

The University of Edinburgh

Internal Periodic Review 2019/20

**Internal Periodic Review of School of Social & Political Science
Postgraduate Provision
7 & 8 November 2019**

Final report

Section A- Introduction

Scope of the review

Range of provision considered by the review:

PhD African Studies
PhD International Development
PhD Global Health Policy
PhD Politics
PhD Science Technology & Innovation Studies (STIS)
PhD Social & Political Science (SPS)
PhD Social Anthropology
PhD Social Policy
PhD Social Work
PhD Sociology
PhD Socio-Cultural Studies
PhD South Asian Studies
MSc by Research in SPS
MSc by Research in STIS
PhD in the Anthropology of Human Security in Africa (ANTHUSIA) - Joint PhD programme with Universities of Aarhus, Oslo and KU Leuven

The Internal Periodic Review of the School of Social & Political Science consisted of:

The University's remit for internal review (listed in Appendix 1)

The subject specific remit for the review, consisting of the following items (& listed in Appendix 2)

Community Building

Research Training

The Reflective Report and additional material provided in advance of the review (listed in Appendix 3)

The visit by the review team including consideration of further material (also listed in Appendix 3)

The final report produced by the review team

Action by the Subject Area/School and others to whom recommendations were remitted following the review

Membership of review team

Prof Matthew Bailey	Convenor	
Dr Mark Brown	External Member	
Prof Waltraud Schelkle	External Member	

Dr Calum Maciver	Internal Member	
Helen Jones	Student Member	
Lyn Marshall	Review Team Administrator	

Situate Subject Area/School within its College

The School of Social & Political Science is situated within the College of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences

Physical location and summary of facilities

The School of Social & Political Science is mainly located in George Square within Chrystal Macmillan Building (CMB) but has an additional site for Science & Technology Studies at Old Surgeons Hall, High School Yards and PGR student provision in 27/28 George Square.

Date of previous review

28 & 29 November 2013

Reflective Report:

This was written between July and September 2019 by:

Dr Elke Heins, Director of Postgraduate Research

With input from:

Dr Daniel Clegg, outgoing Graduate School Director

Toni Dismore, Graduate School Manager

Dr Dan Kenealy, outgoing Director of Quality

Dr Alan Marshall, outgoing Programme Director of the MSc in Social Research & incoming Director of the Research Training Centre in SPS

Jennifer Steven, Careers Service

Lucie Stokes, Student Development Office Manager

Some of the data supporting this report has been discussed at the SPS PG Committee, attended by staff and student representatives.

A draft of this report was sent to PGR student representatives to solicit their view on whether the attached report is a fair reflection of the School and its current context.

A developed draft was circulated to the Head of School;

the Director of Professional Services, the Director of Learning and Teaching, the Director of QAE and Course Delivery, the Head of Teaching and Student Services, and the Director of Student Experience and Support.

Section B - main report

1 Strategic overview

1.1

The School of Social & Political Sciences is recognised as the largest within the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, and is a major provider of research training within the School and to the wider University community. The review team appreciates that the School is currently undergoing major change both in strategy and identity.

The current economic climate is bringing major challenges to Universities and for research in the areas particularly crucial to this School, which may significantly impact for several years (possible Brexit). The University of Edinburgh has an elite reputation and the School features highly on international league tables, but with success comes significant challenges in terms of identity and infrastructure. The review team notes the tension between commercial and academic requirements of a successful school and there is concern that this can impact adversely on student experience if growth in student recruitment continues to outpace the capacity of provision.

1.2

The School highlighted continued strong admissions into core subject areas and had debated whether postgraduate admissions should be more strongly aligned to these core strengths. Such alignment may have benefits in terms of student community but the benefits of a diverse postgraduate research portfolio were also recognised and the school was making significant investment to attract quality applications to other areas. It is also recognised that the areas of politics and political theory have very competitive career opportunities for undergraduates in the current global climate. Ideally, it is the Schools' preference to have a wider spectrum of intellectual diversity and a wider range of interdisciplinary connections to reflect the worldwide move within the research community. There is recent investment in new academic posts to develop core business within the seven subject areas which should improve staff/student experience, with a work allocation model giving generous provision to PGR Supervisors for course development.

