

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

Academic Standards Committee

A meeting of the **Academic Standards Committee** will be held on **Friday 20 November 2020** at **9.30 am** via [Zoom](#).

Mrs R Cole
Clerk to Committee
Ruth.Cole@glasgow.ac.uk

AGENDA

Only items listed under Sections A and B will be discussed. At the beginning of the meeting members will be given the opportunity to request that any items listed under Section C be included in the Committee's discussion.

1. Minute of the Meeting held on Friday 2 October 2020 [ASC 20/23](#)

2. Matters Arising

2.1 *PGT College Annual Monitoring Summaries for 2018-19: College of Arts and College of Social Sciences: Adam Smith Business School (ASC/2019/41.2.1 and ASC/2019/41.2.2)* [ASC 20/24](#)

2.2 *PGT College Annual Monitoring Summaries for 2018-19: College of Social Sciences (ASC/2020/2.3)*

As concerns regarding English language skills had been raised across AMRs for a number of years, the issue was drawn to the attention of EdPSC and discussed at its meeting on 22 October 2020. The Convener of EdPSC agreed to raise the issue with Ms Rachel Sandison, Vice Principal, External Relations.

2.3 *Responses to the PSR of Veterinary Medicine – Graduate Access to Mahara (ASC/2020/2.4 and ASC/2020/5.4.2)*

This issue was also highlighted to EdPSC given the increasing number of subject areas expressing interest in the use of Mahara and the growing importance of preparing students for employment after graduation. In view of the resource implications, the Convener of EdPSC undertook to discuss this with Mr Dave Anderson in Information Services. In addition, the Convener will flag this with Learning & Teaching Committee given the planned commitment within the forthcoming L&T Strategy to students' skills and professional development and the need for students to demonstrate their achievements after graduation.

3. Convener's Business

Section A: Items for Discussion

4. Annual Monitoring

4.1 College Annual Monitoring Summaries for 2019-20

4.1.1 Summary [ASC 20/25](#)

4.1.2 College of Arts (UG and PG) [ASC 20/26](#)

4.1.3 College of Medical, Veterinary & Life Sciences (UG) [ASC 20/27](#)

4.1.4 College of Science & Engineering (UG and PG) [ASC 20/28](#)

4.1.5 College of Social Sciences (UG) [ASC 20/29](#)

5. External Examiner Summary Report – Covid Related Issues [ASC 20/30](#)

6. Periodic Subject Review

6.1 Reports on PSR to be Received during 2020-21 and Proposed ASC Reviewers [ASC 20/31](#)

6.2 Full Review Report

6.2.1 School of Computing Science [ASC 20/32](#)

6.3 Responses to Recommendations

6.3.1 MVLS Graduate School [ASC 20/33](#)

6.3.2 School of Engineering [ASC 20/34](#)

7. Discretion and Rounding [ASC 20/35](#)

8. Programme Approval

8.1 Audit Report on Programme Approval Activity Undertaken by Colleges [ASC 20/36](#)

Section B: Items for Formal Approval

9. Item Referred from Scotland's Rural College

9.1 Delivery of Rural Business Management Degree in Ayr [ASC 20/37](#)

10. Item Referred from The Glasgow School of Art

10.1 Report of the Meeting of the Joint Liaison Committee of the University of Glasgow and The Glasgow School of Art held on 11 February 2020 [ASC 20/38](#)

Section C: Items for Noting or Information

11. Periodic Subject Review

11.1 *Full Review Reports Approved under Summer Powers* [ASC 20/39](#)

12. Academic Integrity Charter

[ASC 20/40](#)

For information and to note that the University has signed up to the Charter.

13. Audit Report on Course Approval Activity

13.1 *College of Science & Engineering* [ASC 20/41](#)

14. Report on Accreditation by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies – Session 2019-20

[ASC 20/42](#)

15. Any Other Business

16. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Academic Standards Committee will be held on **Friday 22 January 2021** at **9.30am** via Zoom.

University of Glasgow
Academic Standards Committee

Minute of Meeting held on Friday 2 October 2020 at 9:30 AM via Zoom

Present:

Professor Marc Alexander, Professor Jim Anderson, Dr Donald Ballance, Ms Jane Broad, Ms Helen Butcher, Dr Robert Doherty, Professor Neil Evans (Convener), Dr Angus Ferguson, Professor Joe Gray, Mr Grigoris Kokkinidis, Dr Louise Harris, Dr Eamon McCarthy, Professor Niall MacFarlane, Dr Margaret Martin, Professor Anna Morgan-Thomas, Professor Jill Morrison, Dr Helen Purchase, Dr Scott Ramsay, Mr Niall Rogerson.

In Attendance:

Ms Ruth Cole.

Apologies:

Mr David Bennion, Professor Moira Fischbacher-Smith, Ms Ann Gow, Professor Douglas MacGregor, Ms Anna Phelan.

Welcome: The Convener welcomed the new members to the Committee.

ASC/2020/1 Note of the June 2020 Meeting held by Circulation

The note from the June 2020 meeting was approved.

ASC/2020/2 Matters Arising

ASC/2020/2.1 Update on PGT Dissertation Marking Practices within ASBS (ASC/2019/39)

ASBS had confirmed that on PGT programmes where discrepancies were noted for a dissertation marker then all the dissertations in that marker's sample would be second marked.

ASC/2020/2.2 PGT College Annual Monitoring Summaries for 2018-19: College of Arts (ASC/2019/41.2.1)

A collated response to the various issues raised would be brought to the November meeting of ASC.

ASC/2020/2.3 PGT College Annual Monitoring Summaries for 2018-19: College of Social Sciences (ASC/2019/41.2.2)

As concerns regarding English language skills had been raised across AMRs for a number of years, the issue would be flagged to EdPSC.

Action: Clerk

ASC/2020/2.4 Responses to the PSR of Veterinary Medicine – graduate access to Mahara (ASC/2019/43.1.2)

One issue that had been raised with ASC on a number of occasions was the desirability of students being granted continuing access to Mahara following graduation. BVMS students completed a substantial professional portfolio on Mahara and continuing access to this would be of benefit to them as their careers progressed. Through annual monitoring other areas had raised the same issue reflecting the fact that the use of Mahara was increasing across the University. ASC had referred the issue to the VLE Board which had given the development a low priority due to the small number of students that would benefit and the fact that the purchase of some hardware might be required. For the current meeting, ASC

received a fuller response from the VLE Development Board Convener, setting out two possible courses of action and supporting the suggestion that the issue be referred to EdPSC. (See minute ASC/2020/5.4.2.) ASC members agreed that this issue should be highlighted to EdPSC given the increasing number of subject areas expressing interest in the use of Mahara and the growing importance of preparing students for employment after graduation.

Action: Clerk

ASC/2020/3 Convener's Business

The Convener outlined a number of items that would be considered at future meetings during the session, including: the results from the consultation on the use of discretion in the award of honours and masters degrees; the operation of Good Cause and evidence requirements; and a review of degree regulations (reflecting on the experience of applying the No Detriment policy).

ASC/2020/4 Report on Academic Policy Response to Covid-19: The No Detriment Policy and Other Measures

ASC received a report setting out the University's academic policy response to the Covid-19 pandemic, including the No Detriment policy and other measures. The No Detriment policy was developed by an academic policy group that worked closely with the Clerk of Senate. The central principles were agreed with the Principal and Senior Management Group, and other key stakeholders and the SRC were consulted, as appropriate. Information was disseminated to students and supported by FAQs included on the University's webpages.

The No Detriment policy sought to:

1. promote and encourage the completion of assessment where possible;
2. acknowledge the unprecedented and challenging circumstances the pandemic created for students;
3. enable awards to be made that maintained the University's high academic standards.

Analysis of online participation in assessments indicated that levels of student engagement in assessment throughout the No Detriment period were high and initial feedback also suggested that completion levels were good.

Data was currently being gathered on a number of aspects of assessment completed over the affected period and a report would be prepared for a later meeting of ASC.

It was noted that comparisons with other years would need to be made with caution because of the number of ways in which the assessment period in spring and summer 2020 varied from the norm. It was also undesirable that extra work should be created by asking staff to generate data that was not already available. Although the SRC were keen to obtain feedback from students on their experience of the No Detriment policy, most students that had been directly impacted by the policy had graduated and current efforts were being focused on monitoring the student experience of the learning and teaching being delivered this semester.

It was noted that results from the No Detriment period of assessment would impact final outcomes for at least the next two years so ASC would continue to reflect on this for the foreseeable future. Relevant to this was the fact that in many cases progression decisions had been made on the basis of incomplete assessment so it would be interesting to see whether this in turn affected outcomes.

ASC/2020/5 Periodic Subject Review

ASC/2020/5.1 Pilot Outcome

Ms Butcher introduced a report on the PSR of Computing Science which was run as a pilot of the proposed revised process for PSR from 2020-21 onwards.

The PSR took place in March 2020 and the Senate Office welcomed the School's positive engagement with the pilot. Informal feedback indicated that the School found the amended format of the Reflective Analysis had encouraged more forward thinking, though its preparation still represented a considerable workload. Feedback from the Review Panel suggested that the structure of the review had led to a stronger focus on enhancement.

The reviews scheduled to take place in 2020-21 would take place on-line if necessary. There would be a focus on improved availability of data to support Schools and Subject areas in their preparation: Planning, Insights and Analytics would be working closely with the areas under review in the coming session in order to put in place arrangements for those areas to access appropriate data in a timely way.

ASC agreed to approve the recommendation that the revised approach taken in the pilot in March 2020 be applied for the PSR reviews scheduled for 2020-21. In view of the fact that the finalised outcome report from the Computing Science review had not yet been made available to ASC, approval of its format was deferred.

ASC/2020/5.2 Disruption in 2019-20 and Arrangements for 2020-21

ASC noted paper ASC 20/05 which set out the overview of PSR activity during 2019-20 and the revised schedule for 2020-21 and future years. The changes reflected the impact of industrial action and the Covid-19 pandemic. It was noted that the review of Philosophy, which had been suspended in March 2020 due to industrial action, would take place in spring 2021 in accordance with the previous PSR process.

ASC/2020/5.3 Full Review Report

ASC/2020/5.3.1 Economic & Social History

Dr Ballance had reviewed the report and found the commendations and recommendations to be appropriate.

Dr Ballance noted three areas of interest:

- Return rates from on-line course evaluation were low. There was a discussion about ways of improving return rates. It was agreed that making feedback compulsory could be counter-productive and ASC noted that advice was available from the Senate Office on improving return rates for on-line evaluations.
- Concerns had been noted about students not always receiving a receipt for submitted coursework, raising the question of whether there should be a standard approach to this across the University. ASC noted that as most assessment was now completed electronically this should no longer be an issue.
- In ESH it appeared that the extent to which students were required to participate in groupwork was variable. The generic undergraduate regulations currently included the requirement for students to achieve at least a grade of D3 in a piece of independent work in order to qualify for an honours degree and this raised the question of whether there should be a similar requirement in relation to groupwork. Members felt that groupwork was not a matter for regulations but, rather, something to be developed as a graduate attribute.

Dr Ballance noted that some issues that had been highlighted during the review were not captured in the recommendations or commendations. While this was appropriate for this

review, there might be value in formally noting them for the purposes of identifying common themes across the various reviews taking place in any given session. The issues in this case were: mental health difficulties, the difficulties of managing fluctuations in PGT numbers, writing support for international students, the alignment of assessments with ILOs, administrative support, and shortcomings with the workload model. Ms Butcher agreed to consider including in the amended PSR process a category of issues to be logged though not categorised as a recommendation for specific follow-up.

Action: Ms Butcher

In discussion, it was noted that Recommendation 1 concerning clarification of the role of Advisors of Study appeared to be a local issue and ASC's view was that it should be addressed for the attention of the School rather than for the Clerk of Senate (ASC was not aware of similar concerns having been raised in other areas). The Convener also suggested that the inclusion of a recommendation for an overall strategic plan might be useful for bringing together a number of different areas noted in the report as being under review/development or of concern and which may touch upon the issues highlighted by Dr Ballance.

Subject to these comments, the report was approved for onward transmission to relevant officers responsible for taking forward the recommendations. ASC agreed that, in view of the current heavy workload associated with the response to the pandemic, ESH should be invited to consider whether it would be more constructive to provide formal responses to the recommendations in 12 months rather than in the usual six months.

ASC/2020/5.4 Update Reports

ASC/2020/5.4.1 Celtic & Gaelic

The six-month update report from the review of Celtic & Gaelic had been received under Summer Powers. Updates had been requested on four recommendations, the responses to which were now accepted as satisfactory.

ASC/2020/5.4.2 School of Veterinary Medicine

The six-month update report from the review of the School of Veterinary Medicine had been received under summer powers. Updates had been requested on 10 recommendations, the responses to which were now received. The responses were accepted as satisfactory (or superseded) with the exception of Recommendations 6 and 10, where progress had been impacted by the pandemic and so an update was requested in 12 months. For Recommendation 5, concerning the demand for student access to Mahara after graduation, the Convener of the VLE Development Board had provided a response indicating two possible solutions: using other software or setting up a second instance of Mahara that did not rely on the GUID. Both would have significant cost implications. Members agreed that this matter should now be highlighted to EdPSC.

Action: Clerk

ASC/2020/5.4.3 Short Courses

Update responses had been received from Short Courses in relation to a number of recommendations. ASC was satisfied with all the responses except that it was noted that there appeared now to be an impasse in relation to Recommendations 5 (concerning the possibility of students on non-credit bearing courses having access to Moodle) and Recommendation 14 (concerning the accessibility of all learning spaces). In both cases, work had been done on understanding the issues but further progress depended on resourcing that was beyond the scope of the PSR process. It was agreed that both issues should be noted for highlighting to the Review Panel when Short Courses was next reviewed.

Action: Senate Office

ASC/2020/5.4.4 Undergraduate Medical School

Under Summer Powers ASC had received the six-month update report from the review of the Undergraduate Medical School. Further updates had been requested for seven recommendations. From the responses that had now been received, it was clear that the timescale had been unrealistic and little progress had been made. It was agreed that update responses should be requested in relation to Recommendations 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 to be submitted to ASC in May 2021.

ASC/2020/6 Programme Approval

ASC/2020/6.1 Report on Programme Approval 2019-20

ASC received the report of new programmes and programme amendments approved by College Boards of Studies for introduction in 2020-21.

ASC/2020/7 Annual Report to the SFC: Institutional Report on Quality Assurance and Enhancement 2019-20

Ms Butcher introduced the draft Annual Report which had been prepared with Professor Fischbacher-Smith, Vice-Principal (Learning & Teaching). The report covered all summaries of Institution-led Reviews of Quality outcomes undertaken during Session 2019-20. This included a summary of Periodic Subject Review outcomes, noting recommendations, commendations and good practice.

This year the report also reflected the impact of industrial action and the institution's response to the Covid-19 pandemic. In terms of key priorities for 2020-21 session, the new Learning & Teaching Strategy and associated action plan were highlighted.

Professor Morrison commended the excellent report. In relation to the response to the pandemic, (section 2.2) she suggested that in view of the rapidly changing situation the report should moderate the reference to face-to-face teaching.

ASC agreed to endorse the report, noting that it was also required to be signed off by Court before being submitted to SFC.

ASC/2020/8 Items Referred from Edinburgh Theological Seminary

ASC/2020/8.1 Report of the Meeting of the Joint Board of the University of Glasgow and Edinburgh Theological Seminary held on 5 November 2019

ASC received the Joint Board report and approved:

- The remit and membership of the Joint Board for 2019-20, and
- The appointment of an ETS staff member as an Associate University Lecturer.

ASC noted that there had been discussion around the possibility of restructuring the Bachelor of Theology as a four-year programme incorporating a part-time ministry training module. This would involve 90 credits being studied each year and the remainder of the student's time being given to ministry work. The idea was in the early stages with no definite proposal being developed yet. ASC noted that if ETS wished to bring this forward early consultation with the Academic Collaborations Office and the Senate Office was advised.

ASC/2020/8.2 Report of the Meeting of the Joint Board of the University of Glasgow and Edinburgh Theological Seminary held on 21 April 2020

ASC approved as Associate University Lecturers the listed recently appointed members of staff.

It was noted that the reports from November 2019 and April 2020 both referred to the issue of gender balance, with ETS continuing its efforts to increase the participation of female staff on an expanded Senate and moves to expand the role of a female member of staff to include academic counselling. Professor Morrison, the Convener of the Joint Board, advised ASC that this was an issue that was frequently raised at the Board and efforts were on-going to address gender imbalance in a number of different ways.

ASC/2020/9 Items Referred from Scotland's Rural College

ASC/2020/9.1 Proposal to Separate the Institution-led Review and Revalidation Procedures

ASC approved SRUC's proposal to separate its Institution-led Review process from its revalidation procedure as outlined in the presented report, for implementation in 2021-22. No programmes were due for revalidation during session 2020-21.

ASC/2020/9.2 Report of the Meeting of the Joint Liaison Committee of the University of Glasgow and Scotland's Rural College held on 27 November 2019

ASC noted the report of the meeting of the Joint Liaison Committee held on 27 November 2019 and approved:

- The remit and membership of the Joint Liaison Committee for 2019-20, and
- The appointment of SRUC staff members as Associated University Lecturers.

ASC/2020/10 ASC Remit, Composition and Membership 2020-21

ASC/2020/10.1 Remit and Composition

The remit and composition for 2020-21 was approved.

ASC/2020/10.2 Membership

The membership for 2020-21 was approved.

ASC/2020/11 Audit Reports on Course Approval Activity

ASC received audit reports from the Colleges of Arts, MVLS and Social Sciences. The report from the College of Science & Engineering would follow at the next meeting. ASC noted that the audit revealed variation in the quality of the paperwork presented. For Arts, in most cases it was reported that the documentation had not been completed to the required standard whereas in Social Sciences in most cases documentation had been satisfactory. For MVLS, it was reported that while the documentation had been satisfactory, in a number of cases comments had been passed back to the School on clarifications needed.

Dr McCarthy advised ASC that the Arts audit indicated that the documentation was unsatisfactory even where only minor issues had been identified. It seemed likely that this was similar to the issues noted on the MVLS audit though they had been recorded there differently. Dr McCarthy noted that the auditing process was undertaken carefully, involving the Dean of Learning & Teaching, and that training had recently taken place for the clerks and conveners of School Boards of Studies in order to ensure clarity about the requirements.

There was a discussion about whether there would be value in course approval activity being audited by a different College. It was agreed that this would give an interesting insight in how different areas operated. However, members felt that there was value in Colleges knowing what was happening in their own Schools and having the on-going dialogue about the requirements. It was also felt that coordinating the audit by other Colleges may add unnecessary complication to the process.

It was agreed that the audit reports should be shared with the respective Deans of Learning & Teaching.

Action: Clerk

ASC/2020/12 Report on Items Approved under Summer Powers

ASC/2020/12.1 Periodic Subject Review – Full Review Reports

ASC noted that the reports of the PSRs of Sociology and Theology & Religious Studies had been approved under Summer Powers subject to minor comments which had been forwarded to the Panel Conveners. The finalised reports would be available to ASC at the next meeting.

ASC/2020/12.2 Periodic Subject Review – Responses to Recommendations

ASC noted that the full responses to the recommendations made at the Politics review in Spring 2019 had been considered under Summer Powers. Further responses for four of the recommendations had been requested and would be received by ASC in March 2021.

ASC/2020/13 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Academic Standards Committee will be held on **Friday 20 November 2020** at **9.30am** via Zoom.

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 20 November 2020

**Responses to Issues Raised in the Colleges of Arts and Social
Sciences Postgraduate Annual Monitoring Summaries 2018-19
(ASC/2019/41.2.1 and ASC/2019/41.2.2)**

Cover Sheet

Ms Lesley Fielding, Senate Office

Brief Description of the Paper

Following consideration of the Colleges of Arts and Social Sciences Postgraduate Monitoring Summaries, ASC confirmed and identified themes that they wished to be raised and/or clarified with the School/subject.

