

The University of Edinburgh

Internal Periodic Review

Year on response report

Internal Periodic Review of: Law

Date of review: 11-14 October 2021

Date of 14 week response: 27 April 2022

Date of year on response: 29 June 2023

The School/Subject Area is responsible for reporting on progress with all recommendations, including those remitted to other areas of the University for action. If any recommendation has been fully addressed please record the action taken and date completed. Any barriers to progress should be highlighted on this report.

Recommendations 1 -3, 5-6 & 8: remitted to the School.

Recommendation 4: remitted to Information Services (Melissa Highton)

Recommendation 7: jointly remitted to the School and the Careers Service (Shelagh Green)

Recommendation no	Recommendation	Timescale for completion	Comment on progress towards completion and/or identify barriers to completion	Completion date
1	The review team recommend that the School reflect on where responsibility sits for delivering change across the range of School goals, including within the management structure, roles and responsibilities of other post holders, and how this includes the student voice. The purpose of this recommendation is to encourage the School to ensure that it can work through and deliver planned changes, including large-scale change projects such as LLB curriculum review.	1 st October 2023	<p>As per the 14-week response, the School has successfully implemented new leadership roles tasked with academic line management and input to School-level strategy. As indicated, these roles (Heads of Group, Director of Education) have been able to feed in more organically to School management and leadership decisions and offer a clear link between academic staff and the development of policy and strategy in relation to School activities.</p> <p>The School Management Group (SMG) is expecting to have its annual Strategy Away Day in September 2023, with a focus on working to reduce barriers to change and ensure effective strategic oversight allows for achievement of shared objectives, such as curriculum review.</p>	
2	In relation to issues of programme development / renewal, programme structure and assessment strategy, the review team recommend that the School develop a structure for a programme level approach to planning and delivery that involves subject area leads, course organisers, tutors and students in a meaningful way, and that takes account of student experience and staff workload. The aim of this recommendation is to	1 st October 2023	<p>Our revised teaching planning process has been run for a second year, building on the improvements made in advance of 2022/23. The process worked as well as previously, but there were some barriers; these included unexpected staff absences (in a range of roles, including academic) which impeded timely provision of information. The Director of Professional Services has worked with Teaching Office Managers to identify gaps in resource for</p>	

	<p>ensure effective interactions between senior management planning and subject area planning, and to ensure that the School planning and delivery facilitates a cohesive and coherent programme-level experience for students. Programme-level planning is likely to cut across subject areas, and this recommendation is relevant to the LLB, the Diploma, and PGT Masters programmes to the extent that students take courses from across the suite of PGT programmes.</p>		<p>supporting the planning process and a proposal for a new professional services UE07 role (Planning, QA and Projects Manager) has been put forward. This role is expected to take a lead on data and planning coordination, working with subject areas, academic office bearers and professional services colleagues across the School to facilitate effective teaching planning at programme level. Connecting this with a practical role in relation to QA processes also helps to ensure a meaningful relationship between student, staff and tutor feedback, and offers an opportunity for that information to be reflected in positive enhancement for programmes and courses.</p> <p>Additionally, the planned review of the School's PGT portfolio is currently underway. This project is expected to produce recommendations (including suggestions for further work) in time for the September 2023 SMG Strategy Away Day. The emerging themes for the project are focused around effective programme planning, diversity in admissions, staff workloads, course choice (specifically the balance between optional vs. mandatory courses) and teaching. While the focus for this review is on PGT programmes, it is expected that any recommendation around planning and programme structure will also be considered in relation to the UG programmes. Indeed, a large piece of analysis work is being undertaken to look at staff workloads and resource requirements, which necessarily takes into account the entire suite of our teaching activities. We are optimistic that despite challenges in getting this project initiated, there will be a great deal of benefit in tackling these issues for the whole staff and student community.</p>	
3	<p>The review team recommend that the School ensure that mainstreaming accessibility requirements are being met for all levels of study, and that the School is aware of and implements best practice around inclusivity. In particular, regard should be had to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - obligations around captions on recorded materials. Students reported that some pre-recorded lectures did not have captions, and this included lectures for students with adjustment schedules requiring captions; - the University policy regarding provision of reading lists and course materials appropriately in advance of classes;(accessible_and_inclusive_learning_policy.pdf 	Continuing	<p>The School Learning Technologist reports around 50% uptake of Resource Lists across the School. Further work to identify courses without a Resource List and offer support to colleagues to build this into their course is being undertaken over summer 2023.</p> <p>The Director of Education's group has not had appropriate capacity to address the matter of assessment timings. This will be taken forward as an action for 2023/24. Separately, work is being undertaken by the Director of the Diploma to review the assessment structures for the programme. It is hoped that this may result in some positive change with regard to assessment loads, as well as associated improvements with clarity of</p>	