1.3

The School have prioritised significant resources to advance research training provision. The nascent Research Training Centre (RTC) is expected to have a very positive impact on student experience across the portfolio and the potential of offering short courses for CPD could be of great academic & financial benefit for the School.

The review team see significant benefit in the School strategy in creation of this RTC, which is considered a positive reflection in the School's advancement in research development. The current research training provision is often shaped by the requirements of funding councils (eg ESRC/SGSSS) which can be restrictive and the reliance on generic research methods courses does not take into account the diverse prior experience of the incoming student cohort diverse abilities. The review team noted student dissatisfaction with current provision and the School recognises that this is not the "best fit for purpose". While acknowledging the continuing need for core generic training courses in areas such as research design the review team **suggest** course teams look for ways to introduce more customised pathways through these research courses to better accommodate the very different prior experience and subject interests of new PG students. This might include some streaming for the workshop and tutorial components of courses. The RTC is well placed to build on these foundation courses with more flexible and specialised training provision.

The RTC will build on the excellent foundations of Edinburgh's Q-step Centre (which offers additional quantitative skills) by providing an additional framework to enhance student training in qualitative research. The review team **suggest** that small bespoke workshops streams, flexible/online working and possibly diagnostic entry to create designated training pathway for students in all research methods should be considered. This would also support the Training Needs Analysis which is now required for all funded students, and considered good practice for all PGR students. Students take generic courses with no analysis of their previous experience or future requirements and the review team **recommend** a more directional suite of training opportunities will improve the satisfaction of students and provide a wider introduction to the varied range of research methods available.

The review team **commend** the appointment of a Director for this RTC, several significant teaching posts in both qualitative and quantitative areas and the future appointment of a Professional Services Manager within the RTC confirm the significant importance the School place on the Centre.

1.4

The Review Team concluded that student growth over the last five years has placed severe pressure on the School's estate. While recognising that the School has to operate within a University estate plan, the review surfaced multiple concerns from students over a perceived lack of communication/consultation regarding recent estate-related decisions. The Review Team noted dissatisfaction from students, who indicated a significant gap between their expectation of a high-quality experience (expressed in terms of self-funding of high/international tuition fees) and their actual experience. The review team noted that students spoke very highly of positive experiences with supervisors, academic and support staff but are nevertheless concerned that further expansion of student numbers, without the capacity to provide adequate provision of space and supporting infrastructure, will continue to have a negative impact on the experience of both students and staff.

Staff and students clearly view the Chrystal Macmillan Building (CMB) as the centre or "home" of the School, although there are staff located in other areas, particularly the Science Technology & Innovation Studies subject area which is in High School Yards. The School has recently made investment to the infrastructure and the review team **commend** the high quality refurbishment of 27/28 George Square, currently allocated to Yr3 & Yr4 PGR students as student/social space.

The review team identified "estate issues" as a major theme raised by students and staff. Students expressed strong dissatisfaction with a recent School decision to relocate Yr1 & Yr 2 students from dedicated space in the "West Wing" to refurbished space in the David Hume Tower on the opposite side of George Square. Moreover, the review team noted strong student dissatisfaction with the lack of consultation and absence of engagement by School management. The use of data monitoring to assess space usage was viewed negatively. Particularly concerning to the review team was the clearly articulated view that the student voice was not being heard as a priority by the school. This was the essence of dissatisfaction voiced at both meetings with the students during the visit.

Accepting the role of CMB as "the heart of the School", the review team considers the creation of a third student space in the DHT as a retrograde step, detracting further from the sense of community that the School rightly identifies as an important aspect of their PG provision. Having all PGR students except those requiring accessible study space, located to two separate locations outside CMB, reduces informal interaction between staff and students and has the potential to entrench the currently negative student view

of this aspect of their experience within the School. It is appreciated by the review team that changes in infrastructure are responsive to the University's long-term strategy but the School must reassess the impact on the current cohort who are immediately affected.

1.5

It is **commended** that there has been a significant investment in studentships and scholarships within the past 5 years and the increased provision in these awards will hopefully retain the high calibre students often enticed to other institutions offering more substantial support. The provision of the Alice Brown scholarship is also evidence of the Schools' support to widening participation offering support for part-time students' access to study.