The responses are presented in the attached paper.

Action Requested

ASC is asked to confirm that they are satisfied with the responses provided and identify any areas that require to be followed up.

Recommended Person/s responsible for taking the action(s) forward

Senate Office to seek additional responses, if required.

Resource Implications (where appropriate)

As appropriate

Timescale for Implementation (where appropriate)

As appropriate

Equality Implications (where appropriate)

As identified in the report

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 20 November 2020

Responses to Issues Raised in the Colleges of Arts and Social Sciences Postgraduate Annual Monitoring Summaries 2018-19 (ASC/2019/41.2.1 and ASC/2019/41.2.2)

Ms Lesley Fielding, Senate Office

ASC, in considering the Colleges of Arts and Social Sciences PGT Annual Monitoring Summaries, identified the following issues and requested further information/updates:

1. College of Arts

- (i) *MLitt Technical Art History note the need for greater awareness of the request for adequate space within KH to deliver the unique object-based Technical Art History Programme. Support from the Hunterian and the use of Hunterian facilities at Kelvin Hall has been essential and has been key to the development of the course in the last two years.*

ASC response: It was not clear to ASC what exactly was the issue with the space in the Kelvin Hall. Does this pertain to the space needed not existing or is it the availability of the pace that is limited for the unique object-based teaching?

Subject response: The key points of the response are highlighted

May I reiterate (Mark and Caroline's original statement as convenor last year) that: we work with the Hunterian Collections with our PGT and PGR students through research led teaching, hands-on technical examination and conservation. That we have a research facility at KH in ConsLab2 enabling us to work with our collections and others for applied conservation research/technical examination (but this is not a seminar/lecture space) and use the Study Centre for sessions with students which all augments our teaching. Our students also make use of the Study Centre Reading room at KH and interact with the curators and staff at the Hunterian. Thus, much of the time they are based there. **But we have consistently had problems in room bookings in the Seminar RM1 & 2 through CTT for teaching (even though the College of Arts has a priority for object based teaching).** This fragments our sessions as they have to be split up. e.g. one-hour seminar followed by two hours with objects. Therefore, we need to be in SM1 or SM2 for the seminar part.

The Robertson TAH lab is woefully ill equipped for seminars; without enough space and out-of-date audio visual equipment, separated from objects we are dealing with. We used to have a seminar space in the Boyd Orr which was lost in the building works two years ago- **this space now should be consistently seminar Rm 1 or 2 at KH since the Hunterian** and much of our activities are based there. There needs to be better communication between CTT, our fantastic programme administrators and Hunterian who have been extremely supportive of all our activities.

I am convening the programme this year and I am having the same problem. I believe there was a meeting yesterday between the Hunterian and CTT that I hope may resolve this issue for this year as we start teaching with the collections on the 21st September.

- (ii) *MPhil Textile Conservation are keen to continue to use an electronic portfolio platform for this assessment, however the Mahara Platform is not well liked by the students on a practical level (e.g. uploading information etc). This will be reviewed to find see if it is possible to find a way to make these practical aspects easier to manage.*

While this was marked for Subject action, **ASC advised the following:**

Re MPhil Textile Conservation/Mahara electronic portfolio, the Subject should contact Lesley extensive experience with Mahar portfolios and have overcome aspects of student unhappiness with this platform. Nicolon, Lubna Nasir and Jenny Hammond at the School of Veterinary Medicine as they have overcome aspects of student unhappiness with this platform.

Subject response: Thank you. We have been working on improving these aspects this year. Mahara has also had some updates this year so it is slightly so it is more straight forward to use and upload information/documents etc. We also introduced template to make it clearer what was required as research has indicated that this is helpful too. We are currently working with Gordon McLeod to improve these aspects further to make the set up more intuitive. The students have used it this summer and so far, have not reported the same difficulties. I am familiar with the use of Mahara at the Vet School and I worked with them when we first decided to introduce it but is useful to have some additional contacts at the school.

- (iii) *The absence of any pastoral/funding/academic administrative and regulatory support systems for management and administration of PGT cohorts and courses, is of concern given the comments also made in ELIR. (For College attention)*

Extract from 2019-20 PGT College of Arts AM Summary

Advising PGT Students & College Structures: Greater clarity is needed around communications between the Advising Team & PGT convener when providing support to students. Humanities note the ongoing discussion, which was delayed due to the pandemic, of a possible new position of Dean of PGT at College level and believe that such a post is essential to the delivery of an effective programme for students who pay considerable fees (and to support the exemplary admin staff who work for the College in this regard)

2. College of Social Sciences - Adam Smith Business School

The Adam Smith Business School requested an extension to responding to the following items. An update, where appropriate, will be provided to the January 2021 meeting of ASC.

- (i) *Language skills has now arisen as a concern across AMRs for a number of years. It is of concern that there is a 'failure of ...recruitment processes to enforce IELTS requirements'*
This issue is now under consideration by EdPSC.
- (ii) *It was noted in the AMR that 'Concerns have been expressed about the dissertation experience' this is of concern given that this has been a subject of discussion between ASBS, Senate and ASC.*

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 20 November 2020

Overview of College Annual Monitoring Summaries 2019-20

Cover Sheet

Ms Lesley Fielding, Senate Office

Brief Description of the Paper

In response to the exceptional circumstances created by the Covid-19 pandemic, the Annual Monitoring process was abridged to focus on key areas. As in previous years, the Undergraduate Annual Monitoring Summaries for each College were submitted to the Senate Office two weeks in advance of the November meeting of ASC, and the Colleges of Arts and Science & Engineering also included their Postgraduate Annual Monitoring Summaries. The College summaries have been reviewed by the Senate Office in order to identify any common themes.

The main themes are presented in the attached paper along with some indicative examples of the comments made. The themes cover both what worked well and issues that require further consideration.

Action Requested

Following its consideration of the College Annual Monitoring Summaries, ASC is asked to confirm that the themes identified below are an accurate reflection of the issues raised by the Colleges. The Senate Office will then seek updates and responses from the relevant sources to these University-wide matters.

Recommended Person/s responsible for taking the action(s) forward

Senate Office to obtain initial responses or updates from relevant sources, and forward areas of good practice to the Learning Enhancement & Academic Development Service.

Resource Implications (where appropriate)

As appropriate.

Timescale for Implementation (where appropriate)

As appropriate.

Equality Implications (where appropriate)

As identified in the report.

University of Glasgow**Academic Standards Committee – Friday 20 November 2020****Overview of College Annual Monitoring Summaries 2019-20****Ms Lesley Fielding, Senate Office****1. Introduction**

In response to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Annual Monitoring process was streamlined in terms of reporting requirements. The abridged form aimed to capture a focused and concise evaluation, given the extraordinary events arising from the pandemic during academic session 2019-20. Implementation of the revised Annual Monitoring process that was approved by both ASC and EdPSC has been postponed until the disruption of the pandemic has settled. Reporting dates remained unchanged, Colleges submitted the College Annual Monitoring Summary (CAMS) to the Senate Office two weeks in advance of the November meeting of ASC. The Colleges of Arts and Science & Engineering summaries include information that pertains to both undergraduate and postgraduate learning and teaching matters, whereas summaries of postgraduate activity in the Colleges of Social Sciences and MVLS will be submitted in January 2021.

The College Summaries have been reviewed by the Senate Office in order to identify any common themes, including what worked well and issues that require further consideration. These are presented below. Following its consideration of the College Annual Monitoring Summaries, ASC is asked to confirm that the themes identified below are an accurate reflection of the issues raised by the Colleges. The Senate Office will then seek updates and responses from the relevant sources to these University-wide matters.

Areas that worked well have also been identified in the College Summaries. These have been broken down into themes and will be sent to the Learning Enhancement & Academic Development Service (LEADS) for wider dissemination.

2. What worked well

There were a number of common themes reported in the What Worked Well section of the College Summaries. These themes, however, also feature in the themes for attention. These areas included the following:

- Response of staff to the challenges of online delivery
- Online exams processes
- No Detriment Policy
- Staff support - teaching

2.1 Staff response

“All schools reported that their staff (academic and administrative) responded remarkably well to the challenges of delivering online examinations in a very short period, and worked well beyond expectations in order to support students and bring the year to a successful conclusion. This was despite the fact that they themselves endured difficult circumstances, and that the additional workload (both in revising and marking exams, and in setting up the online exam environment in Moodle) was significant, unfamiliar and unexpected. In some schools, the effort was mostly confined to a small very hard-working group of people who supported each other through this harrowing period; in other schools, some tasks were

distributed to members of staff no longer involved in the marking of L1&L2 exams.” (College of Science & Engineering)

“Staff must be congratulated for the dramatic change in working practices which saw the remainder of the MBChB curriculum delivered, assessments carried out and preparations made to ensure delivery of the curriculum for the forthcoming session.” (MVLS)

“Rapid collaborative response between all year teams and overarching management. This ensured standardisation of approach, common documentation and processes.” (Dental School)

“All schools reported that their staff (academic and administrative) responded remarkably well to the challenges of delivering online examinations in a very short period, and worked well beyond expectations in order to support students and bring the year to a successful conclusion. students through the difficulties posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.” (College of Science & Engineering)

2.2 Online exams

“While some schools indicated that, for their own subjects, open-book 24hr exams were particularly difficult to create (Eng, CS), all schools reported that the overall online exam processes were all conducted very smoothly and successfully, including the management and calculation of grades under the NDP. The commitment and dedication of all staff and the amount of effort expended to ensure these successful outcomes should not be underestimated.” (College of Science & Engineering)

“From the student point of view, schools reported that students typically adapted well to the new circumstances (P&A), and gave positive feedback on the online exam process (CS); few significant issues were reported by students (Eng). Some schools held timed exams (M&S, P&A), and reported that they went smoothly, with no significant problems.” (Sci & Eng)

“Planned written assessments were moved to online delivery and student performance was largely unaffected by the change in delivery methods.” (MVLS)

“The online examinations worked well and student performance was reflective of ability across other course assessments. Students adapted well with the transition to online examinations. External Examiners indicated that online assessments were both robust and rigorous (BN2), and the open book examinations created opportunities for depth of discussion, whilst capturing the range of abilities across the cohort (BN3).” (NHCS)

“Commitment and willingness of staff to support their students and each other.” (School of Life Sciences)

2.3 No Detriment Policy

“All four Schools report that the ‘No Detriment’ policy, while complex to implement, worked very well. There is strong evidence that **student performance** within Arts was not adversely affected by the pandemic. Schools report on the significant amount of work undertaken by staff to adapt both teaching and assessment at short notice. There has been a very positive response from students to 24-hour take home exam as a model. External examiners praised agile solutions to assessment from staff, particularly in relation to assessing presentations and oral examinations.” (College of Arts)

“Implementation of examinations delivered online (open-book and 24hr window) for year 3 and final year students and application of “no detriment” policy proved highly effective.” (School of Life Sciences)

“Implementation of no detriment and the dedication of all staff- teaching and admin, student results in line with previous sessions.” (CEES)

2.4 Staff support – teaching

“In response to the pandemic, the College created two cross-College fora to help better support staff in delivery of teaching:

- Arts COVID-19 Teaching Planning Oversight Group co-chaired by Dean of L&T and Dean of Graduate Studies.
- Delivering Online Learning & Curriculum Enhancement 2020 (Moodle site offering practical support with tools for online learning).” (College of Arts)

3. Themes for University attention

There were a number of common issues reported through the Summaries, a number of which have been recurring themes over previous reports. The issue identified related to the following themes:

- IT/Remote Delivery
- Staffing/workloads
- University Policy
- Suitability and quality of teaching spaces
- University systems
- Staff and student Mental Health
- University Communication
- Ongoing issues from previous sessions

3.1 IT/Remote Delivery

There were a substantial number of comments received pertaining to various aspects of IT provision for staff and students:

(i) Provision of Equipment/support

“The preparation of new online material to deliver the practical classes in academic session 2020-2021 will require significant resources e.g. recording equipment, software and IT technical assistance.” (School of Vet Medicine)

“IT infrastructure is boosted sufficiently to only allow seamless online teaching AND any online assessment and functionality on scale, including unlimited availability of Turnitin (including for exam submission), timed online examinations, Moodle quiz functionality, MCQ etc.” (School of Life Sciences)

“Additional equipment and consumables and importantly maintenance of equipment, will be essential to meet the demands of simulated practical teaching to replace patient activity during these unprecedented times.” (Dental School)

“Continuing support for the increased demands placed on both staff and students by online delivery and assessment, including access to equipment, software, training, IT support and appropriate staffing.” (School of Law)

“Reassurance is sought that there will be adequate technology support for remote delivery.” (Schools of Maths & Stats, Physics & Astronomy)

“24/7 central IT support would be welcomed -not just for remote delivery (especially international off-campus students), but also for ODL.” (School of Engineering)

“Expand investment for additional learning technologists to raise the profile and professional standing of on-line courses. This is a particular concern within Accounting and Finance.” (ASBS)

“There was a view that great efforts could be made to utilise online technology to improve inclusion of SiS colleagues in wider College and University initiatives.” (School of Interdisciplinary Studies)

“To continue to increase the availability of e-learning materials through the library to help support the online teaching was seen as important.” (School of Interdisciplinary Studies)

(ii) Student Support - IT

“The University needs to make sure that laptops/wifi are available for all students to work from home as there are students with a less advantaged background who will struggle. For these students, we cannot simply rely on the provision of University PC clusters as these will probably not be available due to disinfection challenges and also because we cannot force students that live far away to take frequent transport to access these facilities. We need to make sure that these students are supported and that we are inclusive.” (School of Life Sciences)

“The University should be attentive to the need to provide equal access to all students to computing and on-line services to enable successful participation in blended learning.” (School of Social & Political Sciences)

“There is also a need to ensure that digital provision is not associated with greater inequalities among students. According to research from 2017, disadvantaged students consistently perform worse through online learning than they do in face-to-face classrooms, which increases the likelihood of dropping out.” (ASBS)

“The pandemic has exposed digital inequalities among students, which need to be addressed by the university.” (College of Arts)

“The University should be attentive to the need to provide equal access to all students to computing and on-line services to enable successful participation in blended learning.” (School of Education and School of Law)

3.2 Staffing/Staff workloads

All college summaries referenced the significant additional workload that the pandemic situation had created for staff. As was evident from the comments in the “What worked well” section, there was an amazing effort by staff, however, there were concerns that this was at the cost of staff wellbeing. Staffing and workload issues are matters for College resourcing, however, the following comments were extracted from the ‘For University attention’ section. In addition, the impact of understaffing on staff wellbeing was highlighted.

(i) Staffing and Workload

“One school commented that increased university requirements for conducting, monitoring, managing and reporting on teaching activities significantly increases workload for course

heads/ programme directors/ year heads etc., with a request that their necessity be reassessed.” (School of Chemistry)

“We need some staff positions! Some key strategic and operational positions (including academic positions) to be unfrozen to ensure continued and robust delivery in the short and medium terms and to allow future re-activation of courses that have currently been cancelled due to insufficient staffing and the hiring freeze (e.g. L1 Environmental Biology).” (School of Life Sciences)

“Ensure adequate School staffing to allow delivery of courses requiring high levels of staff input.” (School of Vet Medicine)

“The continuing understaffing and “churn” within the SVM Undergraduate School has a significant impact on the ability of the School to meet the expectations of accrediting bodies, external examiners and student body in relation to delivery and assessment of the course (BVMS3, BVMS4).” (School of Vet Medicine)

“In discussion with the Directors of Learning and Teaching in the seven schools, it was clear that additional targeted administrative and academic staff resources will be needed if the Schools’ currently excellent provision is to be sustained and improved.” (School of Science and Engineering).

“Challenges in ensuring consistency and quality of life science teaching owing to lack of staff. Life science content is a unique selling point of the programme and year-on-year NSS feedback endorses the value of the science content and its contribution to student satisfaction. An inability to deliver the courses outlined in the programme and course descriptors could potentially impact on student satisfaction and ultimately league table rankings. This situation is being addressed, however requires close monitoring.” (NHCS)

“Physically-distanced teaching of practical skills to BVMS1-BVMS4, will impact on staff availability for BVMS5 teaching (and vice versa).” (School of Vet Medicine)

“Adoption of blended learning model across the curriculum, requiring staff to upskill in specific TEL areas, whilst meeting ongoing operational demands and increased workload due to the COVID-19 pandemic.” (NHCS)

“There was significant increased workload on colleagues at College, School, and Subject level and the work associated with examining was not concluded until the first week of July which placed substantial additional pressure on those colleagues tasked with preparation for teaching in 2020-21.” (School of Social & Political Sciences)

“There is a strong concern expressed about staff well-being under such pressure (expressed by two schools, but widely shared by all others).” (Schools of Chemistry and GES)

(ii) Staff welfare

“**Return to Campus:** One subject (TRS) has raised questions regarding the safety of on-campus teaching. TRS also note that once we are back teaching in classrooms, changing rooms for every class might be a real problem and that classes need at the very least to be in the same place every week.” (Theology & Religious Studies)

“The requirement for face-to-face teaching during practical classes and rotations carry a significant risk to staff and due to the low numbers of staff, if one member of staff becomes COVID-19 positive, teaching becomes untenable.” (School of Vet Medicine)

“Issues such as rooms which are overcrowded, poorly maintained, and poorly cleaned will be of particular concern as we move towards a return to campus within social distancing rules. We need to ensure health and safety of staff and students in campus re-opening plans and continue to take a flexible and compassionate approach to those who may be at risk or worried about health risks.” (School of Social & Political Sciences)

3.3 University Policy

(i) *No Detriment Policy*

“Application of No Detriment Policy and Processing of Results: This resulted in overly complicated spreadsheets and means of assuring the quality of student grades. Exam boards were delayed as scrutiny groups and administrative teams struggled to apply the guidelines and confirm results in the time available.” (ASBS)

“Student expectations relating to No Detriment Policy were not managed with sufficient care at University level.” (School of Social & Political Sciences)

“**Communication / support:** Colleagues welcomed the policy but would have appreciated some further work on filtering of information and instruction to ensure that school/subject guidance is clear and simple for both staff and students. Staff were grateful for, but nonetheless anxious about, the complexity of the final spreadsheets and formulae for result calculation, which also changed regularly. Some have asked about the possibility of simplification, or that they at least be more clearly explained, for the next round of exams.” (College of Arts)

“**Degree classification:** A number of externals in one School (SMLC) stressed the need for a comparative statistical analysis to analyse what impact the No Detriment policy has had on degree classifications, and in the longer term what impact the disruption has had on subsequent cohorts.” (SMLC)

“**(PGT):** Two Schools highlighted the difficulties in applying the No Detriment policy to PGT students in general. They also noted the difficulties caused due to a delay in the production of a shared spreadsheet that was suitable to allow the processing of marks for PGT students.” (College of Arts)

“Staff have felt supported by the University, although at times firm guidance was understandably a little slow.” (School of Vet Medicine)

(ii) *Code of Assessment*

“Code of assessment has had its day – and its weakness was revealed by the COVID-19 crisis: the Herculean effort needed to cope, points to the problem. The Code is:

- Too complex, and consequences thereof: not clearly explained in the guide, difficult to interpret, difficult to implement.
- Sometimes demands manual manipulation of data for individual students thus not efficient.
- Practicalities of implementation are not part of the design of the code or supported by any University systems: often requires storage of data that MyCampus cannot store and thus necessitates use of spreadsheets, requires comparison of numbers stored in different places/spreadsheets etc. Calculations can be very cumbersome, slow, and error prone.
- Point of weakness and potential failure in a core Institutional function and responsibility.” (Life Sciences)

“We need a new central assessment IT system linked to a streamlined code and we need these things urgently. Progress towards these goals seems to have stalled (in spite of widespread enthusiasm for the idea). Need an institutional commitment and some sense of urgency. COVID-19 has highlighted the importance of student education and the reliability and validity of their assessment outcomes to the University’s reputation and its finances: time to invest in those neglected, unflashy, but key functions; or we play reputational Russian roulette.” (School of Life Sciences)

