend they are invited to send a substitute member. Substitute members should represent the same constituency and who brings similar expertise and knowledge as the member they are attending on behalf.</p> <p>Senate would be notified of the additional meetings and papers in line with the agreed practices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on Externally-Facilitated Review of Senate and its Standing Committees |

Senate received a presentation of emerging recommendations from external review with the final report expected in early July. A copy of the slides would be shared with the Committee. Overall, the effectiveness of Committees is noted as positive however there are some issues regarding communication between Senate and its Committees.

- **Schedule of review for policies, regulations and guidance – Accessibility and Inclusive Learning Policy**

The Accessibility and Inclusive Learning Policy sits with the Senate Education Committee. A revised policy was approved on 11 May and this will be published in the normal way. The next review is scheduled for 2026/27.

- **Curriculum Transformation**

A series of workshops are scheduled for the coming period, these would be primarily looking at curriculum design. The Committee would receive items for consideration ahead of these going to Senate as per the decision taken at the 29 March meeting of Senate.

- **Update to APRC on review of ESC (note attached)**

There has been two strands of work undertaken around ESC this academic year, the review of ESC process, and the APRC task group. The Deputy Secretary, Students is working to bring the outcome of both strands of work together before a policy comes to APRC for approval. It is expected that this will be received in mid to late June.

Work is already underway to consider and develop improvements to the ESC system and service, which have resulted from the review of the ESC process and which will take place regardless of any policy changes. This includes, but is not limited to, improvements to the Extra Time Adjustment tool. Some Schools have expressed a desire not to engage with these improvements ahead of a revised policy being received.

Members of the APRC Task Group have not received an update on the policy work since concluding their meetings in March. An request for an update to the group was made.

Action: The Convener and Head of Student Support Operations, Student Systems and Administration will work with the Deputy Secretary, Students to update Schools on the system changes being separate to the policy changes expected in June.

Action: The Convener to raise the request for an update to the APRC Task Group on the policy work with the Deputy Secretary, Students.

Report of Convener's Action

- **Summary of approved concessions**

The Convener updated APRC on the actions which have been taken by Convener's action since the Committee last met.

- **Summary of approved concessions**

A total of 19 individual student concessions have been approved. There have been no cohort concessions received since the previous meeting. The Convener gave a broad overview of approved concessions approved by category:

- Extensions and AIS: 13
- DPT variation, progression requirements and credits: 6

- **Handling of concessions in relation to Industrial Action**

There have been no concessions relating to Industrial Action considered since APRC last met on 2 May 2023.

A clarification regarding the duration of Authorised Interruption of Study (AIS) available on Postgraduate part-time programmes was raised. The Programme Director has received advice from their College office that students are not able to receive further time for an AIS, which is affecting the retention of students to particular programmes. The Regulations stipulate that

maximum available to part-time postgraduate students and any further extension beyond the maximum would be submitted to APRC for approval.

The Advice Place are available to provide advice to students around applying for a further AIS.

Action: The Director of Postgraduate Research and Early Career Research Experience in CMVM would discuss with the Programme Director to clarify the position and discuss advice provided to staff and students on taking an AIS beyond the maximum.

For approval

4. Taught Assessment Regulations - APRC 22/23 9B

For approval

Dr Kathryn Nicol, Head of Governance and Regulatory Framework Team, Academic Services introduced the paper. The Taught Assessment Regulations (TAR) are updated on an annual basis, the paper presents the draft Taught Assessment Regulations 2023/24 for approval. The following key changes were discussed:

- A proposed amendment to Regulation 27 which was put forward by CSE on behalf of the Bayes Centre to allow a resit entitlement for non-graduating students. This proposal would be problematic for CMVM where there are a high number of PPD students. The proposed amendment to Regulation 27 was withdrawn and the Bayes Centre would seek approval for an exception to this Regulation at a future meeting of APRC.
- A proposed amendment to Regulation 30.4 and the addition of a regulation reminding students to exercise caution when using AI tools. The Regulations states that *programme and/or course handbooks will provide additional guidance in cases where AI tools might form part of an assessment task* and this was highlighted to Colleges to assist in communicating this update to Schools. The statement in the Regulation aligns with the guidance produced by the University on the use of generative AI. The Committee approved the wording as drafted for Regulation 30.4.
- A proposed amendment to Regulation 37.2 to clarify that Boards of Examiners are required to apply an Academic Misconduct penalty and that Regulation 43 should be followed where special circumstances apply. This proposed amendment is in line with the existing position on the handling of academic misconduct and special circumstances. The Committee approved the amendment to Regulation 37.2.
- A proposed amendment to Regulation 56.6 to state that pass/fail courses are excluded from the calculation given under Regulation 56 (b). The Committee raised the impact of this change on programmes where there are a large number of pass/fail courses. A Board of Studies is relied on to prevent situations where programmes are designed in a way that classification is based on a small number of credits which return a numeric grade. The Committee noted that consideration of the Postgraduate assessment progression was required more broadly and this was an area where the Committee would recommend further work be undertaken in future. The Committee approved the amendment to Regulation 56.6.

The Committee approved all other changes to the Taught Assessment Regulations and no were objections raised.

5. Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees - APRC 22/23 9C

For approval

Dr Kathryn Nicol, Head of Governance and Regulatory Framework Team, Academic Services introduced the paper. The Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees are updated on an annual basis and the paper presents the draft Regulations for 2023/24 for approval.

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| | The Committee approved the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees as presented and no were objections raised. |
| 6. | <p>Online exam arrangement for 2023/24 – submission deadlines - APRC 22/23 9D CLOSED For approval</p> <p>This item is closed business: its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs.</p> |
| 7. | <p>Late Special Circumstances deadline – PGT Dissertation 2022/23 - APRC 22/23 9E For approval</p> <p>Dr Kathryn Nicol, Head of Governance and Regulatory Framework Team, Academic Services introduced the paper. The paper proposes an amendment to the schedule of deadlines for late Special Circumstances (SC) applications for 2022/23, this is intended to align Special Circumstances deadlines across the University and to create greater consistency for students and to provide the ESC Service with a cut off for applications.</p> <p>The following points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colleges have indicated a preference for Option B as given in the paper. • The proposed approach is unlikely to be suitable for online, part-time postgraduate programmes and an earlier deadline is required for these programmes. • The dates and terminology used around the resit diet is geared towards undergraduate programmes, and is not workable for some postgraduate programmes. <p>The Committee approved option B as outlined in the paper and no were objections raised.</p> |
| 8. | <p>Late Special Circumstances deadlines – 2023/24 - APRC 22/23 9F For approval</p> <p>Dr Kathryn Nicol, Head of Governance and Regulatory Framework Team, Academic Services introduced the paper. The paper proposes a schedule of deadlines for late Special Circumstances (SC) applications in 2023/24. The dates for the Semester 1 and Semester 2 diets are required for Student Systems purposes.</p> <p>The following points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The standard dates are not suitable for teaching undertaken in blocks. • Students are required to provide evidence to support a late application. There is believed to be misunderstanding among students on this requirement. <p>The ESC and Academic Services would liaise with Schools and Deaneries, including Biomedical Sciences and Clinical Sciences, where teaching is undertaken in blocks to agree an approach for handling submissions which do not align with the standard dates set.</p> <p>The Committee approved the Semester 1 and Semester 2 deadline and noted that ESC would liaise with programmes where the SC deadlines are not suitable to confirm the approach.</p> <p>The Committee did not approve the resit or PGT dissertation deadlines, these would return to the next Ordinary meeting for consideration.</p> <p>Action: The Head of Student Support Operations agreed to confirm the evidence requirements to support a late SC application and report back to the Committee.</p> <p>Action: ESC and Academic Services would liaise with Schools where standard deadlines are not appropriate to confirm the approach.</p> |