1.6

The School is heavily reliant on student tutors. PGR tutors are predominantly used for Yr 1 and 2, but their additional deployment in pre-Honours (junior/senior honours- **fact check please?**) and even Masters' teaching was considered unusual and concerning. Tutors expressed dissatisfaction with the perceived lack of transparency regarding work allocation. Tutors said they saw an imbalance of workload, contrasting some tutors who had only two courses, but wanted more, with those having up to 9 or 10 groups. The School's professional service staff oversee allocation of tutor roles within the Graduate School and it was clear to the review team that staff take significant steps to give equity of work allocation within any HR processes that might apply. Nevertheless, there was a disconnect between these actions and the perception of these actions by tutors. The Review Team **recommends** this process must be given more transparency, while it accepts that aligning the needs of the School, the desires of the students to have more paid hours and the University policy of a workload of max 9 hours a week, is complex and challenging.

PGR tutors, particularly the senior tutors, are a valuable asset to the School. They are undertaking important tasks which are central to the quality of the School's provision. The review team **recommend** that a new academic support appointment was necessary to coordinate and support these tutors.

2.1 The approach to enhancing Learning and Teaching

The review team **commends** the initiative to develop a Research Training Centre (RTC), which has the potential to expand the research training capacity and capability for the School's existing postgraduate portfolio and a wider audience. It is accepted that this is at an early stage of development; the development of this research provision to provide core skills, within funding council remits will enhance and define the school as a major provider in this area.

The review team further **recommends** that this Research Training Centre be expanded to include further learning opportunities in core research skills for all Students. The review team **recommends** that this expansion includes a portfolio of courses, following the successful Q-step model, to provide bespoke, directed training through innovative teaching methods that is responsive to the requirements and abilities of the individual student.

The current provision requires a diverse cohort to take mandatory generic courses and is limiting to the School's ambition for its postgraduate provision. Working within funding provider requirements, it is suggested the RTC consider a providing a research learning environment with a programme of short intense courses, online flexible learning options, modular workshops based on the level of interest or subject specific requirements and also consider a strategic change to streaming students on arrival and completing an early Training Needs Analysis to ensure an individual learning profile is created.

2.2 Assessment and Feedback

The review team **commends** the implementation of mid-semester feedback whereby students provide feedback to course teaching team, but it noted lack of clarity about feedback on whether any issues raised were being adequately addressed. It is imperative that matters are resolved an early stage, particularly for students on the 1-Year MScR programmes with a heavy teaching portfolio where issues may have wider implications across courses or subject groups. A supportive learning environment that encourages individual issues to be raised seems to be more evident in smaller subject areas or smaller group activities.

The difficulty of providing timely feedback to students within short turnaround times was acknowledged by the review team, but the School reassured that the 15-day turnaround was being met.

The review team was concerned that the PGR annual review is not prioritised by supervisors as a key academic activity that safeguards quality and provides benefits to students throughout the PhD lifecycle. There appears to be a disconnect between the annual progression review and the electronic recording of this review on EUCLID. Completing Euclid sections is not sufficient and this annual review must not be viewed as a purely administrative task but given greater worth in the PG academic calendar. The review team **recommends** that School take action to give Annual review higher recognition and priority.

The School should review implementation in all areas to identify good practice. The annual review must be linked with Academic progression as a key moment in the student cycle in first and all subsequent year groups.

The timely completion of annual reviews by the academic review team would significantly reduce the demands currently placed on professional staff who continually chase for these reports, with poor academic support. It is considered that an increase in mandatory completion of these annual reports would give students a more directional approach to their research on an annual basis and support a focused approach to successful submission – in turn significantly improving the School PGR completion rates.

The review team notes that student completion rates were a recurring theme highlighted at the visit. The Review Team identified the annual progression review as an opportunity that could be enhanced to improve completion. Separate discussion with academic supervisors and professional support staff indicated that the prevailing culture is to regard the annual review as primarily an administrative task. The School should incorporate best practice from other areas of the University to ensure that the annual review is viewed by academic staff and students as an essential component of Quality Assurance/Enhancement for the School's PhD programmes.