“**Policy on deadlines and extensions:** These may need to be revised during 2020-21 in response to the present circumstances”. (College of Arts)

(iii) *Online Assessment*

“An urgent pre-COVID-19 requirement remains the creation of an examination question bank to allow efficient and effective assessment management. SVM does not have appropriate software and despite previously raising this requirement at College level there has been no progress (BVMS3, BVMS4).” (School of Vet Medicine)

“Caution is required with the move to remote/blended learning, to maintain standards and academic integrity. A key concern is to ensure that exam misconduct is minimised in an open-book exam setting. Reducing the 24h time window would alleviate the above-mentioned issues. Timed exams are also suggested as a possible solution.” (ASBS)

“To put this another way, colleagues request that care be taken by the University and teaching support services when assessing, outlining, recommending changes to the provision of learning, teaching and assessment: that we separate Covid-19 circumstances from the practice more generally or rather the ‘best practice’ of remote/online learning and teaching.” (School of Humanities)

“**Exams (online):** Schools thanked their own administrative teams for all their work on making this model of examination a success but highlighted that the administrative burden to organise 24-hour exams fell to Schools. There are also concerns about the potential for plagiarism on this type of exams. It was also felt that there was a need for better communication around what was expected of candidates in such exams (e.g. length of time to spend on the paper). One School (Humanities) particularly welcomed receiving typed exam scripts and would like to see the introduction of digital exams, but not sat at home, and performed in a timed setting.” (College of Arts)

Exams (students with caring responsibilities): There is some concern that resits/deferred exams in August won’t help the students with caring responsibilities if the current situation continues. History requests that the University consider ways in which different student circumstances might be addressed with remote and open book resits/deferred exams. (College of Arts)

“Development of policy on delivery of online examinations.” (Medical School)

“That online delivery of examinations be part of the assessment mix from now on and *ad infinitum*, and freely supported and available via Registry, and with flexibility: timed vs untimed, closed vs open book vs open-net, remote invigilation as an option, Moodle quiz as an option, use of Turnitin as routine etc.”(School of Life Sciences)

(iv) *Good Cause*

“Subject areas report the difficulty of assessing student participation and in particular student presentations in the face of seemingly growing reluctance, and recourse to Good Cause, to avoid these parts of courses. Further guidance on how to manage this type of ‘Good Cause’ claim is necessary.” (College of Arts)

3.4 University Systems

(i) *EvaSys*

“The emphasis placed on the established course evaluation survey is considered to be counterproductive and far too rigid. Student engagement with the process is highly variable, generating some very poor response rates and unreliable data. There is a feeling among colleagues that we are polling students far too often and that they suffer from “feedback fatigue”. In some instances, only the dissatisfied few complete the evaluation, resulting in low participation scores and imbalanced feedback. The feedback itself is often personalised, inappropriately targeting members of teaching staff rather than course delivery. Colleagues would like to see a move away from bureaucratic box ticking to more innovative, responsive and reliable instruments and a more considered approach. A willingness to apply some innovative thinking and devise a more flexible approach would be welcome: possibly with a random selection of one or two courses evaluated for each member of staff per year; or with an annual survey of core classes on a programme and irregular feedback on electives; or spot check evaluations of a certain proportion of the provision per programme. Changes along these lines, or with other options, would be attractive, responsive and generate more useful information for development and planning.” (ASBS)

“Better support needed for off-campus remote access to EvaSys by staff. One subject suggest that questions asked also need to invite more reflective feedback from students.” (TRS)

(ii) *Moodle*

“SMLC notes that the Moodle marking interface is inadequate for intricate marking of scripts. The system is also prone to function slowly and be unresponsive, which increases the scope for error on the part of markers. This will need attention before we return to teaching given the heavy increase in online marking next session.” (School of Modern Languages & Cultures)

“With a massive push as regards online teaching the infrastructure underpinning Moodle needs to be sufficiently robust to support full usage e.g. Moodle Quiz.” (School of Vet Medicine)

“Moodle is clumsy for online assessment; an improved online assessment tool would make the marking process more efficient for staff.” (Eng)

“If future iterations of the summative Degree Examination are to be online; then access to and support for using Moodle Quizzes and/or tailored online assessment software with provision for invigilation would be advantageous.” (School of Vet Medicine)

“Moodle needs to be sufficiently robust to support full usage – Moodle quiz.” (Vet School)

“Moodle marking interface is inadequate for intricate marking of scripts.” (College of Arts)

(iii) *Sharepoint*

“One School reported significant problems with SharePoint for handling data (and handling of spreadsheets more generally). They frequently encountered the wrong/old version of a spreadsheet being presented/circulated. It’s not completely clear where the problem lay, but

certainly this needs to be addressed for next year's exams period and further training may be required in this area." (School of Cultural & Creative Arts)

(iv) Mahara

"The absence of access for graduates to their Professional Phase Portfolio post-graduation remains unresolved." (Vet Medicine)

This issue was also highlighted to EdPSC given the increasing number of subject areas expressing interest in the use of Mahara and the growing importance of preparing students for employment after graduation. In view of the resource implications, the Convener of EdPSC undertook to discuss this with Mr Dave Anderson in Information Services. In addition, the Convener will flag this with Learning & Teaching Committee given the planned commitment within the forthcoming L&T Strategy to students' skills and professional development and the need for students to demonstrate their achievements after graduation.

3.5 Suitability and quality of teaching

(i) Location and quality of teaching spaces

"Consideration of room bookings so that students are not in a different place for the same course each day*, and don't have to traverse long distances between classes* (P&A).

"The issues of students having to move significant distances across campus between classes was also raised. In particular, Film & Television noted the lack of suitable teaching space for teaching practical courses." (College of Arts)

"Quality of teaching spaces* (P&A), in particular: Gregory Building* (GES), East Quad (GES), functional lapel microphones* (C). Need for out-of-hours lab access and flexible spaces (GES).

"Rooms which are overcrowded, poorly maintained, and poorly cleaned." (School of Social & Political Sciences)

(ii) Rooms/Room bookings/Timetabling

"We continue to have concerns over rooms and room bookings. These include a lack of consistency in provision; chopping and changing across the weeks of a course." (School of Political & Social Sciences)

"All four Schools again reported issues with the suitability of some of the rooms (including equipment in TEAL rooms) on campus and, as before, highlighted difficulties with the timetabling process, including only timetabling classes at short notice (e.g. 24-hours before the class) or not finding a room for a class." (College of Arts)

"Request that the large L&TH lecture theatre be used to prevent duplication of lectures." (School of Psychology)

"The consequences of timetable clashes being overridden due to remote learning will need to be considered when returning to on-campus delivery." (School of Geography & Earth Sciences - GES)

"Electronic timetables do not reflect course information submitted or staff workloads and are difficult to correct." (School of Education)

"Some improvements have been made with CMIS electronic timetabling, however the Dental School continues to be frustrated by the lack of facilitation for our 4th /summer term."

3.6 Student Support/Mental Health

“The University's student mental health provision is still considered inadequate especially in these changed circumstances.” (Schools of GES, Psychology and Computing Science)

“Having a named mental health practitioner associated with each School is suggested.” (School of Chemistry)

“We have previously raised concerns about the increasing number of students who have high levels of anxiety, depression, and stress. This is resulting in an increased number of ‘good cause’ claims and is putting a considerable emotional strain on academic and administrative staff who are often the first port of call for these students. These issues are likely to be exacerbated due to a summer of lockdown and ongoing public health restrictions. We would therefore like to see greater support for the Counselling and Psychological Services to both help these students and relieve some of the pressure on staff.” (School of Social & Political Sciences)

3.7 University Communication

A number of School commented on the need for improved communication from the university on issues relating to central communications.

“Acknowledging opportunities for local decision making (e.g exam format and processes (C, GES)), and clarity on Disability provisions. Clarity over what information is sent to whom (and when) (P&A). In particular, information on what we can and can't offer students on-campus is essential for recruitment activities.” (Schools of GES, Computing Science)

“Improved communication to PGT students regarding admissions matters (deferrals, deposits etc.), so that they are not sent directly to academic staff.” (Schools of Psychology and Computing Science)

“Improved (timely, consistent, unambiguous) communication of regulations and future plans.” (Schools of GES, Maths& Stats, Psychology, Engineering, Computing Science)

“ **PGT Marketing:** It is important to note that conversion activities (e.g. recording promotional videos, tending to applicants' requests) usually take place at pressure points in the academic year, so more notice is needed for such requests (e.g. more than 10 working days).” (College of Arts)

3.8 Other Issues

“The blocks in BVMS final year have been organised such that there is flexibility to accommodate students who are unable to attend originally scheduled rotations, if there was a substantial number of students who fell into this situation this could result in a delay to the completion of teaching for the whole cohort and this could impact on the date of graduation.” (School of Vet Medicine)

“Dentistry is unlike any other course within the University. There is a huge reliance on clinical access and patient treatment. It is essential that the University recognises Dentistry as an exceptional case. The Dental School will require unprecedented support to mitigate as far as possible the particular difficulties our course faces within this pandemic. The University should also be aware that we may be unable to graduate students in 2021 with the knock-on effect this will have on all other years.” (Dental School)

“There has been a potential for loss of clinical provision by some external providers, the school has been in active discussions with Scottish SPCA etc. and is formulating a strategy to mitigate against such a loss. This has financial implications.” (School of Vet Medicine)

3.9 Ongoing issues from previous sessions:

“Please can MyC automatically send an email notification when a student enrolls/unenrolls for a class after start of semester.” (School of Chemistry)

“Please can MyC be adapted so that multiple windows are supported, allowing multi-tasking.” (School of Chemistry)

“Field trips costs are passed directly to students; this puts UofG at a disadvantage with regard to competitors.” (GES)

“The University travel insurance is unsuitable for field trips” (GES)

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 20 November 2020

**Undergraduate and Postgraduate College Annual Monitoring
Summary 2019-20 – College of Arts**

Cover Sheet

Dr Eamon McCarthy, College Quality Officer

Brief Description of the Paper

This paper contains a summary of the annual monitoring reports from the College of Arts.

Action Requested

ASC is asked to consider the issues raised in the report covering undergraduate and postgraduate provision in the College of Arts in 2019-20.

Recommended Person/s responsible for taking the action(s) forward

Actions identified separately.

Resource Implications (where appropriate)

As appropriate.

Timescale for Implementation (where appropriate)

As appropriate.

Equality Implications (where appropriate)

None.

The aim of Annual Monitoring is to maintain quality and improve provision through identifying action that can be taken to improve future student experience. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic annual monitoring will proceed with a significantly reduced area of focus in terms of reporting requirements.

For session 2019-20 this abridged form should be used to record Annual Monitoring Activity. Its purpose is to capture a focused and concise evaluation (or a reflective summary). In undertaking annual monitoring, online meetings should take place to support reflection, reporting and development planning towards enhancement and the maintenance of academic standards.

College	Arts (Dr Eamon McCarthy, College Quality Officer) [compiled from SAMS received from Schools of Critical Studies, Culture and Creative Arts, Humanities, and Modern Languages and Cultures; and from responses received from Professor Wendy Anderson, CoA Dean of Learning and Teaching and Professor Nick Fells, CoA Dean of Graduate Studies]		
School/Subject/Discipline (as appropriate)	Culture & Creative Arts, Critical Studies, Humanities, Modern Languages & Cultures		
Provision covered	Unit of Learning	Represented by	Input received [at meeting (M)/via form (F)]
Collaborative Provision covered			

In the context of the extraordinary circumstances of this academic year, please reflect on Student Experience and Student Performance. (Please take particular account of course evaluations, data on student performance and the reports of external examiners).

What is working well?

All four Schools report that the 'No Detriment' policy, while complex to implement, worked very well. There is strong evidence that **student performance** within Arts was not adversely affected by the pandemic. Schools report on the significant amount of work undertaken by staff to adapt both teaching and assessment at short notice. There has been a very positive response from students to 24-hour take home exam as a model. External examiners praised agile solutions to assessment from staff, particularly in relation to assessing presentations and oral examinations.

All subjects across the College report on very positive responses to changes implemented pre-pandemic as part of ongoing work to enhance the **student experience**. Examples include the move to online submission of assessments (Theatre Studies), use of Aropa (Art History), course evaluations taking place mid-semester (ELL), decolonialisation of curriculum (History), blended learning (Archaeology), new approaches to team teaching (Gender History), and cross-college teaching (Gaelic & SMLC). At College level, the roll out across most subjects of an option to complete a dissertation with a placement is a significant addition to programmes. There is also strong evidence of reflection on practice more generally, with a notable focus on what lessons can be learned from changes to practice as a result of the pandemic.

Form AM1 – Report of Annual Monitoring Activity - Review of Session 2019-20

The newly-formed Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Network led by Dr Vicky Price will allow examples of good practice to be shared more easily across the College and will facilitate dissemination of work being conducted in this area.

In response to the pandemic, the College created two cross-College fora to help better support staff in delivery of teaching:

- Arts COVID-19 Teaching Planning Oversight Group co-chaired by Dean of L&T and Dean of Graduate Studies.
- Delivering Online Learning & Curriculum Enhancement 2020 (Moodle site offering practical support with tools for online learning).

In addition to this, the Dean of L&T, eLearning & Innovation Officer, and a member of the working group on Digital Accessibility held a Q&A session on the Digital Accessibility guidance for staff in the College.

The Dean of L&T and Dean of Graduate Studies have produced a Guide for GTAs / Demonstrators, which will provide clear information for anyone working in these roles across the College.

What needs work?

Schools made very effective use of this section to set out the areas that require further attention at both subject and school level. A few broader issues to be brought to the attention of College or University emerged and these are included in the relevant sections below.

In the context of the extraordinary circumstances of this academic year, and any anticipated requirements and challenges in 2020-21, please reflect on any themes or issues that you wish to report to the responsible level of the University.

(Check with your School or College Quality Officer if advice is needed on which is the most appropriate level)

School

Within the College, the four School Quality officers reported different issues to be dealt with at School level. Whilst many issues were specific to one subject or a particular School, the following cross-cutting issues emerged:

- Transition to online learning.
- Building a sense of learning community through the pandemic.
- Processes around calculation of marks and management of spreadsheets.

College

Advising PGT Students & College Structures: Greater clarity is needed around communications between the Advising Team & PGT convener when providing support to students. Humanities note the ongoing discussion, which was delayed due to the pandemic, of a possible new position of Dean of PGT at College level and believe that such a post is essential to the delivery of an effective programme for students who pay considerable fees (and to support the exemplary admin staff who work for the College in this regard).

PGT Placements: Further guidance would be appreciated from College on how to manage placements in 2020-21.

Ethics: One subject (ELL) noted that the system for ethics approval is too slow for approving M.Sc. projects, which need to be completed within a tight summer schedule. M.Sc. applications need to be fast-tracked and/or blanket M.Sc. coverage given for standard ethical issues, so that the research can be carried out in the short window of the M.Sc. dissertation to meet the required deadline.

Online teaching: UG convenors need assistance with digital/on-line delivery for all courses, including practice-based & object-based courses. There is also a need for GTA support in online delivery (e.g. assistance during Zoom lectures) and in preparation for online delivery (including taking part in meetings, making Moodle lessons,

updating resources, etc.). It is vital that training for remote teaching be offered to GTAs expected to teach seminars etc remotely.

Learning community: subject areas in a number of Schools are concerned about their ability to foster learning community and cohort building for students when teaching remotely.

IT Resource: Archaeology reported that space and computing facilities for digital and lab-based teaching needs better support. In particular, at the PGT level access to better spec. computers is increasingly important. This could be provided as remote access.

Board of Studies: Subjects in the School of Humanities have welcomed the ability to make temporary changes to assessment due to the pandemic without recourse to Board of Studies. It is worth noting, though, that a very large number of colleagues have indicated that they may wish their changes to become permanent. Therefore, College and School may have to prepare to deal with a large number of requests to make temporary changes permanent. Current arrangements, resourcing and staffing of School and College boards of studies may not be sufficient to deal with this.

A particular question raised about Board of Studies procedures will be clarified directly with ELL as it is a specific question.

University

IT (Sharepoint): One School (CCA) reported significant problems with SharePoint for handling data (and handling of spreadsheets more generally). They frequently encountered the wrong/old version of a spreadsheet being presented/circulated. It's not completely clear where the problem lay, but certainly this needs to be addressed for next year's exams period and further training may be required in this area.

IT (Moodle): SMLC notes that the Moodle marking interface is inadequate for intricate marking of scripts. The system is also prone to function slowly and be unresponsive, which increases the scope for error on the part of markers. This will need attention before we return to teaching given the heavy increase in online marking next session.

IT (Student support): The pandemic has exposed digital inequalities among students, which need to be addressed by the university.

PGT Marketing: It is important to note that conversion activities (e.g. recording promotional videos, tending to applicants' requests) usually take place at pressure points in the academic year, so more notice is needed for such requests (e.g. more than 10 working days).

Return to Campus: One subject (TRS) have raised questions regarding the safety of on-campus teaching. TRS also note that once we are back teaching in classrooms, changing rooms for every class might be a real problem and that classes need at the very least to be in the same place every week.

Glasgow's 7 principles of remote and blended teaching: one subject area in the School of Humanities with pre-existing experience of delivery of blended delivery does not believe that it is possible to implement these objectives in time for September teaching, and believe that they are adding unnecessary stress and anxiety to all staff as they attempt to deliver the best remote teaching possible within the established timeframe. To put this another way, colleagues request that care be taken by the University and teaching support services when assessing, outlining, recommending changes to the provision of learning, teaching and assessment: that we separate Covid-19 circumstances from the practice more generally or rather the 'best practice' of remote/online learning and teaching.

Rooms / Timetabling: all four Schools again reported issues with the suitability of some of the rooms (including equipment in TEAL rooms) on campus and, as before, highlighted difficulties with the timetabling process, including only timetabling classes at short notice (e.g. 24-hours before the class) or not finding a room for a class. The issues of students having to move significant distances across campus between classes was also raised. In particular, Film & Television noted the lack of suitable teaching space for teaching practical courses.

Exams (online): Schools thanked their own administrative teams for all their work on making this model of examination a success but highlighted that the administrative burden to organise 24-hour exams fell to Schools. There are also concerns about the potential for plagiarism on this type of exams. It was also felt that there was a

need for better communication around what was expected of candidates in such exams (e.g. length of time to spend on the paper). One School (Humanities) particularly welcomed receiving typed exam scripts and would like to see the introduction of digital exams, but not sat at home, and performed in a timed setting.

Exams (students with caring responsibilities): There is some concern that resits/deferred exams in August won't help the students with caring responsibilities if the current situation continues. History requests that the University consider ways in which different student circumstances might be addressed with remote and open book resits/deferred exams.

Good Cause: subject areas report the difficulty of assessing student participation and in particular student presentations in the face of seemingly growing reluctance, and recourse to Good Cause, to avoid these parts of courses. Further guidance on how to manage this type of 'Good Cause' claim is necessary.

Policy on deadlines and extensions: These may need to be revised during 2020-21 in response to the present circumstances.

No Detriment policy (communication / support): Colleagues welcomed the policy but would have appreciated some further work on filtering of information and instruction to ensure that school/subject guidance is clear and simple for both staff and students. Staff were grateful for, but nonetheless anxious about, the complexity of the final spreadsheets and formulae for result calculation, which also changed regularly. Some have asked about the possibility of simplification, or that they at least be more clearly explained, for the next round of exams.

No Detriment policy (degree classification): A number of externals in one School (SMLC) stressed the need for a comparative statistical analysis to analyse what impact the No Detriment policy has had on degree classifications, and in the longer term what impact the disruption has had on subsequent cohorts.

No Detriment policy (PGT): Two Schools highlighted the difficulties in applying the No Detriment policy to PGT students in general. They also noted the difficulties caused due to a delay in the production of a shared spreadsheet that was suitable to allow the processing of marks for PGT students.