	(ed.ac.uk)); - whether the time given to receive and complete assessments is appropriate and enables students to plan and balance workloads and other commitments and needs.		information about assessment requirements (which was noted as a suggested improvement).	
4	The review team recognises that automated captions may not be sufficient for lectures using technical language, and further recommend that Information Services prioritise improving automated lecture captioning. While the current system is in place, however, the School must address this issue in order to ensure accessibility. In some Schools, tutors have been employed to correct automated lecture captioning.		<p>Commentary provided by Assistant Principal Online and Open Learning, Director of Learning, Teaching and Web Services:</p> <p>We were successful in gaining funding for a ‘human-finishing’ captioning service. But there are still barriers to getting this work moving forward, most notably, we have been unable to recruit a Service Manager. LTW is currently running at about 30% down on staffing and there are real challenges in recruiting to technology roles on campus as many people in such roles prefer to work fully online. Our advert will go out again this month (March 2023)</p> <p>This service manager role is key to getting this service up and running. As an example of how much this service is needed, in Media Hopper Create alone almost 60K items of media were added in academic year 21/22, a total of almost 1.3 million minutes</p> <p>We are aware that currently different services use different captioning providers which makes the overall accuracy of automated caption inconsistent and provide different interfaces for staff who correct captions across the services. The burden on academic and support staff to human-finish that quantity of media is currently considerable and so this project has been set up to work on improvements to automated captioning tools and also to provide a human finishing service for priority media. The project requires a group of staff to provide such a service – a service manager, developers to look at the automated captioning and a group of students to staff the human-finished element of the project. If any schools have professional service staff colleagues who might be interested in taking on (seconded?) to this service role we’d be very happy to discuss.</p>	March 2023
5	The review team appreciate that there are many logistical barriers to change, but recommend that the School instigate a programme of curriculum renewal for the LLB and Honours programmes, taking into	1 October 2023	A proposal to address the issues in the allocation of Honours courses has been devised. The Director of UG Studies consulted with students, academic colleagues and the Senior Undergraduate	

	account the needs of the Law Society while also ensuring that the requirements of the Law Society are not over-interpreted as a barrier to change.		<p>Administrator for their views on the proposed approach. Overall, feedback has been positive and we expect to roll out the new approach in the coming weeks. Evaluation of the process will take place during Semester 1, looking at the quality of data produced, identifying any pain points in the administration, and consulting with students on their experience.</p> <p>The School is preparing to engage more pro-actively with the Curriculum Transformation Project. This will be a primary objective for the incoming Director of Education in the next academic session. This will include discussion with the Law Society.</p>	
6	The review team noted that the School plans to draw on SSLC feedback to inform the next iteration of the School Learning and Teaching Strategy. The review team recommend that the School identify complementary opportunities to engage with students to improve their experiences, to enhance student participation beyond participation in School committees, and to more actively engage students in course and programme review.	June 2024	<p>The challenges of this academic year (staff absence, industrial action) have caused the refresh of the strategy to be put on hold.</p> <p>The Director of Education has sought initial view from key colleagues via the advisory group and will pass on the objective to the incoming Director, who is due to take up post in August. We anticipate a working group to be formed, ideally with student representation.</p>	
7.	<p>The review team recommend a number of actions in relation to supporting student career development:</p> <p>The review team recommend that the School ensure UG students are made aware of the entry requirements for the Diploma at an early stage in their UG programme. Students who the team spoke to had not been aware of the significance Year 1-2 results, indicating that current methods of communicating about this may not be effective;</p> <p>While students spoke very positively about career support from programme staff, some reported that advice from the University Careers Service was too general for their specific needs: the review team recommend the School work with the Careers Service to improve provision for these students, involving the Law Society and the profession as appropriate; and</p> <p>The review team recommend that the School ensure that PGR students receive career development support for non-academic, as well as academic, careers, and that all opportunities are taken to give students access</p>		<p>The Director of Student Experience reports that all actions reported in the 14-week response have been carried out. Further discussion is ongoing with the Director of the Diploma about having direct involvement in student induction for Year 1 LLB Hons and LLB Grad Entry students, creating a formal link between the foundation programme (LLB) and the Diploma. The School is also preparing to brief Year 1 and Year 2 Academic Leads on the requirements for professional practice to ensure all staff involved in academic guidance for students can speak confidently about what courses must be passed, both for entry to the Diploma and latterly for entry to the Faculty of Advocates. This action will be assigned to the Director of Education to take forward with the Director of Undergraduate Studies and UG Director of Academic Guidance. We hope to evaluate the effectiveness of these changes through student surveys or informal discussion with Academic Leads in Year 1 and 2, over the course of the 23/24 academic year.</p> <p>On careers more generally, the School has been able to make significant further progress. The <i>Edinburgh Law School Career Opportunities Programme ('The Programme')</i> is an umbrella for partnerships between the Law School and Members drawn from the local, national and global legal profession and other professional communities in which our graduates are prominent.</p>	June 2023 with evaluation ongoing

to career development and networking opportunities beyond Scotland and UK.

Members of *The Programme* benefit from unique engagement opportunities with our large and diverse cohort of undergraduate and postgraduate students at every stage of their academic, personal and professional development. There are a growing number of [leading law firms](#) already involved, and we have an exciting calendar of recruitment events being held on campus in the next academic year.