The use of a review panel/thesis committee beyond year 1 to set goals and define a completion strategy has had a positive effect on completion times in other areas of the University.

School management should actively lead reviewing practice across the School

Also related to completion time, the review team recognised the complex issues and demands on students, particularly those who have to pursue paid employment alongside their studies. Moreover, pressures to have a CV that reflects experience beyond PhD research (e.g. publications and work placements) alongside the requirement for extensive fieldwork affects completion within the prescribed period of 3 years, and often the

maximum period of 4 years. Timely discussions with students, formally tied to the annual review process, allows students to be responsive to funding/financial constraints and the duration of fieldwork.

2.3 Supporting students in their learning – all aspects of support relevant to students' learning

2.3.1

The School is seen as broadly supportive of the student representative roles. That the School values this input was evident from the reflective report, which expressed a desire for horizontal and vertical integration of the student voice within the School. The Review Team noted a “vertical” disconnect in current practice and there needs to be more consideration of student representation on key management committees at the School level to enhance the good work currently done at programme level. The School should review processes to ensure that consultations are both inclusive and responsive, closing the feedback loop with notice of all outcomes and decisions. There appears to be a tradition of Yr 1 students being appointed as representatives but these students highlighted the absence of formal handover of knowledge/projects from outgoing representatives. This hinders continuity, particularly since Year 2 students are often absent from the School, engaged in fieldwork. This current practice prevents the continuity of community-building between different cohorts and may contribute to the student perception that their voice is not being heard by School management. The review team recognised that the absence of a whole year group on field work presents a significant challenge to the School and a review of student representation to enhance continuity and connectivity would be beneficial. It is **suggested** that events before departure and on return might be considered to aid inclusion, and basic handover documents detailing funding planning and outcomes of events. Some of the necessary documentation can be obtained from EUSA as this is standard for EUSA affiliated representatives to complete at the end of the role. This extends to improving the transition process between student representatives at all levels to ensure continuity and safeguard the student voice. The review team also **suggest** if no Yr 2 representatives are appointed the School should encourage Yr 3 representatives to help and share experiences. At present there seems to be no Yr 3 or higher students interested in the role as previous Yr1 representatives were now disengaged. This may be helped by the closing of the loop feedback and encourage more representation from members of the college in higher years groups, as this representation felt lacking.

2.3.2

It is clear that the School has considered how best to support the transition of new students into their programmes during Welcome Week. It is also evident that new students are typically “overwhelmed” by the wealth of information provided. Specific examples were: an incomplete understanding of the “hot-desk” concept and where such study space might be found; uncertainty over the correct reporting/ support structures through which to raise issues or access pastoral support. The School was **commended** that a member of the Graduate School was a trained mental health first aider. However this information was not widely known to new students, nor did students know about wider support networks such as Student Disability Services or Counselling Services. The review team **recommends** that the School review the induction process and consider expanding the delivery timeframe beyond Welcome Week to enable a wider volume of information to be disseminated and understood by students. The review team **suggests** that the School engage with current students to assess their experience of induction. The review team also **suggests** that the School give particular focus to improving the transition between new and demitting student representatives.

2.3.3

The review team **commends** the approach for a Training Needs Analysis of PhD students at the beginning of their studies and considers this as evidence of **good practice**. In tandem with a robust annual progression review where training needs are also reviewed, this individualised approach to training will support successful and timely completion of study.

The review team **commends** the School for the high value placed on the student/supervisor relationship. This relationship is central to a successful experience of postgraduate training and was evidently highly valued by both students and staff.

The review team **commends** that the students are encouraged to present at seminar sessions and supervisory staff do attend these which are useful in building confidence and fostering community.

2.3.4

There were concerns expressed by students over the workload for tutors. The review team noted the lack of academic oversight of tutors, particularly Senior Tutors, and the review team **recommends** there is more involvement by core academic staff in this area. Although academic staff were involved in all teaching there appeared to be little direct involvement in Tutorial roles. The review team were also concerned that PGR tutors appear to be involved in the tutoring of Year 3 Honours level courses and Masters' courses and providing assessment of course work at this level. The workload of Senior Tutors, particularly at the planning and marking stages, does not seem to be commensurate with the hours required for completing these tasks. There was also confusion on the allocation of seminar teaching with tutors being allocated very different amounts of hours.