EvaSys: Better support needed for off-campus remote access to EvaSys by staff. One subject (TRS) suggest that questions asked also need to invite more reflective feedback from students.

Sensitive materials: At the moment we don't have institutional policy/process/principles that protect students and staff. The School of Critical Studies fed into the content warning/trigger warning group and would like to see policy/guidelines/principles arising out of that work.

Three issues (Purchase of SLIDO licenses, Student Netiquette Guidelines & electronic resources through the Library) raised by Schools for University attention have already been addressed over the course of the summer (purchase of Mentimeter, student guidelines & e-mail from library) so have been omitted from this list.

Additional matters

Please highlight any additional matters that you wish to raise from this year's Annual Monitoring cycle

No additional matters were highlighted by Schools.

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 20 November 2020

**Undergraduate College Annual Monitoring Summary 2019-20 –
College of Medical, Veterinary & Life Sciences**

Cover Sheet

Dr Niall Rogerson, College Quality Officer

Brief Description of the Paper

This paper contains a summary of the Annual Monitoring Reports from the College of Medical, Veterinary & Life Sciences.

Action Requested

ASC is asked to consider the issues raised in the report covering undergraduate provision in the College of Medical, Veterinary & Life Sciences in 2019-20.

Recommended Person/s responsible for taking the action(s) forward

Actions identified separately.

Resource Implications (where appropriate)

As appropriate.

Timescale for Implementation (where appropriate)

As appropriate.

Equality Implications (where appropriate)

None.

The aim of Annual Monitoring is to maintain quality and improve provision through identifying action that can be taken to improve future student experience. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic annual monitoring will proceed with a significantly reduced area of focus in terms of reporting requirements.

For session 2019-20 this abridged form should be used to record Annual Monitoring Activity. Its purpose is to capture a focused and concise evaluation (or a reflective summary). In undertaking annual monitoring, online meetings should take place to support reflection, reporting and development planning towards enhancement and the maintenance of academic standards.

College	<p>Medical Veterinary and Life Sciences (Undergraduate Annual Monitoring Summary)</p> <p>Notes in parentheses indicate from which course AMRs specific comments arose.</p> <p>Medical School (MS) Dental School (DS) Nursing and Health Care School (NHCS) School of Veterinary Medicine (SVM) School of Life Sciences (SLS)</p>
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In the context of the extraordinary circumstances of this academic year, please reflect on Student Experience and Student Performance. (Please take particular account of course evaluations, data on student performance and the reports of external examiners).

What is working well?

MS

- Staff must be congratulated for the dramatic change in working practices which saw the remainder of the MBChB curriculum delivered, assessments carried out and preparations made to ensure delivery of the curriculum for the forthcoming session.
- Planned written assessments were moved to online delivery and student performance was largely unaffected by the change in delivery methods. MBChB2 External Examiner commented: *'Although virtual, the team went above and beyond to ensure we were looked after and could engage fully with the process. As ever, special circumstances were handled with great professionalism and with appropriate outcomes for students'*. It was more difficult to replicate clinical assessments online. However, a robust process to assess the competence of students was put in place. MBChB5 External Examiner commented: *'The swift but thorough response to the rapidly changing situation in the way in which the clinical assessments were changed was impressive (attention to educational theory and a collaborative approach)'*.
- OSCE examinations were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, where there was insufficient evidence of a student's competency online Virtual OSCEs were utilised to assess these particular students. The External Examiners were fully informed and discussion followed at an online meeting. An External Examiner commented: *'The teams are to be commended for the speed, creativity and standard of their actions'*.
- Online Virtual Wards (for Medicine and Surgery) developed and delivered via Moodle. Feedback from

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students was very positive and this will be continued to MBChB4.

- Student support continues with meetings via Microsoft Teams. It is compulsory for MBChB1 and MBChB2 students to meet with their Adviser of Studies (AOS) and this is monitored using E-portfolio. Students from all years are encouraged to meet with their AOS via student support meetings, telephone and e-mail interactions. A new database is being developed to improve data gathering for monitoring and to enhance development of suitable student support services.
- The General Practice (GP) teaching team including Vocational Studies tutors adapted rapidly to online teaching. In particular the creation of two additional weeks of high-quality online GP teaching for MBChB4. The GP teaching team were able to support their students through very challenging circumstances.
- In summary, 2019-2020 has been a successful year for the Undergraduate Medical School. The School continues to evolve and further enhance the MBChB Programme.

DS

- Rapid collaborative response between all year teams and overarching management. This ensured standardisation of approach, common documentation and processes.
- Staff moved quickly to enable the delivery of didactic teaching into an online format following cessation of face-to-face teaching. Recorded content was followed by live question and answer sessions.
- Clear lines of communication were set up with students via their representatives as regards course and examination delivery. All mentoring programmes were stepped up to check in frequently with individual students and in their small mentor groups with regard to educational development and pastoral care.
- Urgent guidance was sought from the General Dental Council (GDC) as regards examination of all year groups and completion of delivery of ILO's. Confirmation was given that the Mock OSCE Examination for BDS5 in December could be used as the main summative examination. Consequently a Virtual OSCE was required for only three students. This worked well using Zoom Rooms and was replicated for the delayed BDS3 OSCE for the entire year.
- Online Mock Examinations were followed by group and individual feedback. Student connectivity was also assessed during Mock examinations.
- Online standard setting processes worked well.
- Written Examinations were delivered in a fair and robust manner using Moodle modules (Assignment and Quiz).
- Prior to COVID-19, Graduate Attributes teaching for BDS5 was expanded and was well received by BDS5 students.
- Use of the electronic assessment and feedback system LIFTUPP continues to be useful in determining clinical experience, professionalism and skills levels for all clinical years.

NHCS

- The online examinations worked well and student performance was reflective of ability across other course assessments. Students adapted well with the transition to online examinations. External Examiners indicated that online assessments were both robust and rigorous (BN2), and the open book examinations created opportunities for depth of discussion, whilst capturing the range of abilities across the cohort (BN3).
- Student evaluations indicate that the level and quality of staff support provided over the COVID-19 pandemic was appreciated and highly valued. Students appreciated the constant communication provided via e-mails, Zoom, and weekly check-ins whilst they were working remotely.
- BN2 – BN4 students participated in the workforce expansion scheme (April – September 2020) supporting the NHS during the COVID-19 pandemic. Supernumerary learning experiences were replaced with non-supernumerary contracted placements and guidance/standards for practice learning were substituted by the 'Emergency Standards for Nursing and Midwifery Education' (NMC, 2020). This enabled students (BN2-BN4) to fulfil their 'Practice Learning Experience' course requirements (i.e. clinical competencies and clinical

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hours) as NHS employees/students, and this has required students to work flexibly, in new and in different ways. The Nursing and Healthcare School have provided many opportunities for students to meet for reflection, pastoral support, and discussion in small groups via Zoom at regular intervals.

- Feedback on student performance from NHS partners, at local and at strategic levels has been positive. During clinical reflection sessions students have generally evaluated their experiences positively, any issues raised are followed up within the School's quality monitoring procedures and additional support provided.
- Despite the challenging circumstances very good/excellent grades for clinical practice using the 'Scottish Ongoing Achievement Record' were awarded.

SVM

- Students found courses stimulating and well run and were happy with the format of the courses.
- Students were well supported throughout the altered assessments, with queries or concerns managed in a timely fashion (BVMS5).
- Monthly focus group with the Professional Phase Lead and Senior Lecturer enabled students to raise concerns from rotations in addition to identifying 'Best Practice'. Then communicated to the cohort and staff, in a 'You Said: We Did' fashion (BVMS5).
- The portfolio was again highlighted by External Examiners, as an asset to assessing students (BVMS5).

COVID-19 Related Comments

- Restrictions prevented some aspects of face-to-face teaching. Staff promptly created online material to deliver theory; this was appreciated by the students (BVMS5).
- Staff reviewed and reduced the number of Direct Observed Procedural Skills (DOPS) that students were assessed upon (BVMS5).
- Communication channels with students were maintained, e.g. examination briefing, advisor Zoom meetings, Moodle forums, extraordinary SSLC meetings. This was appreciated by the students (BVMS1).
- Smooth transition from face-to-face to online teaching, considering the limited administrative and technological support available at that time (BVMS3).
- Online open-book examinations went well, all students passed, and the spread of grades was very similar to that obtained in previous examinations in similar courses (BScVetbio3, BVMS5).
- The open-book assessment format may well have benefited students whose performance is normally adversely affected by examination conditions. This format encourages more clinical decision making and critical thinking which graduates are required to do in their first few days of practice; this may provide a more authentic method of assessment (BVMS5).
- Notably fewer content-related queries about the examinations compared to normal (BVMS5).

SLS

- Commitment and willingness of staff to support their students and each other.
- Improving opportunities for, and quality of, feedback to and dialogue with students to support their learning.
- Strike action was accommodated smoothly.
- COVID-19 pandemic occurred sufficiently late to have little impact on student experience of learning and delivery of teaching.
- Implementation of examinations delivered online (open-book and 24hr window) for year 3 and final year students and application of "no detriment" policy proved highly effective:
 - a) Students performed at or better than previous cohorts (hence no evidence of systematic detriment).
 - b) Few issues, queries or difficulties encountered by students or staff.

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- c) Student-run Athena Swan survey of the student experience indicate that students are very happy with how the School and the University handled these challenges and their experience of their assessments, communications, etc. and very appreciative of staff effort and help.

What needs work?

MS

- The in-house student welfare system is working well. However this service requires extra resources as the workload has increased significantly and clinical and administration staff are severely stretched.
- Increased numbers has again been challenging in trying to deliver the curriculum both with facility availability and a requirement for more groups or repetition of classes.
- Advisor of studies system is likely to require further work with increased student numbers going forward.
- Development of remote and online delivery of the curriculum for 2020-2021 to cover the continuing COVID-19 emergency. This will be a balanced combination of live, recorded, blended and asynchronous learning.
- Development of policy and delivery of online examinations including Virtual OSCEs.
- Increase the number of questions by utilising question writing and quality assurance events. Also working with the Medical Schools Council Assessment Alliance (MSCAA) examination question bank.
- Continued development of question banks to support an increase in MCQs across all written assessments in preparation for the Medical Licencing Assessment.
- Rollout of Operation Colleague in Medicine and Surgery with new near peer coach and Team Professional Activities.
- Ongoing delivery of clinical skills teaching. Many sessions had to be cancelled and will have to be rescheduled. It will be difficult to run many of these sessions in the first semester due to the challenges faced by physical distancing.

DS

- Examination questions which were used online now require to be retired for a considerable time. This creates a profound need for large scale writing of new questions.
- There is currently a massive push towards blended learning with staff further developing online resources and seeking to provide pre-clinical skills teaching and clinical access. Face-to-face and clinical teaching is particularly difficult to organise with plans changing in an almost continual basis as information becomes available. There is a need for maximum flexibility.
- Clinical access for aerosol generating procedures (AGPs) and non-AGPs in the Dental School and Outreach Clinics is a critical problem. Patient confidence to attend is likely to have diminished in addition to the challenges created by physical distancing, minimising staff/student/patient exposure risk and related to personal protective equipment (PPE). Lack of clinical access may have a profound effect on the ability of the Dental School to graduate future years.

NHCS

- NSS indicates overall student satisfaction has risen from the previous year and now just short of the KPI target of 91%. The objectives are to maintain current levels and consider ways of enhancing student satisfaction. The assessment and feedback KPI has decreased to 61.3%, the target is 75%. Based on qualitative feedback, the problem is a delay in the delivery of assessment feedback to students. The objectives are to identify the root cause of these delays, to manage assessment related workload and setting assessment schedules based on the UoG's 'Guide to the Code of Assessment'.
- Integrate Lt© as a method of technology enhanced learning (TEL). Development of an underpinning framework and upskilling staff to use Lt© within a blended curriculum model to support students' critical appraisal skills. Lt© is a cloud-based learning platform providing a range of immersive and active learning experiences designed to support and enhance knowledge of biomedical life sciences, pathophysiology, and

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clinical nursing care.

- Integrate Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) content throughout the course.

SVM

- Managing student engagement with online materials and teaching (BVMS5).
- Development of support for delivering blended learning i.e. utilising our experience to enhance future learning opportunities, such as online materials, Moodle Lessons, etc. (BVMS5).
- Review and modification of current examination bank material for open-book assessment delivery (BVMS5).
- Standard setting of questions, informed by past performance to ensure standard setting is robust (BVMS5).
- Use of Moodle Quizzes or other online assessment software that would facilitate ease of delivery of assessments from the student perspective and expedite post-examination processing for staff (BVMS5).
- Review of the assessment ‘window’ and time restrictions for completing examination papers; i.e. a defined assessment window for each student, making assessment more authentic (BVMS5).
- The School needs a full-time digital learning technologist to support Moodle and Mahara.

SLS

- Much of the change over the last few years has positioned the School to cope better with the challenges and adjustments of the COVID-19 pandemic. Nonetheless, adapting to widespread use of remote/online teaching and blended learning will be a significant challenge for 2020-2021.

In the context of the extraordinary circumstances of this academic year, and any anticipated requirements and challenges in 2020-21, please reflect on any themes or issues that you wish to report to the responsible level of the University.

(Check with your School or College Quality Officer if advice is needed on which is the most appropriate level)

College

MS

- A robust workload model to ensure adequate staff cover with future pressures. Many staff work less than 1FTE or deliver across different degrees and therefore at times it is unclear whether there is equitable share in delivering MBChB.

DS

- Ongoing learning technologist support to assist teaching staff to move further towards blended learning. The Dental School Learning Technologist has changed roles. However has maintained a level of support. A long-term solution is now essential.
- Continuation of the excellent training delivered by the Digital Education Unit to support staff during these challenging times.
- Additional equipment and consumables and importantly maintenance of equipment, will be essential to meet the demands of simulated practical teaching to replace patient activity during these unprecedented times.

NHCS

- Clinical skills will be more resource intensive (clinical skills laboratories, PPE, staff) due to the requirement for smaller groups.
- Adoption of blended learning model across the curriculum, requiring staff to upskill in specific TEL areas, whilst meeting ongoing operational demands and increased workload due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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- Funding for TEL, in particular Lt© to support delivery of life sciences, nursing, and clinical skills courses across the programme.
- Challenges in ensuring consistency and quality of life science teaching owing to lack of staff. Life science content is a unique selling point of the programme and year-on-year NSS feedback endorses the value of the science content and its contribution to student satisfaction. An inability to deliver the courses outlined in the programme and course descriptors could potentially impact on student satisfaction and ultimately league table rankings. This situation is being addressed, however requires close monitoring.

SVM

- The preparation of new online material to deliver the practical classes in academic session 2020-2021 will require significant resources e.g. recording equipment, software and IT technical assistance.
- Ensure adequate School staffing to allow delivery of courses requiring high levels of staff input.
- An urgent pre-COVID-19 requirement remains the creation of an examination question bank to allow efficient and effective assessment management. SVM does not have appropriate software and despite previously raising this requirement at College level there has been no progress (BVMS3, BVMS4).
- The continuing understaffing and “churn” within the SVM Undergraduate School has a significant impact on the ability of the School to meet the expectations of accrediting bodies, external examiners and student body in relation to delivery and assessment of the course (BVMS3, BVMS4).
- If future iterations of the summative Degree Examination are to be online; then access to and support for using Moodle Quizzes and/or tailored online assessment software with provision for invigilation would be advantageous.
- The blocks in BVMS final year have been organised such that there is flexibility to accommodate students who are unable to attend originally scheduled rotations, if there was a substantial number of students who fell into this situation this could result in a delay to the completion of teaching for the whole cohort and this could impact on the date of graduation.
- There has been a potential for loss of clinical provision by some external providers, the school has been in active discussions with Scottish SPCA etc. and is formulating a strategy to mitigate against such a loss. This has financial implications.
- Physically-distanced teaching of practical skills to BVMS1-BVMS4, will impact on staff availability for BVMS5 teaching (and vice versa).
- The requirement for face-to-face teaching during practical classes and rotations carry a significant risk to staff and due to the low numbers of staff, if one member of staff becomes COVID-19 positive, teaching becomes untenable.

SLS

- Already in hand. Fluid situation and evolving more rapidly than suitable for AMR cycle.

University

MS

- Development of policy on delivery of online examinations.

DS

- Dentistry is unlike any other course within the University. There is a huge reliance on clinical access and patient treatment. It is essential that the University recognises Dentistry as an exceptional case. The Dental School will require unprecedented support to mitigate as far as possible the particular difficulties our course faces within this pandemic. The University should also be aware that we may be unable to graduate students in 2021 with the knock-on effect this will have on all other years.
- Some improvements have been made with CMIS electronic timetabling, however the Dental School

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continues to be frustrated by the lack of facilitation for our 4th /summer term.

- With a massive push as regards online teaching the infrastructure underpinning Moodle needs to be sufficiently robust to support full usage e.g. Moodle Quiz.

SVM

- The preparation of new online material to deliver the practical classes in academic session 2020-2021 will require significant resources e.g. recording equipment, software and IT technical assistance.
- Ensure adequate School staffing to allow delivery of courses requiring high levels of staff input.
- An urgent pre-COVID-19 requirement remains the creation of an examination question bank to allow efficient and effective assessment management. SVM does not have appropriate software and despite previously raising this requirement at College level there has been no progress (BVMS3, BVMS4).
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- The blocks in BVMS final year have been organised such that there is flexibility to accommodate students who are unable to attend originally scheduled rotations, if there was a substantial number of students who fell into this situation this could result in a delay to the completion of teaching for the whole cohort and this could impact on the date of graduation.
- There has been a potential for loss of clinical provision by some external providers, the school has been in active discussions with Scottish SPCA etc. and is formulating a strategy to mitigate against such a loss. This has financial implications.
- Physically-distanced teaching of practical skills to BVMS1-BVMS4, will impact on staff availability for BVMS5 teaching (and vice versa).
- The requirement for face-to-face teaching during practical classes and rotations carry a significant risk to staff and due to the low numbers of staff, if one member of staff becomes COVID-19 positive, teaching becomes untenable.
- The absence of access for graduates to their Professional Phase Portfolio post-graduation remains unresolved.

SLS

- That online delivery of examinations be part of the assessment mix from now on and *ad infinitum*, and freely supported and available via Registry, and with flexibility: timed vs untimed, closed vs open book vs open-net, remote invigilation as an option, Moodle quiz as an option, use of Turnitin as routine etc.
- IT infrastructure is boosted sufficiently to only allow seamless online teaching AND any online assessment and functionality on scale, including unlimited availability of Turnitin (including for exam submission), timed online examinations, Moodle quiz functionality, MCQ etc.
- Code of assessment has had its day – and its weakness was revealed by the COVID-19 crisis: the Herculean effort needed to cope, points to the problem. The Code is:
 - 1) Too complex, and consequences thereof: not clearly explained in the guide, difficult to interpret, difficult to implement.
 - 2) Sometimes demands manual manipulation of data for individual students thus not efficient.
 - 3) Practicalities of implementation are not part of the design of the code or supported by any University systems: often requires storage of data that MyCampus cannot store and thus necessitates use of spreadsheets, requires comparison of numbers stored in different places/spreadsheets etc.

Calculations can be very cumbersome, slow, and error prone.

4) Point of weakness and potential failure in a core Institutional function and responsibility.

We need a new central assessment IT system linked to a streamlined code and we need these things urgently. Progress towards these goals seems to have stalled (in spite of widespread enthusiasm for the idea). Need an institutional commitment and some sense of urgency. COVID-19 has highlighted the importance of student education and the reliability and validity of their assessment outcomes to the University's reputation and its finances: time to invest in those neglected, unflashy, but key functions; or we play reputational Russian roulette.