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| 9. | <p>Proposal to terminate supervision of a PhD project - APRC 22/23 9G For approval</p> <p>This item is closed business: This paper contains information relating to a process which is still to be conducted. Disclosure of the contents would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs.</p> |
| 10. | <p>Revised curriculum approval arrangements for Edinburgh Futures Institute - APRC 22/23 9H For approval</p> <p>Deputy Convener, Professor Patrick Hadoke, convened this item. The Convener, Dr Paul Norris noted that he has recently served on the EFI Curriculum Oversight Board.</p> <p>This item was introduced by Kate Orton-Johnson, EFI Director of Education and Sarah Harvey, EFI Head of Education Administration. The paper sets out a proposal to establish a Board of Studies for EFI with effect from September 2023, superseding the existing Curriculum Oversight Board.</p> <p>The Committee approved the proposal as outlined in the paper to form of a Board of Studies for EFI and to disband the Curriculum Oversight Board with effect from September 2023.</p> |
| 11. | <p>Major change to an existing programme: MSc in Clinical Trials - APRC 22/23 9I For approval</p> <p>This item was introduced by Afshan Dean, Programme Manager, MSc in Clinical Trials. This paper outlines a proposal for the introduction of a fully taught Year 3 for students enrolled on the online part-time MSc Clinical Trials programme, to be offered as an alternative option to the current 60-credit dissertation.</p> <p>The paper also seeks approval to remove the progression hurdle following the completion of the first 120 taught credits of the programme.</p> <p>In discussion of this item following points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal to offer a full taught Year 3 would allow students who choose this route to meet the programme learning outcomes. • The proposal is primarily led by student demand with the traditional dissertation route is limiting for the diverse student cohort this programme attracts. The programme is one of the most expensive in the field and is looking to remain competitive and allow for learning to be tailored to the individual student's needs. • The progression hurdle to achieve 50% over 120 credits would be removed, there is precedent for this decision following other programmes which have also moved to a fully taught Year 3 structure. Students taking the dissertation pathway would be required to meet this requirement as a pre-requisite for enrolment on the dissertation course. • The degree outcomes of students across different routes should be routinely reviewed by the programme team to ensure equity of student experience and performance across each pathway. <p>The Committee approved the proposal as outlined in the paper and no objections were raised.</p> |
| 12. | <p>Major change to an existing programme: MSc Data Science for Health and Social Care - APRC 22/23 9J For approval</p> |

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| | <p>This item was introduced by Michelle Evans, Programme Director, MSc Data Science for Health and Social Care. This paper outlines a proposal to offer alternatives to the dissertation in the third year of study. These additional options are to include the SLICC + course electives option, and a Work-Based Placement with the Public Sector or Industry option.</p> <p>The paper also seeks approval to remove the progression hurdle following the completion of the first 120 taught credits of the programme.</p> <p>In discussion of this item following points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The programme team are comfortable that the proposal will allow students who choose either route to meet the programme learning outcomes. • The proposal is led by student demand with the traditional dissertation route is limiting for the diverse student cohort this programme attracts. • The degree outcomes of students across different routes should be routinely reviewed by the programme team to ensure equity of student experience and performance across each pathway. <p>The Committee approved the proposal as outlined in the paper and no objections were raised.</p> |
| 13. | <p>Major change to a new programme: MSc Leading Digital Transformation for Health and Care in Scotland - APRC 22/23 9K For approval</p> <p>This item was introduced by Michelle Evans, Programme Director, MSc Data Science for Health and Social Care. This paper outlines a proposal to offer alternatives to the dissertation in the third year of study. These additional options are to include the SLICC + course electives option, or a 60 credit e-Portfolio as an alternative to a dissertation.</p> <p>The paper also seeks approval to remove the progression hurdle following the completion of the first 120 taught credits of the programme.</p> <p>In discussion of this item following points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a new programme developed in collaboration with the Scottish government, led by the NHS and delivered by the Usher Institute. • The proposal is led by student demand with most students seeking to evidence how they are making an impact in digital education across Scotland. • At present, the programme has funding for 3 years and there are 50 students enrolled on the programme at present. <p>The Committee approved the proposal as outlined in the paper and no objections were raised.</p> |
| 14. | <p>Academic Misconduct Procedure - APRC 22/23 9L For approval</p> <p>This item was introduced by Roshni Hume, Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services. The paper proposes amendments to the Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures. The Committee received the proposal at its March meeting with no further comments received in the interim.</p> <p>The Committee approved the paper as presented subject to the following amendment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The final sentence of 1.5: Individual responses in collusion cases would be updated to note that each student must respond to the allegations individually. |
| 15. | <p>Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy Update - APRC 22/23 9M For approval</p> |