Tutors were confused by this process and the review team **recommends** that the process for these appointments be made more transparent.

There did not seem to be an adequate process to manage and develop the performance of those who perform poorly.

The review team **recommends** that the School review the Tutor environment and consider the appointment of a dedicated academic member of staff, for the management, training, support and development of tutors.

The review team also supports representation of tutors on appropriate school decision-making committees (e.g. the Learning and Teaching committee or equivalent). Additional resources, including appropriate desk space, should be allocated to tutors for marking and office hours as some tutors do not have dedicated space within the School.

2.4. Listening to and responding to the Student Voice

2.4.1

The Review committee **commends** School for fostering an environment in which students and staff express a genuine enthusiasm to develop the sense of community. There is evidently a strong philosophy within the School that places PGR provision as a cornerstone for the School's ongoing research development.

The review team **commends** the appointment of the role of Director of Student Engagement & Experience and that this role is being extended to include all UG, PGT and PGR communities.

2.4.2

The review committee **recommends** that the School Management prioritise concerns from PGR students about allocation of study space and the relocation from the West Wing to David Hume Tower. School management must take action to re-engage with students to make it clear that the student voice is heard and is valued by the School. The review team acknowledges and accepts the constraints in which the School has to operate and accepts that difficult decisions have to be made by the leadership. Students clearly feel excluded from the decision process and this is currently having a negative impact on the student experience. Indeed, the perception by students that they are not heard is undermining positive community action, including the success of the consultative process for the redevelopment of student space in 27/28 George Square.

The review committee **recommends** inclusive consultation with staff and students, but also that the School Management reconsiders the recruitment targets for the PhD programme if real estate constraints do not allow to assign every student an appropriate space to work.

2.4.3

The review committee **recommends** that the School take significant action to hear the student voice and restore confidence. The school should expand on the community experience which is evident in subject specific areas throughout the school and review the vertical structures to encompass meaningful student representation on School-level committees.

2.5 Accessibility, Inclusivity and Widening Participation

2.5.1

The review team **commends** the School's overall investment in, and enhancement of, student resource for scholarships. The initiative of the Alice Brown scholarships, purposefully targeted to part-time students, is an example of best practice. Teething problems with implementation were evident and the review team **suggests** that the School consider these students as a specific training programme requiring support to effectively manage their part-time research and non-research activities. The students' expectations that sufficient work opportunities (eg tutoring) would be provided within or by the School must be managed for mutual benefit.

It is noted the Alice Brown scholarships have an expectation that students will take up paid work, however the review team **recommend** the School must make it clear to students if there are sufficient resources for this employment to be within the School or wider University all year round including the summer vacation, or if it is expected that students will be required to seek work outside the University and if School will assist them find this work.

2.5.2

Students contributed to development of the new PGR site at 27/28 George Square, which is now home for 3rd & 4th year PGR students. The refurbishment, sensitive to the historic nature of the building, is widely welcomed however, the Review Team noted that building restrictions mean that there is currently no disabled access to the building. Students who need accessibility will be given office space within CMB, however the review team has concerns regarding the potential isolation of these students and the impact on the PGR community. The review team **suggests** the School review the provision for inclusion for PGR students (yr 3&4) located within CMB due to accessibility issues when all other students in their cohort are situated in 27/28 George Square.

These concerns were also raised by the students, who felt that the provision of accessible offices only within CMB will present another very important dimension to sense of student isolation and the challenge of fostering community within the School. It is noted the School has identified Widening Participation ambassadors who may be able to address some of the issues arising from this division. The review team **suggests** the School consider through dialogue with the wider student community how best to safeguard against potential isolation/fragmentation of the whole student community.

2.6 Development of Employability and Graduate Attributes

The review team acknowledges the current global changes and challenges in these SPS subject areas of research, which demands that students have a breadth and depth of skills, including publishing papers, placement experience and public engagement activities by the time they graduate. These competing requirements are supported by the School. The review team **commends** the School for recognising these competing demands and considering the deployment of a 4-year PhD programme with integrated study which would enable students to combine in-depth research training with a broader skills portfolio within an achievable framework.