- The University needs to make sure that laptops/wifi are available for all students to work from home as there are students with a less advantaged background who will struggle. For these students, we cannot simply rely on the provision of University PC clusters as these will probably not be available due to disinfection challenges and also because we cannot force students that live far away to take frequent transport to access these facilities. We need to make sure that these students are supported and that we are inclusive.
- We need some staff positions! Some key strategic and operational positions (including academic positions), to be unfrozen to ensure continued and robust delivery in the short and medium terms and to allow future re-activation of courses that have currently been cancelled due to insufficient staffing and the hiring freeze (e.g. L1 Environmental Biology).

Additional matters

Please highlight any additional matters that you wish to raise from this year's Annual Monitoring cycle

SVM

- Staff have felt supported by the University, although at times firm guidance was understandably a little slow.

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 20 November 2020

**Undergraduate and Postgraduate College Annual Monitoring
Summary 2019-20 – College of Science & Engineering**

Cover Sheet

Dr Helen Purchase, College Quality Officer

Brief Description of the Paper

This paper contains a summary of the Annual Monitoring Reports from the College of Science & Engineering.

Action Requested

ASC is asked to consider the issues raised in the report covering undergraduate and postgraduate provision in the College of Science & Engineering in 2019-20.

Recommended Person/s responsible for taking the action(s) forward

Actions identified separately.

Resource Implications (where appropriate)

As appropriate.

Timescale for Implementation (where appropriate)

As appropriate.

Equality Implications (where appropriate)

None.

The aim of Annual Monitoring is to maintain quality and improve provision through identifying action that can be taken to improve future student experience. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic annual monitoring will proceed with a significantly reduced area of focus in terms of reporting requirements.

For session 2019-20 this abridged form should be used to record Annual Monitoring Activity. Its purpose is to capture a focused and concise evaluation (or a reflective summary). In undertaking annual monitoring, online meetings should take place to support reflection, reporting and development planning towards enhancement and the maintenance of academic standards.

College	Science and Engineering		
School/Subject/Discipline (as appropriate)			
Provision covered	Unit of Learning UG and PGT degrees in the following schools	Represented by School Quality Officers	Input received [at meeting (M)/via form (F)]
	Engineering (Eng) Computing Science (CS) Psychology (Psy) Geographical & Earth Sciences (GES) Mathematics & Statistics (M&S) Physics & Astronomy (P&A) Chemistry (C)	Dr Kelum Gamage Dr Paul Siebert Dr Ashley Robertson Dr Iain Neill Dr Chris Athorne Dr Peter Sneddon Dr Linnea Soler	via form (AM1)
Collaborative Provision covered			

In the context of the extraordinary circumstances of this academic year, please reflect on Student Experience and Student Performance. (Please take particular account of course evaluations, data on student performance and the reports of external examiners).

What is working well?

September 2019 - August 2020

All schools report positive responses from students to improvements in curricula, operations, delivery or assessment. For example, successful new degrees and curricula (GES, CS, Eng), diverse assessment methods (incl. peer assessment (GES), graded homework (P&A), group work (GES), YACRS (M&S)), improved project allocation and marking processes (Psy, P&A), improved lab and course organisation and management (Psy, C, P&A), and changes in assignment frequency (P&A).

Two schools in particular are making concerted efforts in building a community between and with their students (Psy, M&S).

Two schools particularly wished to commend positive actions taken by the university: the 'Technicians commitment' (C), and the provision of a School-based student support officer (CS).

March-August 2020

All schools reported that their staff (academic and administrative) responded remarkably well to the challenges of delivering online examinations in a very short period, and worked well beyond expectations in order to support students and bring the year to a successful conclusion. This was despite the fact that they themselves endured difficult circumstances, and that the additional workload (both in revising and marking exams, and in setting up the online exam environment in Moodle) was significant, unfamiliar and unexpected. In some schools, the effort was mostly confined to a small very hard-working group of people who supported each other through this harrowing period; in other schools, some tasks were distributed to members of staff no longer involved in the marking of L1&L2 exams.

While some schools indicated that, for their own subjects, open-book 24hr exams were particularly difficult to create (Eng, CS), all schools reported that the overall online exam processes were all conducted very smoothly and successfully, including the management and calculation of grades under the NDP. The commitment and dedication of all staff and the amount of effort expended to ensure these successful outcomes should not be underestimated.

Although there was limited educational delivery in the final two weeks of March (since many courses had finished, or almost finished), those that continued were concluded successfully through remote lectures, with appropriate online assessment.

From the student point of view, schools reported that students typically adapted well to the new circumstances (P&A), and gave positive feedback on the online exam process (CS); few significant issues were reported by students (Eng). Some schools held timed exams (M&S, P&A), and reported that they went smoothly, with no significant problems.

The effect of the online exams on undergraduate students' exam grades was typically that they were higher than might have been expected (Eng, P&A, CS, M&S), in particular for content-heavy courses (P&A). Only one school (GES) reported that the grade profile was similar to previous years. PGT students' exam marks in CS were not higher than normal, but the application of the NDP meant that the progression rate to the MSc project stage was much higher than usual.

PGT students particularly appreciated the NDP (GES), and especially the flexible extension policy for project submission (Psy).

There is recognition that our new circumstances bring some advantages: Zoom meetings mean higher attendance by staff at, for example, Exam boards and recruitment events (GES), assessing problem-solving rather than bookwork is

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a positive step (CS), implementing new online resources which can be used flexibly will benefit delivery for future cohorts (C), and moving group work exercises online will allow students to manage their time better (M&S).

There is appreciation of the wide range of technologies procured by the university to support remote delivery (CS).

What needs work?

September 2019 - August 2020

Schools report a wide range of suggested improvements that are independent of the need for remote delivery: revising the balance between content and skills (GES); introducing continuous assessment and formative feedback and considering the suitability of end of year exams (P&A); improved feedback quantity (Psy), timeliness (Eng, GES), consistency (Eng, GES P&A); reviewing the amount and nature of assessment (M&S), revisiting group work assessments and individual contributions (Psy), as well as proposed changes to the way specific content is delivered (P&A, CS).

There is a clear desire to improve students' engagement and increase attendance, through community-building (Psy) or quizzes, groupwork, YCARs etc. (M&S). Increased numbers of PGT students means that themed projects conducted by a group of students (while still ensuring the delivery of an independent project) will be considered (Eng).

March - August 2020

Only a few problems were reported regarding the online delivery at the end of March: confusion over what would (and would not) be assessed at L1 (C), international students travelling home and needing extensions for missed assessments (GES) and the difficulty of cancelling and refunding the costs of field trips (GES).

While only one school explicitly reported an increase in student mental health problems from March onwards (Psy), it is likely that this phenomena was widespread throughout the college.

All schools reported frustration at the management of university communications during a very difficult period, while acknowledging the challenges experienced by those charged with devising and communicating policy. The frustration was particularly extreme when poorly-managed communications resulted in additional unnecessary work for already stretched staff, particularly as they were required to address student queries without knowing the answers (C, CS, GES). For example, communications sent to students without the knowledge of staff (P&A, CS, C), a one-size-fits-all approach resulting in confusion amongst students (especially PGT students) (GES, CS), long delays in decisions made about teaching formats or session dates (GES), changing and contradictory information (P&A), delayed communication about PGT regulations (CS, GES).

There was initial confusion over the responsibilities for managing the online exam process, with the set up, delivery and administration of exams (tasks usually done outwith Schools) ultimately being passed to School staff (CS,C). The extent of Schools' autonomy in the exam process was also ambiguous (C); it was not clear what decisions could be made at School level and which ones had to comply with university-level regulations.

Beyond August 2020

Most schools recognise the importance of reassessing their approach to delivery and assessment, especially if exams are to continue to be offered online (and therefore open-book) (C, Eng, P&A, CS), and in particular in addressing the balance between assessing content and problem-solving (C,P&A). Many schools are clear that 24hr exams are unsuited for their subject, and request the option to hold timed exams (CS, Eng, C). [*Postscript: since the submission of the School Annual Monitoring forms - it has now been determined that timed exams may take place.*]

Struggling L1 students who were allowed to automatically progress to L2 will need to be monitored carefully (CS).

In the context of the extraordinary circumstances of this academic year, and any anticipated requirements and challenges in 2020-21, please reflect on any themes or issues that you wish to report to the responsible level of the University.

(Check with your School or College Quality Officer if advice is needed on which is the most appropriate level)

Since many of these themes apply variously to different School/ College/ University levels, these are interspersed in the text in blue bold font.

An asterisk* denotes an issue raised in previous AMR reporting cycles.

Staff workloads

All schools express concern about vastly increased workloads, and support is requested at School, College and University levels to enable staff to fulfil their duties successfully:

- remote delivery: provision of basic equipment, eg. webcams (P&A, Psy) [School]; support for developing online materials (Eng, M&S) [University]; monitoring student engagement [University] and determining the effect of remote learning [School] (C)
- recruitment: additional staff resources for remote communication with applicants (GES) [School]
- provision of online exams: additional administrative [College] and IT [University] staff resources (M&S)
- teaching and assessing vastly increased numbers (esp PGT): additional staff resources (CS, GES) [College]
- building a sense of community and engaging students; managing and co-ordinating remote delivery for cohorts of students: additional staff resources (C, Psy, P&A) [College]

School-specific additional workload demands include significant revision of labs to allow for remote delivery (P&A) [School], the challenge of providing field-trips (GES) [School], a need for additional Maths support for Engineering students (Eng) [School], late-submitting PGT projects requiring supervision well into the 2020/21 academic session (Psy, CS) [School], new Linux server to support remote delivery (P&A) [College (probably)].

Five of the seven schools (GES, M, P&A, C, CS) explicitly request that School workload models be clearly adapted to reflect these additional demands [School]. One school commented that increased university requirements for conducting, monitoring, managing and reporting on teaching activities significantly increases workload for course heads/ programme directors/ year heads etc., with a request that their necessity be reassessed (C) [University].

In discussion with the Directors of Learning and Teaching in the seven schools, it was clear that additional targeted administrative and academic staff resources will be needed if the Schools' currently excellent provision is to be sustained and improved.

Mental Health

There is a strong concern expressed about staff well-being under such pressure (expressed by two schools (C, GES), but widely shared by all others) [University].

The university's student mental health provision is still considered inadequate (GES, Psy, CS) - especially in these changed circumstances. Having a named mental health practitioner associated with each School is suggested (GES) [University].

Communications

Improved (timely, consistent, unambiguous) communication of regulations and future plans (all schools), acknowledging opportunities for local decision making (e.g exam format and processes (C, GES)), and clarity on Disability provisions. Clarity over what information is sent to whom (and when) (P&A). In particular, information on what we can and can't offer students on-campus is essential for recruitment activities (GES, CS). Improved communication to PGT students regarding admissions matters (deferrals, deposits etc.), so that they are not sent directly to academic staff (Psy, CS) [University].

Reassurance is sought that there will be adequate technology support for remote delivery (M, P&A). 24/7 central IT support would be welcomed - not just for remote delivery (esp. international off-campus students), but also for ODL

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(Psy). Moodle is clumsy for online assessment; an improved online assessment tool would make the marking process more efficient for staff (Eng) [\[University\]](#).

Quality of teaching spaces* (P&A), in particular: Gregory Building* (GES), East Quad (GES), functional lapel microphones* (C). Need for out-of-hours lab access and flexible spaces [GES]. Renovation of Boyd Orr was so disruptive that several classes had to be cancelled. [\[University\]](#).

Consideration of room bookings so that students are not in a different place for the same course each day*, and don't have to traverse long distances between classes* (P&A). Request that the large L&TH lecture theatre be used to prevent duplication of lectures (Psy). The consequences of timetable clashes being overridden due to remote learning will need to be considered when returning to on-campus delivery (GES). [\[University\]](#).

Specific issues previously raised [\[University\]](#):

- Please can MyC automatically send an email notification when a student enrolls/unenrolls for a class after start of semester*
- Please can MyC be adapted so that multiple windows are supported, allowing multi-tasking (C)*
- Field trips costs are passed directly to students; this puts UofG at a disadvantage w.r.t. competitors (GES)*
- The University travel insurance is unsuitable for field trips (GES)*

Additional matters

Please highlight any additional matters that you wish to raise from this year's Annual Monitoring cycle

Particular QA achievements include:

Engineering: IET/IED/RaeS/IPEM reaccreditation for all degree programmes; SRC Teaching Award (Alistair McCay)

Computing Science: SRC Teaching Award (John Williamson)

Psychology: SRC Teaching Awards (Emily Nordmann, Heather Cleland Woods); significantly improved NSS scores

Geographical & Earth Sciences: NSS Overall Satisfaction of 100% for Geology and 98% for Human Geography

Mathematics & Statistics: NSS Overall Satisfaction of 100% for Statistics

Chemistry: University Teaching Excellence Award (Linnea Soler), SRC Teaching Award (Beth Paschke), RSC reaccreditation of UG and Msci programmes

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 20 November 2020

**Undergraduate College Annual Monitoring Summary 2019-20 –
College of Social Sciences**

Cover Sheet

Dr Robert Doherty, College Quality Officer

Brief Description of the Paper

This paper contains a summary of the Annual Monitoring Reports from the College of Social Sciences.

Action Requested

ASC is asked to consider the issues raised in the report covering undergraduate provision in the College of Social Sciences in 2019-20.

Recommended Person/s responsible for taking the action(s) forward

Actions identified separately.

Resource Implications (where appropriate)

As appropriate.

Timescale for Implementation (where appropriate)

As appropriate.

Equality Implications (where appropriate)

None.

The aim of Annual Monitoring is to maintain quality and improve provision through identifying action that can be taken to improve future student experience. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic annual monitoring will proceed with a significantly reduced area of focus in terms of reporting requirements.

For session 2019-20 this abridged form should be used to record Annual Monitoring Activity. Its purpose is to capture a focused and concise evaluation (or a reflective summary). In undertaking annual monitoring, online meetings should take place to support reflection, reporting and development planning towards enhancement and the maintenance of academic standards.

College	College of Social Science
Provision covered	<p>Unit of Learning</p> <p>The outcome of annual monitoring across the five schools was reported to College with all undergraduate units and courses within the College subject to a review process. The Centre for Open Studies has been included with the College this session for reporting purposes. This report has been informed by the <i>abridged</i> School AMRs provided by the Quality Officers responsible for undergraduate provision across all of the Schools that comprise the College:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adam Smith Business School: Professor Martin Beirne • School of Education: Dr Julie Harvie • School of Interdisciplinary Studies: Dr Alexander Whitelaw • School of Law: Dr Dot Reid • School Social & Political Sciences UG Studies: Dr Craig Smith • <i>Short Courses</i>: Dr Janice Ross <p>Dr Robert Doherty, College Quality Officer.</p>
Collaborative Provision covered	

In the context of the extraordinary circumstances of this academic year, please reflect on Student Experience and Student Performance. (Please take particular account of course evaluations, data on student performance and the reports of external examiners).

What is working well?

Adam Smith Business School

- Academic and professional service colleagues responsive in adapting teaching and learning arrangements and supporting students through the difficulties posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- An enormous collective effort was invested in remote/on-line delivery/assessment, patterns of student attainment across three divisions was robust, with a great deal of academic effort devoted to supporting students.

- Programmes taking action to support student satisfaction; additional previous ‘voice’ and support initiatives in operation helped in identifying and addressing some of the subsequent pandemic generated difficulties. Level of support to Staff in the shift to online delivery and make changes to their mode of assessment.
- Improvements in student attainment, especially at the lower end of grade distributions.
- Our overall sense is that students generally coped very well with the shift to remote learning and online assessment. A strong contribution to managing the changes and supporting students by professional service colleagues.
- The student experience team was highly responsive and effective in dealing with the additional challenges presented by the pandemic.

School of Education

- Course content and programme structures– a good balance between academic, professional and practice.
- Academic Support – Students supported in their academic work and in relation to their general wellbeing.
- Organisation of resources -Moodle sites, reading resources and materials are accessible.
- Assessment - varied forms of assessment are used and detailed feedback for students provided.
- Pastoral Support – The wellbeing of students is well supported.
- Quality of teaching staff – staff recognised for the passion and knowledge they have about their subjects.
- Positive Student Feedback – Feedback from students in terms of overall satisfaction.

School of Interdisciplinary Studies

The school notes a range of positive features across its three Undergraduate programmes:

- Student evaluations are generally very positive, broadly reflected in NSS scores.
- Diversity of course design and examples of genuine interdisciplinarity.
- Programmes supporting graduate attributes and personal development. Use of Fieldwork & Visits, Case Studies, Report-Skills Seminars, Lab work, Placements, and Professional Mentoring Scheme.
- Assessment feedback to students, grading is fair and comprehensive.
- A wider range of assessments types are in use including innovative examples.

School of Law

Levels 1 and 2

Student feedback underlined that a majority of L1 and L2 students greatly enjoy lectures and appreciated their lecturers (“passionate”; “brilliant”; “amazing teacher”; “exceptional course staff”; “captivating”). The good practice of the School in terms of maximizing direct contact between staff and students may also be a contributing factor and an example of good practice.

The newest cohort of students on the LLB (Common Law) programme engaged in an impressive way and appear to have integrated well into the School. Their feedback indicates a healthy staff-student relationship. Staff dialogue with students on this programme is an example of good practice.

In response to issues raised by the LLB (Fast Track) the School has introduced a raft of measures including better representation at Year Level Committees and Law Student Council; engagement with Director of Undergraduate Studies and separate tutorials.

A new professional skills course was introduced, Legal Skills for Graduates (LAW1033). Feedback suggests that it has been popular, and in addition the NSS score for the 2-year degree was 87% overall for 2019 in comparison to 86% for the 4-year degree.

Grade profiles across L1 and L2 for Semester 2 courses, where exams were subject to the 24-hour online format, were generally higher than in previous years. There is a notable increase in B and C grades and a decrease in those achieving E grades or lower.

Levels 3 & 4

The majority of students commented on courses being intellectually stimulating and found lecturers knowledgeable, explained things well and provided useful feedback. There is a wide range of commonly used good teaching practices across all courses, but 2 are specifically highlighted:

Level 3 Academic Writing Course - It provides something not available through LEADS as it blends legal content and legal thought with essay writing education.

Level 4: Law and Social Theory & Politics of Labour Law – No laptop in seminars policy was introduced by convenors and viewed positively by students in these courses.

School Social & Political Sciences UG Studies

- Despite the various disruptions to the academic year, the School reported strongly supportive feedback from students and external examiners and recognition of the collegial manner in which challenges have been faced.
- CEES: Implementation of no detriment and the dedication of all staff- teaching and admin, student results in line with previous sessions.
- ESH: Marking guidelines recognised as clear and assessment outcomes transparent; feedback to students was clear and constructively critical; plural modes of assessment, strength of independent study courses.
- Politics: Student satisfaction with pre-honours curriculum and teaching staff remained high. The quality of teaching on Honours courses was regarded highly by students. The Introduction of a new International Relations pre-honours course.
- SPP: Student satisfaction for SPP programme was 95% in the NSS 2020, exceeding the University KPI. Excellent student feedback in teaching quality and generally on NSS 2020. Securing of two Learning and Teaching and Development Fund (LTDF) grants.
- Sociology: Student performance in the exceptional circumstances of this session. The use of designated contact person for extra-large cohorts. Contributions of course administrators across pastoral care and support to students with extensions and good cause. Positive picture of student experience, student performance, student feedback, feedback from externals and teaching teams.

Short Courses

- An extensive range of positive comments and recognitions of aspects of course quality and forms of student support in the reports of the many External Examiners.
- Student feedback appreciated many qualities demonstrated by teaching staff, including being engaging; enthusiastic; supportive; responsive and helpful.
- The academically demanding content of access courses, the quality of learning resources and the friendly atmosphere in classes.
- Short Courses was responsive and agile in mitigating the effects of covid-19 on the access courses, the achievement of fair outcomes for students and the provision of a positive student experience in the extraordinary circumstances.
- The completion of two COSCA Counselling Skills and two Psychology courses, through online delivery.

What needs work?