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| | <p>Dr Kathryn Nicol, Head of Governance and Regulatory Framework Team, Academic Services introduced the paper. The paper presents minor updates to the Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy and outlines plans for future developments.</p> <p>The Committee approved the paper as presented and no were objections raised.</p> |
| 16. | <p>Programme and Course Handbooks Policy Update - APRC 22/23 9N For approval</p> <p>Dr Kathryn Nicol, Head of Governance and Regulatory Framework Team, Academic Services introduced the paper. The paper presents minor updates to the Programme and Course Handbooks Policy.</p> <p>The Committee approved the paper as presented and no were objections raised.</p> |
| 17. | <p>Proposed Regulation, Policy and Procedure Changes related to Implementation of Student Support Model - APRC 22/23 9O For approval</p> <p>The Convener, Dr Paul Norris invited the Committee to approve this item. A concern was raised regarding the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion statement included in the paper. Due to the proximity to the scheduled meeting end time, this item would be deferred for consideration at a reconvened meeting of APRC.</p> |
| 18. | <p>Academic Year Dates – 2026/27 - APRC 22/23 9P For approval</p> <p>Due to the proximity to the scheduled meeting end time, this item would be deferred for consideration at a reconvened meeting of APRC.</p> |
| 19. | <p>Student Discipline Committee - 2022/23 - APRC 22/23 9Q For approval</p> <p>The Committee approved the revised membership of the Student Discipline Committee to take effect from 31 May and no were objections raised. The Committee agreed that Convener’s action could be taken to appoint the Convener of the Student Discipline Committee.</p> |
| 20. | <p>Election of APRC Convener and Vice-Convener for 2023/24 - Verbal discussion For approval</p> <p>Due to the proximity to the scheduled meeting end time, this item would be deferred for consideration at a reconvened meeting of APRC.</p> |
| To note and comment | |
| 21. | <p>Academic Policy and Regulations Membership and Terms of Reference 2023/24 - APRC 22/23 9R To note</p> <p>Due to the proximity to the scheduled meeting end time, the Committee would receive this item electronically for comment and with comments reported to a reconvened meeting of APRC.</p> |

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| 22. | <p>Annual Report of the Senate Standing Committees - APRC 22/23 9S To note and comment</p> <p>Due to the proximity to the scheduled meeting end time, the Committee would receive this item electronically for comment and with comments reported to a reconvened meeting of APRC.</p> |
| 23. | <p>Annual Review of Effectiveness of Senate Standing Committees - APRC 22/23 9T To note and comment</p> <p>Due to the proximity to the scheduled meeting end time, the Committee would receive this item electronically for comment and with comments reported to a reconvened meeting of APRC.</p> |
| 24. | <p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Thanks to departing members. Thanks and best wishes were extended to Sam Maccallum, EUSA VP Education who returns to their study in early June Thanks were extended to Kathryn Nicol, Head of Governance and Regulatory Framework Team, Academic Services, who returns to her role in Academic Services in early June as Adam Bunni returns to his role in Academic Services, also in early June.</p> <p>All other members would remain active until 31 July and the Committee expected to meet again over the summer period.</p> <p>Provisional meeting dates 2023-24 The Committee noted the provisional meeting dates for 2023-24 as provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday 21 September 2023 • Thursday 23 November 2023 • Thursday 25 January 2024 • Thursday 21 March 2024 • Thursday 23 May 2024 <p>All meetings will take place from 2-5pm, venue to be confirmed.</p> |