2.7 Supporting and developing staff

2.7.1

The professional services staff within the Graduate School are **commended** for their dedication and provision of support to students. They were acknowledged by students as a valuable asset to their experience, often the first point of contact and certainly an important additional source of support/guidance for academic and pastoral issues. The Graduate School staff impressed the review team with their professionalism and desire to expand the support of student-led activities and in-depth induction provision. Further support, training and clarity of student representative roles could be supported by the Graduate School if time permitted.

The review team also found that staffing provision in this key area is inadequate and staff at higher grades are “filling the gap” to perform important but routine tasks rather than focussing on development projects. The team **recommends** that the School consider the appointment of additional resources to support routine tasks. This would enable other members of the professional support staff, particularly the Graduate School administrator, to develop a proactive approach to enhancing student experience.

2.7.2

The review team identified the online student reporting system (EUCLID) as an obstacle to effective student management by supervisors and support staff. Specifically, increasing functionality to permit students to directly enter reports of engagement and/or details of meetings with supervisors, for subsequent confirmation/sign off by supervisors would be much more efficient. The review team **recommends** this system to be developed. Permitting additional control of student progression reporting by professional service staff could also reduce duplication of tasks for academic and professional services staff.

2.8 Learning environment (physical and virtual)

2.8

The students all reported a more satisfactory learning environment within their subject specific areas. Smaller seminar or research group activities, which were joint staff and student activities do lead to a greater sense of community and the review team **suggests** that School to expand such student-staff seminars.

The review team **recommends** that School management prioritise the dialogue with current students regarding the redeployment of student space within the school estate plan.

3. Assurance and Enhancement of provision

3.1 Setting and maintaining academic standards

Significant improvement needs to be made to ensure that the importance of the annual review process is prioritised as a key academic aspect of the PhD lifecycle and is a robust and efficient process, central to the academic progression of all PGR students. The review team **recommends** that the School review its internal guidance to PhD supervisors, establishing a clearly defined minimum-requirement (membership and function) of student review panels/committees at year one and for subsequent years, compliant to the University's regulations.

The Review team further **recommends** that the School ensures effective communication of this guidance to supervisors and establishes oversight to ensure a robust annual progression process is implemented across areas.

3.2 Key themes and actions taken

It is recognised that the School considers the formation of the Research Training Centre as a focus for the future. Expanding the significant developments already in place such as the Nuffield Foundation funded Q-step Centre and the AQMeN ESRC training network, this will provide a centre for excellent research training and further support funding council and SGSSS requirements. This Centre will enable the School to enhance and expand the development of students and staff in a directional focus of specific learning in both qualitative and quantitative research as well as much more bespoke training requirements for a diverse student cohort.

Section C – Review conclusions

Confidence statement

The review team found that School of Social & Political Science has effective management of the quality of academic standards but that the student learning experience is compromised by recruitment that exceeds the expansion of space.

Key Strengths and Areas of Positive Practice for sharing more widely across the institution

No	Commendation	Section in report
1	The review team commends the appointment of a Director and a Professional Services Manager for the RTC.	1.3
2	The review team commends the PGR provision at 27/28 George Square	1.4
3	The review team commends the School's investment and enhancement of scholarships, including the Alice Brown Scholarship	1.5 & 2.5.1
4	The review team commends the development of the Research Training Centre taking forward the School's research provision in cooperation with Q-Step and AQMeN	2.1
5	The review team commends the implementation of mid-semester course unit feedback as an example of good practice and student support	2.2
6	The review team commends that a member of the Graduate School was a trained mental health first aider	2.3.2
7	The review team commends the research seminar sessions as a way of engaging the students and enhancing community among the subject areas.	2.3.3
8	The review team commends the practice of completing a Training Needs Analysis for students ensuring that support is available for successful research study.	2.3.3
9	The review team commends the supervisor appointment process leading to the development of mutually positive relationships.	2.3.3
10	The review team commends the genuine enthusiasm of the School to enhance student experience by further developing community. This is supported by the appointment of a Director of Student Engagement & Experience encompassing UG and PG students.	2.4.1
11	The review team acknowledge the competing demands for students to be competitively qualified on graduation and commends the School for considering such challenges and developing approaches, such as the 4yr PhD programme,	2.6
12	The review team commends the professional service staff located in the Graduate School for the significant contributions they make to student experience.	2.7.1