Adam Smith Business School

- Student attendance and engagement continues is an area of concern, the rapid innovations in blended, online and student-centred learning are being viewed as a fresh opportunity to secure improvements.
- There was considerable progress this session with assurance of learning measures and interventions important to School accreditation. This will be extended alongside the documentation to demonstrate a serious engagement with evidence-based programme improvement ahead of the next AACSB review visit (scheduled for late 2021).
- Dissertation research methods provision in Accounting and Finance. While average dissertation grades were strong this session, some student dissatisfaction about this element is a focus for development.
- Improving the average performance/progression of GIC students is a priority across the School.
- Some of the mathematical and statistical content in Economics courses is challenging for student groups and has been highlighted for enhancement. Changes will be monitored and extended next session and self-study materials have been devised to provide additional support.
- Fostering and sustaining cohesive student groups and communities will be a challenge, certainly through the first semester of next session.

- Larger populations of students are expected on some courses/programmes (including year 1 of the BAcc), raising concerns about resources and support, notably with the availability of GTA/adjunct staff.

School of Education

BACD – more explicit focus on issues relating to ‘race.’

BACP – duplication of feedback for some students across courses. IT resources have been at times inadequate in the computing labs in the St Andrew’s Building. Some courses need a review of the current scheme of assessment.

MEduc

Year 1 -Additional sessions on curriculum and teaching strategies need to be provided. School experience placement is to be condensed to three full weeks to enhance coherency and continuity.

Year 2- Consistency of feedback needs to be developed including moderation. There is a need to increase awareness of course content across teaching staff to avoid repetition.

Year 3 - Students found the Education and Society 3 course very challenging and development is needed.

Year 4 - Some students requested more help and guidance with their assignments. The limited wordcount of the Elective assignment was seen as a challenge for some students. Submission deadlines for assignments will be reviewed for congestion. More input on the types of lessons to be carried out in RERC and a focus on current issues was highlighted for development.

Years 3 and 4 - Staff requested an opportunity for shadowing during Joint Assessed Visits on school experience. Students often refer to a variety of guidance/feedback given from SE tutors and a varying degree of expectation.

Year 5- There is a need for up-front communication about assessment in the course EIP 5. The Moodle site for PEDM requires enhancement. PEDM needs additional input on desk-based studies in preparation for dissertation and types of course feedback needs to be rebalanced.

BTechEd - There is work to be done on timeliness of feedback; this will be an area for development.

CREDL – Zoom sessions will be added to address issues of ‘remoteness’ when working completely online; previously highlighted by some students

School of Interdisciplinary Studies

Across the programmes:

- Group size within programmes is relatively variable, sometimes posing the contrasting difficulties of groups being too large and too small for optimal teaching.
- On the basis of student expectations, and accreditation demands from the Institution of Environmental Sciences, the ESS programme needs to strike an optimal balance between core and elective courses.
- There is a need to achieving more effective concurrency, where students from one programme pick electives in another. There is a perception that ‘non-specialist’ students on elective courses can find it difficult to get up to speed with programme/subject specific work.

School of Law

- Student responses to the EVASYS questionnaire were lower than in previous years.
- The progress that had been made last year in increasing completion rates for student responses through EVASYS. Additional feedback processes have been put in place by individual convenors and by the School. However, we will need to consider how to increase student feedback should similar conditions prevail in 20/21.
- This academic year has provided numerous challenges (industrial action and the COVID 19 pandemic) in terms of disruption to the timetable, delivery and assessment of all courses. While there were some complaints by students, it is encouraging to note that they were generally supportive of the approach taken by the School and individual course teams and there was recognition of the huge efforts that had been expended in trying to manage the disruption.

Level 1 & 2

- UCU strikes and COVID-19 disruption
- Some students felt there was poor communication about cancelled lectures/tutorials/seminars, rearranged classes and revised/postponed assessments, particularly students on the 2-year LLB (Fast Track) programme.

- In part some of these problems stem from the intended disruption created by UCU strikes in late 2019 but also the unforeseeable COVID-19 outbreak in early 2020. A more consistent level of response across courses is a focus for this session.
- Continental Legal Cultures: This course is in need of focused enhancement in terms of student experience and assessment practice.

Levels 3 & 4

- Some Honours students complained about the amount and complexity of reading. This is a perennial issue and Course Convenors are being encouraged to help students to set appropriate expectations. The move to online delivery of all courses has seen a move to a more directed reading schedule, and it is hoped that this will prove popular with Honours students.

School Social & Political Sciences UG Studies

School: Preparations for online provision in the new academic year.

- **CEES:** There is a need to focus on assessment and feedback: review by the School L&T committee.
- **ESH:** Preparation for teaching and learning in 2020-21, specifically online provision at all undergraduate levels, and amendment to assessment regimes, with reduction in high stakes assessments.
- **Politics:** Development around assessment & feedback, timely return of feedback to students, and the development of a learning community.
- **SPP:** Timeliness of feedback requires maintenance, despite SPP being able to return close to 100% of assessment within 15 working days.
- **Sociology:** Supporting year one students with the transition to self-directed learning in HE. Building online community as a key area of work for this session's new cohort. Improved support for staff dealing with distressed students, and the workload allocation for pastoral aspects. The recognition of admin staff in the context of urgent change.

Short Courses

- Access courses - assessment: an overarching theme is the disparity evident in the student assessment experience. There is a range of assessment related issues signalled by external examiners across the access provision.
- Development around the articulation of qualitative comments to grades [COSCA Counselling Skills]
- The distribution of grades on the Child Development course. [Psychology]
- Consistent levels of feedback. [Modern Languages]
- Responses to a range of issues raised by student feedback in relation to individual courses.
- Review of the implementation of Moodle Minimum in a small number of courses [Art & Art History; Modern Languages]
- Review to support the alignment between COSCA requirements and the University of Glasgow assessment requirements.
- Action to develop tutors, MPA staff and subject coordinators' skills to be able to deliver and manage courses online.

In the context of the extraordinary circumstances of this academic year, and any anticipated requirements and challenges in 2020-21, please reflect on any themes or issues that you wish to report to the responsible level of the University.

(Check with your School or College Quality Officer if advice is needed on which is the most appropriate level)

School

Adam Smith Business School

Addressed to Management at all Levels: Convenors and their teaching teams expressed some very strong views about stress levels and the pressures placed on academic and professional staff through recent months. Expressions of thanks and appreciation seem to be regularly undermined by greater demands for evidence of

progress with new materials, unrealistic deadlines and a growing preoccupation with bureaucratic targets and micro-management interventions.

There are serious concerns among conveners that the pressure on academic staff through the coming session will be compounded by the current policy on the use of GTAs and adjunct staff. There is a felt need for some flexibility on this front, and a clear commitment to ensuring that the new forms of teaching and learning are suitably staffed and supported.

Provide clearer and more consistent messaging to inform developmental work and help members of staff to deliver rapid/ongoing changes effectively.

Improve Sharepoint and redesign our Web presence/operation to be user friendly and provide effective means of navigating through the various categories and identifying related source material.

School of Education

BACD - Staffing continues to be an issue, with an over-reliance on temporary staff. This continues to put pressure on the programme.

BACP – Workload hours for BACP FTE staff is at the limit and in cases somewhat over. We also rely on a marking team of associate tutors without whom marking commitments would not be met. Further to previous discussions, it would be beneficial to have somewhat more capacity apropos teaching remits.

MEduc An Attendance Policy for session 20/21 would be helpful and school direction on this is required. There are concerns re student engagement/attendance going forward.

Increased and detailed information on the breakdown of the student demographics for the MEduc would be useful information to have e.g. numbers of our students from diverse minority groups.

There is concern in the current crisis situation about technical issues for staff working from home and staff burn out if working predominately online.

We would like to thank MPA services, Fiona and Kirsteen for advising and student support across the M.Educ.

School of Interdisciplinary Studies

Circumstances related to COVID are naturally very prominent. There is general concern about the quality of on-line teaching and student support. This is seen to be particularly acute in courses that inherently require 'hands-on' engagement and are not easily transferrable to an online format

School of Law

Concerns have been expressed about work overload for both staff and students due to the demands made by a move to online teaching and learning. From the student perspective, the proliferation of group work and the responsibility to convene and participate in a much larger number of group meetings will need to be monitored during Semester 1 of 2020/21.

School Social & Political Sciences

ESH: Early guidance on approvals will be welcome, specifically relating to adjusted assessment regimes and processes for expedited course approval where necessary. Where exams are retained within the assessment regime, provision should be made for exam grades and where appropriate feedback on performance to be delivered to students. Uncertainty around the availability and level of resource for GTAs to support 2020-21 courses presents a challenge for course planning and development, with implications for student experience/engagement and performance, and it is hoped this will be resolved as soon as possible

Politics: We would like to thank the School for its efforts to improve the course approval process in response to feedback from ourselves, and other Subjects. While the new system of rolling approvals through the School Learning and Teaching committees will need to be road tested in the next academic year, we are confident that this will improve the process considerably. We would like to reiterate a point raised in the last AMR. The quality of administrative support is often overlooked as a critical source of student satisfaction. Maintaining year-on-year continuity in these roles as much as possible and ensuring that there are adequate numbers of administrative staff to support subjects, levels of teaching and programmes, are all vitally important. While recognising the budgetary constraints the School is facing in the current circumstances, we would support an expansion of staff within the School Administration office in recognition of the increasing demands on their time. Under these challenging

circumstances we support all efforts within the School to update the workload model to account for the additional workload that the move to online teaching and supporting activities involves.

SPP: GTA contracts and job security. More understanding is needed as to what timeliness of feedback means to students (especially in terms of relevance and meaningfulness of feedback and on enhancing feedback literacy).

Sociology: As we know this means a dramatic reconfiguration of how we deliver teaching, and raises serious issues around accessibility for students - not only in having tech devices to participate, but also fitting the delivery of teaching around changed caring responsibilities, which feeds into decisions about synchronous/asynchronous learning. There are concerns about how to support widening participation as the digital divide becomes more apparent.

Resourcing the teaching team is another pressing issue, specifically around the delivery of the programme with a potentially reduced teaching team of Tutors and GTAs. There are significant implications for teaching and marking workloads when the teaching team is reduced, as we understand it may be due to university budgetary issues.

In terms of what we deliver, at present we are planning the content and structure of course material online which will require time to explore - individually and collectively as a teaching team - different teaching approaches and technologies and some considerable upskilling for the teaching team. There are also resourcing issues here: staff will need (a) 'rapid response' technical support; (b) support with software; (c) support with instructional design/multimedia production (not just IT support); and (d) technical assistance on how to record lectures and then move them online. All of this depends on good quality and stable broadband at home and space at home to develop materials. From an admin perspective the School needs to ensure there is support for admin colleagues in homeworking who also have caring responsibilities. We need to support admin staff with training if we are moving to using online marking programmes and making more extensive use of Moodle.

Issues to bear in mind from the student's perspective: Access to appropriate tech to facilitate participation; Course work and materials and assessments that are designed to be accessible on all devices; access to safe spaces at home to facilitate participation; Access to decent, stable broadband and wi-fi connections to facilitate participation; Opportunities to connect with other students; Opportunities to connect with teaching staff; Timetabling that allows them to learn, and engage in a non-linear way that does not disadvantage any student, especially those with parenting/caring responsibilities, or who might now be in different time zones; Study skills support generally and how this will be delivered online / remotely; and upskilling support for students- we are asking them to engage with new technologies and engage with online learning.

Short Courses

Ensuring access to necessary technology (hardware, broadband) for tutors teaching remotely [Modern Languages].

How to respond more quickly to student demand so that we can follow up popular courses with continuations of the subject, thereby re-recruiting already interested students in a timely way [Classics & Egyptology]

How to achieve more flexibility in planning the schedule of courses to be offered over the academic year [Classics & Egyptology]

Highlighting to Short Courses students the University-wide teaching awards, in relation to recognising tutor excellence [Classics & Egyptology]

College

Adam Smith Business

Application of the No Detriment Policy and Processing of Results: This resulted in overly complicated spreadsheets and means of assuring the quality of student grades. Exam boards were delayed as scrutiny groups and administrative teams struggled to apply the guidelines and confirm results in the time available.

There are recurring concerns with the Ethical Approval Process, which is not working effectively and is a major source of concerns and complaints from both students and staff.

More resources should be provided to help students with mental and physical health issues, and to support students coming from low-income backgrounds. The shift to online learning could exacerbate educational inequalities.

Additional resources could be provided to assist employees to return to the workplace.

School of Education

MEduc - Impressed by the flexibility and ability of MPA colleagues to continue to support academic staff whilst working from their homes.

Need to know quickly what to do if there are problems with Zoom beginning or during an online class. Notice asap if empirical Masters dissertation study is to be re-introduced.

This AMR form does not work well for a very large programme like M.Educ.

School of Interdisciplinary Studies

Given the new mode of teaching delivery which students are encountering this semester, there was a belief that efforts need to be made to maintain close communication throughout the forthcoming academic year.

The sense of 'imposter syndrome' among many incoming L2 and L3 students (who have mainly progressed thanks to CA grades on the basis of the No Detriment Policy) was recognised and the need for possible mitigating actions suggested.

In a wider sense, the need for a forum for discussion across the Schools for information, help and discussion of technological and pedagogical aspects of teaching online was suggested and collaboration across the Schools should be encouraged through shared teaching resources and staff exchanges.

School of Law

- None

School Social & Political Sciences

There were significant challenges posed by the College application of No Detriment Policy at Honours level. External examiners pointed to inconsistencies in the spreadsheet when applying the no detriment policy (particularly with regard to GPAs). While they were satisfied that discrepancies were worked out in a timely manner and met all quality assurance standards, they have asked us to highlight this to the College and point out that it had a significant impact on the workload associated with Exam Boards. If the No Detriment Policy, or other forms of mitigation are to be used in the coming academic year then it is essential that these policies are agreed early and communicated clearly to staff and students.

There are continuing issues with the enrolment of students. This is proving increasingly challenging due to the lack of data that is made available to Subjects about admissions and enrolments, as well as a lack of modelling of expected intakes in a timely manner. Data provided by Admissions is not useful because it focuses on student FTE rather than 'bodies in the classroom' information that would allow Subjects to plan effectively. We would support any efforts to improve data analysis and modelling across levels 1 to 5, and would ask that we are actively involved in these efforts from the outset due to our experience of managing extremely large student numbers across all levels of teaching.

There is a persistent issue with making sense of the NSS data. This is a result of a lack of plan-level analysis of NSS for Subjects such as SPP where the responses are combined with those of other academic units. This examining this data in College and University scrutiny processes extremely difficult.

Many areas of the School are operating significantly over their collective workload. This was the case prior to the pandemic and has only been exacerbated with the additional work created by the move to online teaching. SPS would welcome the lifting of the hiring freeze as soon as possible to allow investment in sufficient academic posts to meet the challenges we are currently facing.

Short Courses

- None

University

Adam Smith Business

Application of No Detriment Policy and Processing of Results: This resulted in overly complicated spreadsheets and means of assuring the quality of student grades. Exam boards were delayed as scrutiny groups and administrative teams struggled to apply the guidelines and confirm results in the time available.

Caution is required with the move to remote/blended learning, to maintain standards and academic integrity. A key concern is to ensure that exam misconduct is minimised in an open-book exam setting. Reducing the 24h time window would alleviate the above-mentioned issues. Timed exams are also suggested as a possible solution.

There is also a need to ensure that digital provision is not associated with greater inequalities among students. According to research from 2017, disadvantaged students consistently perform worse through online learning than they do in face-to-face classrooms, which increases the likelihood of dropping out.

Evasys: The emphasis placed on the established course evaluation survey is considered to be counterproductive and far too rigid. Student engagement with the process is highly variable, generating some very poor response rates and unreliable data. There is a feeling among colleagues that we are polling students far too often and that they suffer from “feedback fatigue”. In some instances, only the dissatisfied few complete the evaluation, resulting in low participation scores and imbalanced feedback. The feedback itself is often personalised, inappropriately targeting members of teaching staff rather than course delivery. Colleagues would like to see a move away from bureaucratic box ticking to more innovative, responsive and reliable instruments and a more considered approach. A willingness to apply some innovative thinking and devise a more flexible approach would be welcome: possibly with a random selection of one or two courses evaluated for each member of staff per year; or with an annual survey of core classes on a programme and irregular feedback on electives; or spot check evaluations of a certain proportion of the provision per programme. Changes along these lines, or with other options, would be attractive, responsive and generate more useful information for development and planning.

Expand investment for additional learning technologists to raise the profile and professional standing of on-line courses. This is a particular concern within Accounting and Finance.

School of Education

MEduc -Electronic timetables do not reflect course information submitted or staff workloads and are difficult to correct.

School of Interdisciplinary Studies

There was a view that great efforts could be made to utilise online technology to improve inclusion of SiS colleagues in wider College and University initiatives.

To continue to increase the availability of e-learning materials through the library to help support the online teaching was seen as important.

School of Law

There is a continuing need for clear guidance on University policy to be issued timeously. The professional requirements for many Law School courses may mean that some flexibility is needed, particularly for L1 and L2. Consultation is needed at an early stage in order to be able to assess the impact of proposed changes and suggest any necessary modifications.

Continuing support for the increased demands placed on both staff and students by online delivery and assessment, including access to equipment, software, training, IT support and appropriate staffing.

School Social & Political Sciences

Student expectations relating to No Detriment Policy were not managed with sufficient care at University level; there was significant increased workload on colleagues at College, School, and Subject level and the work associated with examining was not concluded until the first week of July which placed substantial additional pressure on those colleagues tasked with preparation for teaching in 2020-21.

We have previously raised concerns about the increasing number of students who have high levels of anxiety, depression, and stress. This is resulting in an increased number of ‘good cause’ claims and is putting a considerable emotional strain on academic and administrative staff who are often the first port of call for these students. These issues are likely to be exacerbated due to a summer of lockdown and ongoing public health restrictions. We would

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therefore like to see greater support for the Counselling and Psychological Services to both help these students and relieve some of the pressure on staff.

We continue to have concerns over rooms and room bookings. These include a lack of consistency in provision; chopping and changing across the weeks of a course and, at times, rooms which are overcrowded, poorly maintained, and poorly cleaned. These issues will be of particular concern as we move towards a return to campus within social distancing rules. We need to ensure health and safety of staff and students in campus re-opening plans and continue to take a flexible and compassionate approach to those who may be at risk or worried about health risks.

The University should be attentive to the need to provide equal access to all students to computing and on-line services to enable successful participation in blended learning.

Short Courses

- None

Additional matters

Please highlight any additional matters that you wish to raise from this year's Annual Monitoring cycle

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 20 November 2020

Report on the University's Response to Covid-19 Issues raised in Undergraduate External Examiners' Reports – Session 2019-20

Cover Sheet

Mrs Lesley Fielding, Senate Office

Brief Description of the Paper

This report contains a summary of the concerns relating to the University's response to Covid19 issues raised in Undergraduate External Examiners during Session 2019-20. A number of the themes commented on by External Examiners were similar to the issues highlighted in the College Annual Monitoring Summaries. The report also highlights areas of good practice. The annual External Examiner report on undergraduate issues will be submitted to ASC in January 2021.

Action Requested

ASC is asked to note the report and to consider whether any specific action is necessary with regard to those comments marked for University attention.

Recommended Person/s responsible for taking the action(s) forward

Senate Office.

Resource Implications (where appropriate)

None.

Timescale for Implementation (where appropriate)

As outlined in paper.

Equality Implications (where appropriate)

None identified.

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – 20 November 2020

Report on the University's Response to Covid-19 Issues raised in Undergraduate External Examiners' Reports – Session 2019-20

Mrs Lesley Fielding, Senate Office

1. Introduction

This report summarises comments pertaining to the University's response to the pandemic in Undergraduate External Examiners' reports received for Session 2019-20.