Current Members of *The Programme* have reported substantial increases in applications for traineeships and summer placements due to their increased engagement and visibility among Edinburgh Law School students. Students have also fed back that engaging with Programme Members through official Law School channels, face-to-face and on-campus are their preferred means of interacting with potential employers. Having the opportunity to engage in-person within their educational environment has proved highly popular and motivational for students looking towards their future careers.

Edinburgh Law School also continues to work in partnership with The University of Edinburgh Careers Service. Further to the defined benefits of *The Programme* that are led directly by the Law School, the central Careers Service can provide access to all 45,000 students at the University through the central events and vacancy portal, MyCareerHub, as well as targeted communications channels to the wider student body.

On PGR careers, as well as the continued support outlined in our 14-week response, are in the process of organising a local workshop on 'Non-academic career pathways' for the PGR Law community. This will involve hearing from a number of our graduated PhD students who have gone on to non-academic careers, e.g. into Scottish Government, NGOs and practice. The aim is to ensure that PGRs are aware that their skills and experience can be used across a whole range of roles and sectors and that they are not limited to academic roles (which are becoming more and more competitive as PhD numbers grow). It will be practical and look at how they can prepare CVs etc. that work for these different sectors (as quite different to an academic CV). We plan to run this session next academic year. It will be open to all but most useful for those in the later stages of the programme.

8	<p>The review team note that the School provide a tutor induction at the start of the academic year, but recommend that the School offer additional training opportunities for tutors, specifically PGR tutors, including raising awareness of Advance HE accreditation opportunities. The review team also recommend that tutors, including PGR students, could be given a greater role in course and programme development. This relates to the recommendation 2 above.</p>		<p>Further work is going forward in relation to the tutors in the Diploma, including the Tutor Mentor and the line manager of the Diploma Tutors. Enhancements to training are being discussed for 2023/24, as are further improvements to assessment, feedback and marking guidance which should also offer opportunities for development.</p> <p>For tutors on the Undergraduate programme, a pilot Tutor Mentoring scheme was launched in 2022/23. Existing PGR Tutors mentored new start UG Tutors who identified as coming from underrepresented groups. The scheme was a success and has been funded for all UG new starts in 23/24.</p> <p>The Tutor Mentor has a continued dialogue with the Director of Professional Services about what additional support the School might offer PGR Tutors wishing to pursue HEA accreditation and other CPD opportunities. While we are not at present in a position to offer all PGR tutors paid training time, we would like to carry out further scoping work to understand demand, estimate costs and open discussions around an appropriate source of funding.</p> <p>Additionally, the Tutor Mentor is a member of the Tutor Manager Network and a member of a Working Group conducting a survey of Tutor training practice in all Schools. When complete, the results of the survey will provide a useful comparison with practice in other Schools of comparable size.</p>	June 2023
	Please report on steps taken to feedback to students on the outcomes of the review	A key messages document outlining the recommendations and our actions in a 'You said, we did' format is being prepared for the start of the new academic year. This will be used in whole cohort meetings with students and be made available via digital community spaces. It will also be included as a key talking point for staff convening Student Staff Liaison Committees in the first half of the 2023/24 Academic Year.		
For Year on response only	Any examples of a positive change as a result of the review	<p>The School is pleased to report a number of positive improvements which were received as suggestions within our final report.</p> <p>In line with Suggestion 2, the School has (as part of the rollout of the Student Support Model) introduced Year Leads for each year of the Undergraduate LLB (3 per year of the single honours programme, and dedicated Year Leads for the Joint and Graduate Entry programmes).</p> <p>In line with Suggestion 5 and 8, the Director of the Diploma has increased the frequency of meetings with Course Organisers (externally-engaged staff) and is looking at ways to improve</p>		

consistency of training and development for tutors which supports effective academic practice around marking and feedback. The Director is also engaged with the Course Organisers in a programme of assessment review, carrying out a day-long workshop in June 2023 to consider and propose changes to a range of different areas of assessment practice and policy, with excellent initial results. It has been proposed that the programme undertakes an annual review meeting each year to discuss the programme and opportunities for improvement and enhancement, which was well received. Additionally, in line with Suggestion 6, the School has appointed Ms Kate Hutchings, currently an examiner for the England and Wales SQE 2 and previously Head of Law at BPP, as External Examiner for the Diploma programme. Kate has already met with key staff and attended the awarding Board of Examiners for the programme, and is expecting to visit the School to meet with staff and students in October 2023.

In line with Suggestions 15-16, the Postgraduate Programme Review Project is expected to return a report and recommendations to the School Management Group away day in September. This review has been undertaken by a small group of staff, with the overarching objective of reviewing the current state and suggesting ways to evolve the portfolio. The project expects to recommend, among a range of options, a number of further working groups which may include PGT students. Effort was made early in the project to survey students on their experience and motivation for study at ELS, and a focus group was undertaken with 3-4 students to probe further into that. Further specific opportunities for feedback with, in particular, students on the LLM Law, will be explored as the project outputs and resulting work streams are finalised.