Recommendations for enhancement/Areas for further development

Priority	Recommendation	Section in report	Responsibility of
1	The review team recommends that the School prioritise the annual PGR Annual review process	2.2 & 3.1	School PG Management

	and actively lead reviewing practice to be redefined as a significant event in the academic cycle across all years of the PhD, implemented robustly and efficiently for all students.		Team/ Director of Quality Assurance and Enhancement
2	The review team recommends that School management prioritise the dialogue with current students regarding the redeployment of student space within the school estate plan.	2.4.2 & 2.8	Head of School/School PG Management Team
3	The review team recommends that consideration is given to provision of additional staffing within the professional support staff team of the Graduate School.	2.7.1	School PG Management Team/ PGR Director/ Graduate School
4	The review team recommends the School review student representation to give prominence to the role and then ensure effective inclusion on all major school committees.	2.4.3	Director of Quality Assurance and Enhancement/ Director of Student Engagement & Experience
5	The review team recommends that the School consider the increased involvement of core academic staff in the tutor role to ensure consistency and quality across this provision.	2.3.4	School PG Management Team/ Director of Quality Assurance and Enhancement
6	The review team recommends further expansion of the Research Training Centre with a more directional suite of training opportunities and a portfolio of courses designed to support diverse student needs in research training	1.3 & 2.1	Director of Research Training Centre/School PG Management Team
7	The review team recommends that consideration be given to the appointment of a dedicated academic to manage performance and development of PGR tutors	1.6 & 2.3.4	School PG Management Team/Head of Teaching & Student Services
8	The review team recommends the process of PGR tutor workload allocation is communicated more effectively to make this more transparent and equitable	1.6 & 2.3.4	Director of Quality Assurance and Enhancement/ Director of Student Engagement & Experience
9	The review team recommend the School make it clear for recipients of the Alice Brown Scholarship that sufficient work exists within the School or if students require external employment.	2.5.1	School PG Management Team/ Director of Student Engagement & Experience
10	The review team recommends that the School review the induction process and consider expanding the delivery timeframe beyond Welcome Week to enable a wider volume of information to be disseminated and understood by students.	2.3.2	PGR Director/Graduate School
11	The review team recommends development of EUCLID to permit recording of meetings by students and increased flexibility to permit administration	2.7.2	Student Systems

	access to annual reports by professional support staff.		
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Suggestions for noting

If an issue is minor but the review team nevertheless wants to flag it as a potentially useful action, it will be couched as a suggestion rather than a formal recommendation. Suggestions are not tracked in onward reporting.

No	Suggestion	Section in report
1	The review team suggests that the RTC offer small bespoke workshops streams, flexible/online working and possibly diagnostic entry to create designated training pathway for students. The review team suggest course teams look for ways to introduce more customised pathways through these research courses.	1.3
2	The review team suggests an expansion of the community events currently held by seminar or research groups as there is evidence of these fostering good community engagement.	2.3.1 & 2.8
3	The review team suggests a review of student representation and events, particularly related to Induction and also for students on field work, to enhance continuity and connectivity.	2.3.2
4	The review team suggests that the School consider the recipients of the Alice Brown scholarship as a specific training programme requiring support to effectively manage their part-time research and non-research activities.	2.5.1
5	The review team suggests the School consider through dialogue with the wider student community how best to safeguard against potential isolation/fragmentation of the whole student community.	2.5.2

Appendices

Appendix 1 – University remit

The University remit provides consistent coverage of key elements across all of the University's internal reviews (undergraduate and postgraduate).