2. Statistical Information

This report covers External Examiner reports on courses taught in the University. It does not include reports on courses validated by the University or for joint courses where Glasgow is not the administering University (e.g. Christie's Education, The Glasgow School of Art, Scotland's Rural College (SRUC), Edinburgh Theological Seminary (ETS). These are reviewed by the relevant Joint Boards or Joint Liaison Committees.

252 Undergraduate External Examiner reports were expected and to date, 230 have been received.

3. Good Practice

The number of themes identified as good practice in response to the pandemic, outnumbered those highlighting concerns. There were approximately 78 substantial good practice comments relating to

- University Policy
- Staff/Student response
- Online exams

3.1 University Policy

(i) No Detriment/University Communication

"Correspondence and instruction from the University on No detriment policy was clear and most welcome (particularly the YouTube video)." (School of Life Sciences)

"Central University policy documents which I received regarding the management of assessments in response to the pandemic were sent out in good time and were very informative." (School of Medicine, Dentistry & Nursing)

"I believe the Engineering School, and the University as a whole as tackled these problems from the student welfare and fairness perspective that was very professional. Changes and policies were rapidly brought in to mitigate the issues around campus closure / home assessment etc." (School of Engineering)

"Changes to the exam/assessments due to the chaos of the last academic year were well thought-through and clearly communicated." (School of Interdisciplinary Studies).

"Considerable effort to ensure that students have not been disadvantaged by COVID-19, at University level through the no detriment policy but also by those delivering and administering

the programme but while critically ensuring that rigorous academic standards have been maintained.” (School of Veterinary Medicine)

“The process this year, implementing the no detriment policy set by Glasgow University, meant that the students were most favourably advantaged in their degree classification this year. The process however was transparent and fair.” (School of Engineering)

(ii) Implementation

“I would like to thank the team for ensuring that the administration and access to all relevant work was done smoothly given we were unable to attend Glasgow in person due to COVID-19. Personally, I found the process of being sent one link that contained samples of all relevant work to be very welcome indeed.”

“We ran a pre meet too for members of the exam board - this really helped us understand the no detriment policy and other additional regulations - this really helped us externals connect and be clear about our role (and the revised conditions under which we were operating). A lot of time and thought had gone into running the board appropriately.” (School of Critical Studies)

“As I've inferred in other parts of my report - I think colleagues in all areas of the School have clearly responded admirably to the challenges thrown at them this spring. Your organisation is clearly excellent and the quality of support and teaching equally so - this speaks so well of the efforts of everyone involved and indeed of the ambition of your students too...” (School of Critical Studies)

“The alternative assessment methods chosen for those language assessments where desk exams and face-to-face assessments were no longer possible due to Covid-19 were completely appropriate. I particularly commend the German department for not abandoning final-year oral examinations, as my own institution has done, but instead conducting them via Zoom and taking the time to allow students to get used to the technology before the exam...” (School of Modern Languages & Cultures)

“Good crisis management Good awareness of limitations of this unusual period and the formative nature of the assessments, clear actions in place to highlight and pay attention to underperforming students” (School of Veterinary Medicine)

“I should commend the university and the school for maintaining a very transparent, prompt and effective communication with regard to changes that were being introduced to address and mitigate the effects of the lockdown on students. The teaching team remained in regular contact and we had consistent and regular updates both from the school and university level.” (School of Law)

(iii) Online Exams

“In this year's exceptional circumstances due to covid-19 it was a good choice to use timed exams as these are well adapted to problem solving and mathematical material. The exams appear to have run very smoothly; technical glitches were few in number and dealt with effectively. Problems with collusion appear to have been kept under control by the limited time frame for the exams.” (School of Physics & Astronomy)

“The unexpected changes caused by Covid-19 were dealt with very well and communicated clearly to students. Staff encouraged and supported students in the transition to online assessment, which all went very smoothly. The assessment delivery and marking/moderation was all conducted rigorously and consistently, with clear feedback given to students. I can say with confidence that the students were not hindered by these unexpected changes and were well-supported throughout the examination, assessment and feedback stages.” (School of Culture and Creative Arts)

"I was able to see how this worked through samples on Moodle and I note that the change of medium to electronic marking and feedback did not in any way diminish the usual high quality of the marking and feedback." (School of Modern Languages & Cultures)

4. Themes for University Attention:

There were approximately 42 comments in the undergraduate reports identifying issues relating to the pandemic. A number of the themes identified by External Examiners were reflected in the College Annual Monitoring Summaries.

- University Policy
- IT
- Staff Support/Workload

4.1 University Policy

(i) No Detriment

"The no detriment policy is extremely complex. While I applaud the care with which staff have collated and synthesized results, I am concerned at the amount of extra work entailed. This will have to be tracked over the next 2 years as the affected group move through 4th and 5th year." (School of Computing Science)

"One issue only became clear to me during the Board in relation to how the impact of "no detriment" will be expressed on student transcripts, however, and I find it rather problematic with regard to final year students. Having addressed the materials I was sent in preparation for the Exam Board, with their emphasis on "no detriment" as applying to individual pieces of assessment, rather than to courses in their entirety, I was then somewhat surprised to realise that where pieces of student work have been "set aside", student transcripts will continue to record the (inevitably) lower grade/mark (lower, since it has been set aside) of later pieces of assessment despite the fact that the grade/mark has been removed from classification/progression. While third years have been offered the opportunity to be reassessed for work that they believe was negatively impacted by the Covid-19 situation, this is not the case for final year students. While a higher mark/grade "stands" in terms of these students' University careers, their transcripts will retain a lower grade/mark and include the grading for these "set aside" pieces of assessment. Of course the students should receive feedback and a nominal grade for such work in terms of their ongoing learning and teaching, but given the University's "no detriment" policy there is a conflict here on how the policy is being recorded on student transcripts. This seems somewhat inequitable." (School of Culture & Creative Arts)

"First, the overall weight of the project report was increased, and the COVID-19 lockdown made the University introduce a rule of no detriment. It is difficult to know if any or either of these measures changed the final grades, but all students did well during this year with perhaps a more limited spread of grades with overall higher grades." (School of Life Sciences)

"Should Covid continue to disrupt delivery of programmes, then I think it is important for universities to consider their 'no-detriment policies' carefully, for the reason that they may in fact unwittingly introduce multiple points for compensation that result in unearned grade inflation. As a result of Covid (i) 'benefit of the doubt' marking has been introduced across the sector, (ii) pre-Covid average grades have been introduced as a baseline, (iii) overall grade point averages have been lowered in respect of discretionary rules, (iv) blanket extensions have been introduced. It is understandable why all this has been done, but I would encourage universities to study carefully the results and compare to previous years." (School of Social & Political Sciences)

“The situation is somewhat exceptional due to the COVID situation, but the staff reacted extremely well to the challenges of adapting the marking schedule to guarantee that students were assessed on learning outcomes. The situation was made all the more difficult that University guidelines kept changing which put enormous pressure on the staff to adapt their markings to the new guidelines. Nevertheless, the staff behaved very professionally, and I am satisfied that all students were treated fairly”. (School of Engineering)

“The Covid-19 pandemic and no detriment policies of the University meant that significant changes to the delivery of the examinations and their grading were necessary. This did result in some overly high grades for some examination papers that had a lower problem-solving component. It was evident from viewing some of the exam questions earlier in the year that this would be problematic, and that some papers needed a lower reliance on regurgitation and course-work material to achieve high grades.” (School of Chemistry)

“I found the university's policy of cancelling all the resit exams for Semester 1 a little unfair (this did not happen at Heriot-Watt University) and this has led to some students not progressing. I believe that the university's no-detriment policy was rather unwieldy and over-complicated and cost a lot of staff time to understand and implement.” (School of Maths & Science)

“The no detriment policy was probably a bit generous than others I have come across.” (School of Life Sciences)

“The No-Detriment policy issued by the Senate Office forced on the University by the Covid-19 emergency struck me, on first impressions, as humane and sensible. However, it became clear in the examiners' meeting that there are anomalies in the way the rules work, and that these rules can actually disadvantage some students by denying them the discretion they could count upon in other years in which these emergency rules did not apply. I hope that these matters have been worked out to everyone's satisfaction. (b) It strikes me that the present system of permitting different programmes to devise their own discretion rules, without further clear rules for adjudicating which set of rules apply for candidates enrolled in joint programmes, needs to be abandoned. I think the University should adopt top-down guidance on these issues, after a period of consultation.” (School of Humanities)

“No third-class degrees were awarded this year, and I suspect that the manner in which the no detriment policy operated, in particular the decision to lower the baseline for calculations to 65%, may have helped a few candidates who would not otherwise have made it into the higher class. I hope that some form of comparative statistical analysis will be carried out in due course on this year's results. Once the Examination process for this year is complete, I would urge not so much the School but the University to carry out a comparative statistical analysis in order to analyse what, if any impact the no detriment policy has had on degree classifications and, going forward, what impacts the disruption has on subsequent cohorts.” (School of Modern Languages & Cultures)

(ii) Plagiarism

I am also concerned that use of plagiarism detection software was not permitted, and my understanding this was due to concerns of platform stability. We have batch-processed in excess of 150 10,000-word dissertations through Turnitin with no concerns in the past, if this helps reassure it may be suitable to use. Whilst I could see no evidence of any significant advantage gained by the online assessment format, and whilst I am happy that the assessment designed by the School is robust and allowed students to fairly demonstrate their learning, I hope these comments are useful for the central University in preparing for any future online delivery. I must again stress that I am aware these are not an issue of the School (School of Medicine, Dentistry & Nursing)

“I noted that testing for plagiarism was not automatically performed on all pieces of work submitted post-Cov2 lockdown. Given the open book nature of the assessments there is a

great risk that grades have been artificially inflated by plagiarism. At the examiners meeting we were assured that this would be in place for next year. I would use this opportunity to ask that this definitely be done.” (School of Life Sciences)

(iii) Invigilation

“During the exam board, we learnt that the students sitting the written papers had a long window of time to complete the assessment (esp with the MCQ section) and that there was a decision made not to remotely invigilate. I understand this was a University decision (rather than on a School level) - but wonder whether slightly tighter regulation would make the assessments even more robust.” (School of Medicine, Dentistry & Nursing)

4.2 IT

(i) Online assessment platform

“It should be noted that staff did an excellent job of making sure that the creation of the online exam, marking and administrative process worked well... However, they would have benefited greatly from having access to an online assessment platform to aid them in this process, such as using Moodle quizzes or some other commercially available software platform. I would highly recommend that if remote, online assessments are to be used again in the future, that the university should seriously consider investing in the infrastructure to be able to provide such a platform. Not only would it make the assessments much easier to manage for students and staff, but it would be easier to share information with external examiners, and to ensure that appropriate fairness, consistency and accuracy were ensured throughout the marking of exams and the finalisation of grades.” (School of Veterinary Medicine)

“I made a minor suggestion at the board in relation to the way in which online assessment samples are made available to external examiners. Given the sudden switch to online examinations this year, the solution to this was inevitably rather rushed which I entirely appreciate. However, the solution - downloading samples manually to a Onedrive account and sharing this with examiner - was time consuming and cumbersome. Instead I wondered if external examiners could be given access to Moodle directly (in a controlled way for specific purposes only) - this might eliminate the need for additional sampling and downloading of materials.” (Adam Smith Business School)

(ii) Online Marking

“Given that there was a very sudden shift to fully online marking there are some minor issues that need to be resolved. The one area is consistency in whether dissertation marking and moderation is anonymous or not via MS track changes.” (School of Modern Languages & Cultures).

4.3 Staff Support/Workload

“I do, however, recognise the challenges ahead for the team as they make the inevitable adjustment to a blended model of learning. I hope that the module co-ordinators and lecturers are supported by the university as they make this adjustment. Preparing teaching materials for the online environment will be time-consuming and may well take colleagues out of their comfort zones” (School of Education)

“This was a year full of challenges that required a tremendous effort from staff to minimise the impact of two strike actions and one pandemic on students’ performance and well-being. I believe that moving forward the university’s commitment to staff well-being will be primordial to ensure that the new academic year progresses with as little disruption as possible, given the new circumstances that we will all be working under. Monitoring staff workloads and screen time, which have increased substantially this year, will therefore be essential to enable staff to complete all the tasks that are expected from them and with the same quality demonstrated thus far.” (School of Modern Languages & Cultures)

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 20 November 2020

Reports on PSR to be Received during 2020-21 and Proposed ASC Reviewers

Mrs Ruth Cole, Clerk to the Committee

Monitoring internal subject review (Periodic Subject Review) falls under Academic Standards Committee's remit as part of its overall responsibility of assuring and enhancing the quality of the University's taught educational provision and the maintenance of standards.

Each year ASC receives the following reports relating to the PSR process:

1. Reports of Reviews held in the session (Full Review Reports, approved by the Panel Convener, containing recommended actions arising from the Review).
2. Six Month Update Reports – a standard report on progress with actions/recommendations.
3. Updates on Progress with Recommendations – ad hoc reports, normally requested by the Panel Convener or ASC, where updates are considered necessary after the first normal six-month update.
4. Annual overview of recommendations – compiled by the Senate Office.
5. Annual overview of good practice and key strengths identified in Reviews – compiled by the Senate Office.

To spread the workload in reviewing these reports, academic members of ASC are allocated a number of Subjects/Schools for which they are asked to read full Review, Update and Progress reports (as per 1-3 above) along with one other member. ASC members can therefore work in pairs. Guidance on the process of reviewing these reports is given below. Overview reports (4 and 5 above) are now incorporated in the Annual Report to the Scottish Funding Council which is submitted to the October meeting of ASC and should be considered by all committee members.

Allocation for 2020-21

The following allocation of ASC members to PSR reports is proposed for 2020-21. Where possible, there is continuity between previous review of full reports and subsequent updates.

Full Review Reports 2020-21

Subject	Expected Date of Submission to ASC*	Reviewers
Philosophy	May 2021/Summer Powers 2021	Helen Purchase (CoSE) Niall Rogerson (MVLS)
Geographical & Earth Sciences	Summer Powers 2021	Ann Gow (Arts) Joe Gray (MVLS)
Nursing & Health Care	Summer Powers 2021	Donald Ballance (CoSE) Angus Ferguson (CoSS)
Urban Studies	Summer Powers 2021	Louise Harris (Arts) Margaret Martin (CoSE)

* It has been agreed that for 2020-21 ASC reviewers will receive the draft report at an earlier stage in the process than previously, so will be advised in due course of relevant dates.

MVLS Cluster 2	October 2021	Eamon McCarthy (Arts) Anna Morgan-Thomas (CoSS)
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Responses to Recommendations 2019-20

Subject	Expected Date of Submission to ASC	Reviewers
Sociology	May 2021	Joe Gray (MVLS) Louise Harris (Arts)
Theology & Religious Studies	May 2021	Robert Doherty (CoSS) Margaret Martin (CoSE)
Computing Science	May 2021/Summer Powers 2021	Angus Ferguson (CoSS) Ann Gow (Arts)
Economic & Social History	May 2021/Summer Powers 2021	Jim Anderson (MVLS) Donald Ballance (CoSE)

The Role of the ASC Reviewer

In receiving PSR reports ASC's task is to identify 'issues or recommendations requiring action in other areas of the University and monitoring responses to actions or recommending further action as necessary'. ASC Reviewers should therefore check reports for any issues or recommendations (typically those which will enhance the quality of the University's taught provision) which would relate to other areas of the University and therefore may need wider dissemination.

Update reports should be considered in order to confirm the PSR Panel Convener's view that there have been appropriate responses to the recommendations or whether further action or updates are necessary (this will usually have been identified by the Convener before the report is submitted to ASC).

At least one of the two ASC Reviewers should advise the Committee in the event that there are issues to bring to the notice of ASC, either about the specific review and its recommendations, or the PSR process as a whole. (Members who are unable to attend should provide any comments they may have in writing to the Clerk who will also pass these on to the convener and second reviewer).

University of Glasgow**Academic Standards Committee - Friday 20 November 2020****Periodic Subject Review: Review of School of Computing Science
held on 4 and 5 March 2020****Cover Sheet****Ms Helen Butcher, Senate Office****Brief Description of the Paper**

Report of the Periodic Subject Review of the School of Computing Science held on 4 and 5 March 2020. Following consideration of the report by one ASC reviewer, this report including its 16 recommendations or areas for encouragement has been approved by the Convener of ASC and Clerk of Senate out of committee. In reviewing this report a number of issues were noted as potential areas of good practice for the University as a whole:

- The strategy for supporting the Student Voice should be commended as there was significant evidence to demonstrate closure of feedback loops. (It is noted that the Student Voice is a new area of the NSS and any good practice strategies would be welcome across the University).
- The innovative approach to managing resources and developing people by creating a new divisional management structure with clear lines of responsibility and the creation of a new academic Work Allocation Model (WAM).
- The Graduate Apprenticeship Programme may provide lessons for other subject areas in the University.

Report Structure

The report is from the pilot held in March 2020 which trialled the revised approach to PSR designed for the fourth six-year cycle of events from 2020-21 to 2025-26. The format of the report is therefore altered from the standard used during the third PSR cycle as it reflects the new areas of emphasis in the PSR process and the structure of the Reflective Analysis document submitted by the School in advance of the review meeting.

The main section of the report, the overview, is sub-divided into the four sections of the Reflective Analysis, and this is followed by sections on good practice, commendations and concluding with the recommendations for further enhancement - these are aligned to the themes of the report and presented in tabular form including commentary on the expected enhancement benefits. In the case of strong recommendations there may be more urgency required in addressing the issue. Updates on actions arising from recommendations and strong recommendations will be formally presented to Academic Standards Committee, and commentary on responses to encouragements will also be presented if the Subject area submits this information to the Senate Office although there is no requirement for them to do so.

One further modification is proposed for the structure of the form. This is in response to discussion at ASC in October 2020 (see minute *ASC/2020/5.3.1*), and recommendation 8 arising from the PSR review of the School of Engineering from March 2019 (see paper ASC 20/34 submitted to this meeting of ASC). The report template would include an additional section after the Commendations section – *Further Issues to Note* to highlight any common or university-wide issues that have not been captured in recommendations or commendations, but which should be highlighted as potential themes arising from the PSR process.

Action Requested

Three actions are requested:

1. Academic Standards Committee is invited to **note** the approved report.
2. ASC is invited to **comment** on the areas of good practice noted above and consider whether further dissemination of these would be beneficial.
3. ASC is invited to **approve** the structure of the report for adoption in future PSR events as detailed above; this includes amendment to include an additional section after the Commendations – *Further Issues to Note* - to highlight any common or university-wide issues that have not been captured in recommendations or commendations.

Recommended Person/s responsible for taking action(s) forward

As identified in the report.

Resource Implications

There are no resource issues which require approval by ASC.

Timescale for Implementation

An update on the recommendations will be provided to ASC in November 2021.

Equality Implications

As identified in the report.

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee - Friday 20 November 2020

Periodic Subject Review: Outcome Report from the Review of School of Computing Science held on 4 and 5 March 2020

Review Panel

Convener	Professor Moira Fischbacher-Smith, Vice Principal Learning & Teaching
External Subject Specialist, University of Edinburgh	Professor Jane Hilston
Senate Assessor on Court	Dr Bethan Wood, Senior Lecturer
Student Panel Member	Ms Teresa Banos
Learning Enhancement and Academic Development Services (LEADS)	Mx Nicole Kipar
Cognate Member	Professor Adrian Bowman
Clerk	Mrs Irene Bruce, Senate Office
Observers	Ms Elina Koristashevskaya, LEADS Mrs Catherine Omand, Senate Office

1. OUTCOME

- 1.1 The Panel **confirmed** there were no concerns regarding the academic standards of programmes delivered by the School of Computing Science and recommended the validation of all programmes for a further six years.
- 1.2 The Panel **confirmed** that nothing was raised as a concern during the PSR that had not already been identified by the School.
- 1.3 The Panel **confirmed** the School had a transparent academic governance and quality assurance structure which aligns to the University regulatory framework.