It covers all credit bearing provision within the scope of the review, including:

- Provision delivered in collaboration with others
- Transnational education
- Work-based provision and placements
- Online and distance learning
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- Postgraduate Professional Development (PPD)
- Provision which provides only small volumes of credit
- Joint/Dual Degrees
- Massive Open Online Courses MOOCs (even if non-credit bearing)

1. Strategic overview

The strategic approach to:

- The management and resourcing of learning and teaching experience,
- The forward direction and the structures in place to support this.
- Developing business cases for new programmes and courses,
- Managing and reviewing its portfolio,
- Closing courses and programmes.

2. Enhancing the Student Experience

The approach to and effectiveness of:

- Supporting students in their learning
- Listening to and responding to the Student Voice
- Learning and Teaching
- Assessment and Feedback
- Accessibility, Inclusivity and Widening Participation
- Learning environment (physical and virtual)
- Development of Employability and Graduate Attributes
- Supporting and developing staff

3. Assurance and Enhancement of provision

The approach to and effectiveness of maintaining and enhancing academic standards and quality of provision in alignment with the University Quality Framework:

- Admissions and Recruitment
- Assessment, Progression and Achievement
- Programme and Course approval
- Annual Monitoring, Review and Reporting
- Operation of Boards of Studies, Exam Boards, Special Circumstances
- External Examining, themes and actions taken
- Alignment with SCQF (Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework) level, relevant benchmark statements, UK Quality Code
- Accreditation and Collaborative activity and relationship with Professional/Accrediting bodies (if applicable)

Appendix 2 Additional information considered by review team

1. Research Training

The School is currently reviewing its research training provision. A new dedicated Research Training Centre (RTC) will be set up this summer and a Director has just been appointed (Dr Alan Marshall). This follows on from a survey of students and staff in the school regarding our research training provision. This survey identified a particular demand for improving our qualitative research training and offer further specialisation courses in addition to our generic research training courses. This is also in the context of a notable expansion of our quantitative research skills offer provided by the School's Q-Step Centre (an initiative to promote a step-change in quantitative social science training in the UK funded by the Nuffield Foundation). Students also raised issues around course content integration across programmes that might be addressed under this remit item.

2. Community Building

PRES survey results have repeatedly indicated a fairly widespread feeling of not belonging to a research community. A longstanding student complaint and suggestion by the students to have this discussed at the PPR is also around study space, a likely related issue. Both issues probably should be seen in the context of rapid growth in our PG cohorts over the last few years.

The School is currently trying to formalise its academic and generic professional skills programme, and to enhance support for PGR students who teach, to foster feelings of being part of a School cohort in addition to the cohort building that continues at subject area level. Particularly MRes students expressed a wish for more student support that is particularly targeted at them, indicating that they feel not being adequately accommodated by our offers for PhD students.

Appendix 3 Number of students

Entrants year and by programme

Postgraduate Research

	2014/5	2014/5	2015/6	2015/6	2016/7	2016/7	2017/8	2017/8	2018/9	2018/9
	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT
MScR in Medical Anthropology	1		2		2				1	
MScR in Politics	3		3		3		3	1	3	
MScR in Science and Technology Studies	3		6		8		5		5	1
MScR in Social Anthropology	2	1	3		4		4		4	
MScR in Social Policy				1			2		1	
MScR in Social Work	1			1	1		1		1	
MScR in Socio-Cultural Studies	2	1			2		1		1	
MScR in Sociology	3	1	5		3		3	1	7	
MScR in South Asian Studies			1				1			
PhD in African Studies	3		6		4		5		6	1
PhD in Canadian Studies	2									
PhD in Global Health Policy					1		1		1	
PhD in International Development	5		4	1	6	1	9		3	
PhD in International Public Health Policy	3		1		5					
PhD in Politics	15	2	11	2	14	1	14		12	1
PhD in Science and Technology Studies	7		7		5		10		4	2
PhD in Science, Technology and Innovation Studies					1					
PhD in Social Anthropology	13		5		5		9		11	2
PhD in Social Policy	7		5		6	1	7	1	3	1
PhD in Social Work	4		1	2	2	1	4	2	3	1
PhD in Socio-Cultural Studies			2		1				1	
PhD in Sociology	10	3	9	2	12	2	6	1	20	1
PhD in South Asian Studies									2	
TOTAL	84	8	71	9	85	6	85	6	89	10