2. SUMMARY AND CONTEXT

- 2.1 The School of Computing Science (CS) is one of seven schools within the College of Science and Engineering which is one of four colleges within the University. The previous CS Periodic Subject Review (PSR) was undertaken in May 2014. The Panel were satisfied with the information provided by the School and noted the progress made on recommendations from the previous PSR. The Panel also noted that there was a commitment to ongoing enhancement in relation to the continued focus on assessment review and design.
- 2.2 The Chair confirmed the panel had no authority for allocating resources however the expectation is that solutions to some of the recommendations in this report will be provided in collaboration with key University central professional support services as required and may have resource implications.

Staff and Student Participation

- 2.3 The Panel met staff from across the School including those in leadership roles, key academic roles, early career academics, graduate teaching assistants, professional and support staff and technicians. The Panel met with undergraduate and postgraduate students including those studying on the graduate apprenticeship programme and had discussions with students from University of Glasgow Singapore (UGS) via video conference. Comments made by staff during the PSR were supportive and constructive and demonstrated staff were focused on the best outcome for students. Details of staff and students interviewed are attached in **Appendix 1**.

School Preparation for PSR

- 2.4 The Reflective Analysis (RA) was drafted and co-ordinated on behalf of the School by the Head of School, Director of Learning and Teaching and the Head of School Administration and circulated to staff for comment. Contributions from five student focus groups helped to inform plans for the enhancement of the student experience which the Panel noted as **good practice**. The Chair acknowledged the time taken to prepare for the PSR and the impact this had on workloads at a busy time of year.

Student Numbers and Profile

- 2.5 The RA confirmed a significant increase in student numbers since the last PSR six years ago and detailed the impact this had on workloads, space and resources. The increase of 83% in undergraduate FTE and 246% in postgraduate taught FTE between 2014-15 and 2019-20 represented an overall taught growth of 115%.
- 2.6 Academic staff growth of 42% was primarily Early Career Research Academic staff which aligns with the research intensive nature of the School and the wider University teaching and research strategies.
- 2.7 The Panel noted the breadth and diversity of the student population which included scientists, investigators and entrepreneurs and were confident that the School demonstrated its commitment to reviewing its portfolio in line with the changing industry and commercial external expectations.

3. OVERVIEW

3.1 Strategy for Development

The Panel **commended** the School for its team ethos and its approach to developing a shared understanding of its opportunities and challenges.

Strategy and Resources

- 3.1.1 The Panel commended the School for maintaining its reputation and integrity despite the challenges associated with the significant increase in student numbers and noted that its national and international reputation continues to attract a high level of applicants which aligns with the University strategy for growth in particular disciplinary areas. The Panel noted concerns raised by the School Executive regarding the impact the increased numbers had on their ability to plan and manage resources and **encouraged** the School, External Relations and College Finance (who have oversight of recruitment targets and the admissions process) to work collaboratively to agree recruitment targets.
- 3.1.2 The Panel **commended** the School on the creative use of laboratory space as a response to growing student numbers and limited space and **encouraged** the School to seek support from central university IT services to develop a system for monitoring the usage of the laboratories as a way of maximising the benefits from and evaluation of this initiative.
- 3.1.3 The new line management structure was viewed positively and feedback from academic staff holding key roles suggested it could be further enhanced if leadership and management development could be available. The Panel **recommends** the School seeks support from the University central staff development services to establish a programme of leadership and management training and that bespoke training is also developed in collaboration with colleagues in LEADS.
- 3.1.4 The Panel noted that a small Working Group had been tasked with development of a comprehensive Work Allocation Model (WAM) that will enable effective planning of academic resource. This will be available for implementation in 2020-21. The Panel **encouraged** the School to ensure future refinement of the model includes time for

sharing good practice and assessment and to collaborate with colleagues in Planning Insights and Analysis (formerly Planning and Business Intelligence) to align where possible the principles with University level thinking on workload modelling.

Graduate Teaching Assistants

3.1.5 The Panel **strongly recommends** the School develops a process to provide oversight at School level to monitor workloads and ensure a consistent approach is taken to providing support and development to the GTAs. The inconsistency of workloads at subject level does not at present give cause for concern in relation to employment terms and conditions including visa compliance, but lack of oversight could lead to problems in the future. The GTA's interviewed described a mixed understanding of the level of training and support available to them and that some of the training was mandatory.

Early Career Research Academic Staff

3.1.6 ECRs acknowledged the reduction in teaching hours as part of their probationary period provided them with a structured opportunity to develop but voiced concerns about the increased workload as a result of studying for the Post Graduate Certificate of Academic Practice (PGCAP). The Panel **recommends** that the School works with colleagues in LEADS to review the timetable for this mandatory development and to monitor teaching workloads to facilitate completion. The Panel were satisfied that processes were in place to allow ECRs to influence the future teaching portfolio within the School and the wider student experience.

Strategy for Growth

3.1.7 The School acknowledged the University strategy for growth is at postgraduate level however they are confident there is scope to increase international undergraduate numbers. The RA confirmed the School is planning to develop an international recruitment strategy to address unknown changes to undergraduate EU recruitment following BREXIT when numbers were expected to fall. The Panel **encouraged** the School to work in collaboration with External Relations to obtain a more detailed and tailored market analysis to inform its strategy for growth. The Panel also noted the anticipated gains in international recruitment through the new 2+2 British University in Dubai (BUiD) commencing in 2020.

3.2 Learning, Teaching and Enhancement

Strategic Development for Learning and Teaching

3.2.1 The Panel were impressed with the approach taken by the School to develop its learning and teaching vision as part of the Strategic Planning process which included formal and informal mechanisms. Discussions with staff confirmed this helped to create a shared understanding and ownership of the strategy. The bottom-up and inclusive approach was noted by the Panel as **good practice**.

3.2.2 The Panel were satisfied with plans to review the effectiveness and efficiency in teaching practices and supporting technologies and noted the Annual Teaching Away Day as an example of **good practice**. The School should continue to build on the benefits from this event by ensuring outcomes are shared across all staff and that participation is more formally recognised as Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The panel **recommends** that in order to build on the strong team ethos ECRs and GTAs should be invited to attend.

3.2.3 A member of the CS Learning and Teaching Committee had delegated responsibility to review academic support on behalf of the School. A review of new technologies had already taken place and the Panel noted the plan to review the effectiveness of support from the Library.

Curriculum Review and Development

- 3.2.4 The Panel **noted** the Annual Curriculum Review as an example of **good practice**, and **encouraged** the School to look at how this event could be used to rationalise the portfolio where possible and create space for the development of new collaborative opportunities including TNE. The Panel were **satisfied** that the School demonstrated its commitment to deliver student centric education drawing on the latest research including both theoretical and applied Computing Science and that graduate attributes were articulated within the curriculum. It was also noted the focus of the Centre for Computer Science Education on curriculum development and pedagogical research continued to influence the wider educational community which in turn could include influencing government policy.
- 3.2.5 The Panel **commends** the introduction of the new Graduate Apprenticeship programme as part of the School's commitment to diversify the UG portfolio. The RA confirmed an intake of 34 in 2019-20 with annual numbers expected to rise to 70. The Panel supports the School's plans to participate in the annual bidding process with Skills Development Scotland who provided the external funding to support this initiative. Feedback from students confirmed a high level of satisfaction with the overall experience. Students liked the mixture of work based and on campus learning and confirmed the Adviser of Studies helped them to feel part of the School community when off campus. It was evident to the Panel that various methods of communication, including Zoom were used by this cohort to keep in touch while off campus. The School is **encouraged** to seek support from University External Relations Services to help raise the profile of this programme and promote the added value it brings to the School, College and University reputation.

Assessment and Feedback

- 3.2.6 The RA confirms work had been undertaken since the previous PSR in 2014 to make explicit the linking of assessment to learning outcomes and that this was still an ongoing exercise. Discussions with all student groups provided the Panel with assurance that multiple methods of assessment were in place but there was some confusion around the weighting, workload, expected effort and word count for ten credit modules at UG level and the word count for dissertation at Master level. Students and staff acknowledged some inconsistency of approach to assessment design, the associated differential workload demand across some courses and the need to prioritise this area of review and development. This does not mean that the assessment does not meet the ILOs. From the focus groups with students, the concern was that some assessments required much more effort than others that were similarly weighted and students did not understand the variability. Similarly, staff did not consider that the differences were always merited. There was no concern about the alignment with the ILOs. As such, this work demonstrates a good understanding of the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) and alignment with the University Code of Assessment and the Panel **strongly recommends** the School does further work to ensure consistency and parity of experience for students.
- 3.2.7 The Panel were satisfied with plans outlined to review assessment and feedback processes and **recommends** that as part of the review, the School benchmarks across the College regarding online assessment methods already established and to work in partnership with colleagues in University central support services, (in particular LEADS) to develop staff training workshops to support this recommendation.

Collaboration and external engagement

- 3.2.8 All students interviewed stated the collaborative nature of programmes on offer in the School influenced their choice when applying to study at the University of Glasgow. Feedback from students studying at all levels suggested that studying on programmes which were aligned to industry and commerce prepared them well for a professional

life. The Panel noted some students studying at Masters level had already secured employment as a result of their work experience.

- 3.2.9 The Panel were impressed with the strategic approach to collaboration with commerce and industry and were satisfied that the Industry Advisory Board (IAB) provided an effective governance framework to oversee the development and monitoring of these activities. In line with good governance practice the School reviews the membership, which includes Alumni, on a regular basis and also the range of companies it collaborates with in order to ensure the learning experience remains up to date. The Panel were also satisfied that opportunities for internships were available to students.

Glasgow International College

- 3.2.10 The Panel noted concerns raised by academic staff regarding the challenges facing the international UG students entering year two from Glasgow International College (GIC). Student numbers had increased significantly since the previous PSR in 2014 and the School were concerned that the student experience was not as good as it could be. The UG cohort has grown from 15 in 2018/19 to 39 in 2019-20 and now makes up 43% of the overall UG international cohort. The students require a high level of support in order to ensure they are prepared for full time academic study and the Panel **encourages** the School to continue to work with colleagues in GIC and External Relations services in order to improve the sustainability of this pathway and to continue to review the support needs for this cohort of students.

Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT)

- 3.2.11 The School at present delivers a BSc (Honours) degree in partnership with the Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) and is in the process of transitioning to a new joint degree which started in 2019-20. Following discussions with the School Executive and academic staff, including those in Singapore, it was evident that clarity was required between the School and the University central Academic Collaborations Office regarding the, governance arrangements, resource allocation and teaching commitments in particular. It was clear that the current collaborations between SIT and the School – which include research collaborations, shared staff development and a shared teaching ethos - would be difficult to sustain given the changed relationship emerging under the new joint degree arrangements. In order to minimise the risk of strategic drift, and a loss of institutional knowledge on the part of the School and University of Glasgow Singapore (UGS), the Panel **strongly recommended** the School collaborates with the Academic Collaborations Office to obtain all necessary information to inform resource planning and ensure appropriate good governance arrangements are in place.

Professional Accreditation

- 3.2.12 The Panel were satisfied with the plans and timetable supporting professional accreditation of programmes and that the School were in continual dialogue with other Universities across the sector regarding the future relevance of professional accreditation for both students and employers.

Staff Development and Academic Support

- 3.2.13 Following discussions with academic staff groups it was evident that the School provided formal and informal approaches to staff development. The Panel noted the positive feedback from academic staff on the benefits of peer review and GU staff based in Singapore found the ongoing collaboration with Glasgow campus staff beneficial to their professional development. The Panel noted an inconsistent awareness of central university staff development services and **recommends** the School speaks to colleagues in these services to discuss ways to promote their services more widely across the School.

3.2.14 The panel noted various online platforms developed locally by expertise in CS which were used for multiple purposes including teaching and learning and databases for collecting and analysing data and encouraged the School to work collaboratively with University IT services to ensure adequate backup and alignment to University networks and systems where possible.

3.3 The Student Voice

3.3.1 The Panel **commended** the School for its approach to raising the profile of the student voice and its willingness to hear constructive feedback. Feedback from academic staff and all students confirmed the benefits of the work undertaken by the Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLC). It was evident from the minutes of the SSLC and wider discussions with all student groups that they were comfortable in raising issues with staff and that they would be listened to. The students gave explicit examples of actions taken by the School following feedback which demonstrated closure of the feedback loop. The Panel **encouraged** the School to continue to build on this successful model and to collaborate with colleagues in External Relations (Student Communications) to look at methods of promoting this across the College and wider University.

3.3.2 It was evident from discussions with class representatives, including those studying in Singapore, that they took their role seriously. The School is **encouraged** to look at additional methods of promoting the role and to promote the training and development programme for class representatives provided by the Student Representative Council (SRC) as well as the newly developed Student Representation Toolkit.

3.4 Supporting Student Wellbeing

Student Support Officer / Adviser of Studies

3.4.1 The recently introduced role of Student Support Officer (SSO) created as part of a two year pilot in collaboration with Student Support Services (SSS) was viewed positively by staff and students. The Panel **noted** the remit of the SSO is to sign-post students to a variety of support services and to act as a bridge between the School and University central professional services. Following discussions with staff and students the Panel were concerned to note the volume of work being undertaken by the SSO and significant blurring of boundaries between the SSO and Adviser of Studies (AS) who had delegated responsibility for academic advice related to degree programmes. Discussions with students confirmed some students were going to the SSO for academic advice and the increased workload of the SSO had the potential to become a single point of failure. The Panel **recommends** the School continues this work in partnership with colleagues in SSS to ensure there are evaluation criteria around the pilot that capture the range of relationships and type of support that this new role creates and affects, and look at ways to promote the post as being a collaboration between the School and University Student Support Services.

3.4.2 It was evident following discussions with students that meetings with AS were inconsistent experiences as some met them on a one to one basis and others were meeting in groups. The Panel **strongly recommends** the School reviews the remit of the Adviser of Studies to make explicit the boundaries between academic support and generic support and to put in place methods to ensure a consistent approach to AS student meetings. In addition, the School must make explicit to students the appropriate route for academic related advice and generic support.

Direct Entry Support

3.4.3 The Panel were satisfied with arrangements in place to provide additional support for widening participation and direct entry students including a four week Summer

School. The Panel also noted that the School was working on a plan and resource model to develop this further.

Student Communication

- 3.4.4 The School uses multiple methods to communicate with students including face to face, email, Moodle and other online platforms. Feedback from students suggests a level of confusion and frustration associated with some of these methods which resulted in duplication of information. The Panel noted comments around the awkwardness of log-in and password problems which added to the level of frustration. The Panel **encourages** the School to review its communication methods and to make explicit to students the appropriate route for key information, in particular around assessment deadlines.

4 GOOD PRACTICE

- 4.1 The Panel noted a number of areas of good practice and strongly encourages the School to maximise the support, guidance and advice available from University central professional support services to promote and share the best practice more widely across the College and University.

- 4.2 A list of examples of **good practice** are listed below:

- A strong culture of teaching ambition, for example the Centre for Computing Science Education.
- Establishing a reflective and enhancement focus for teaching and learning by introducing the Annual Learning and Teaching Away Day and the Annual Curriculum Review events.
- Innovative approach to managing resources and developing people by creating a new divisional management structure with clear lines of responsibility and the creation of a new academic Work Allocation Model (WAM).
- Creating a bottom up approach to the Strategic Planning process which is shared and understood by the School community.
- Collegiate and reflective approach to preparation for the PSR.

5. COMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The Panel **noted** the following areas of work which should be **commended**.

- The School should be **commended** for creating an innovative, team culture and should be confident in promoting this at a higher level within the University.
- The strategy for supporting the Student Voice should be **commended** as there was significant evidence to demonstrate closure of feedback loops.
- The School should be **commended** for retaining its national and international reputation while working with significant growth in student numbers.
- The School should be **commended** on its innovative approach to the use of laboratory space to accommodate significant growth in student numbers.
- The School should be **commended** for its strategic approach to working collaboratively with industry as a way of ensuring the employability of its graduates and for ensuring the curriculum remains vibrant and relevant.
- The School should be **commended** for taking part in the collaborative pilot project with Student Support Services to establish the role of a School Student Support Officer.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER ENHANCEMENT

- 6.1 The Panel **noted** the ambition to enhance the student experience embedded in the culture of the School. The recommendations from the Panel builds on work already undertaken by the School.

- 6.2 The Panel **strongly recommends** that the School should maximise the support available to them from key University central professional support services and looks for opportunities at College and University level to promote, share and learn from best practice.
- 6.3 The recommendations for enhancement detailed in the table are aligned to the four key thematic sections of the Reflective Analysis as follows with the recommendations listed in order of priority within each section.
- Strategy for Development
 - Learning Teaching and Enhancement
 - The Student Voice
 - Supporting Student Wellbeing

The enhancement activities associated with each theme are presented either as: strong recommendations; recommendations; or, encouragements. In the case of strong recommendations there may be more urgency required in addressing the issue. Updates on actions arising from recommendations and strong recommendations will be formally presented to the Academic Standards Committee, and commentary on responses to encouragements will also be presented if the Subject area submits this information to the Senate Office although there is no requirement for them to do so.

	THEMATIC ACTIVITY (Section 3.1 Strategy for Development)	Shared Enhancement Benefits	For the attention the School	Attention of University support service
1.	Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTA) The Panel strongly recommends the School develops more formal mechanisms to ensure School oversight of GTA workloads and their wider activities including support and development needs. Ref: Section 3 para 3.1.5	School oversight will create parity of experience for the GTAs and will provide the School with an opportunity to monitor workflows and progress against staff development requirements for GTA.	Academic Tutor Liaison	
2.	Leadership and Management Training It is recommended that the School works with University Staff development services to ensure leadership and management training opportunities are made available to staff in new roles as part of the restructuring. Bespoke training for academic related matters should be developed in collaboration with LEADS. Ref: Section 3 para 3.1.3	The success of the new divisional line management structure will be maximised if appropriate leadership and management training is provided for individuals who are new to these roles and responsibilities. Individuals will feel supported and more confident. Working collaboratively with central services will broaden the knowledge across professional services of the unique requirements of the School and its subject.	Head of School Director of Learning & Teaching Head of Administration	Head of HR: College of Science & Engineering Director of Employee and Organisational Development. Head of Academic Services
3.	Early Career Research (ECR) It is recommended that the School continues to work collaboratively with colleagues in LEADS to ensure the schedule for mandatory PGCAP development is achievable for ECRs. Ref: Section 3 para 3.1.6	This should provide LEADS with an opportunity to raise awareness of its support within the School and working collaboratively should provide an opportunity for both to reflect on the programme content and the timetable.	Director of Learning & Teaching	Director of Academic Services

4.	Laboratory Space The School is encouraged to speak to central University IT services to develop an approach to monitor the use of laboratories. This should help them build on the innovative use of the laboratory space already undertaken. Ref: Section 3 para 3.1.2	Working collaboratively with central IT services will provide professional services with an opportunity to broaden their understanding of the use of university resources. It will also broaden knowledge regarding the use of space to inform the wider university Estates strategy and potentially the smart campus developments.	Head of School Head of Administration Systems Manager (Operations and Staffing)	Director of IT Services Director of Estates and Commercial Services
5.	Strategy for Growth The School is encouraged to work in collaboration with External Relations to develop a tailored market analysis to inform its strategy for growth. Ref: Section 3 para 3.1.7	This should provide the School and ER with a full understanding of the ambition and scope for increasing student numbers which will inform any recruitment and marketing strategy required to support this objective.	Head of School Head of Administration	Head of External Relations Head of College
6.	Workload Allocation Model (WAM) The new Academic Work Allocation Model (WAM) should include time for sharing best practice and assessment. The School is encouraged to collaborate with University Planning, Insights and Analysis to maximising knowledge & resources. Ref: Section 3 para 3.1.8	Refining the WAM will create more transparency across the School. Collaboration with College and central services will provide an opportunity to share unique insight into the subject knowledge and align resource models where appropriate.	Head of School/Deputy Head of School Director of Learning & Teaching Head of Administration	Director of Planning, Insights and Analysis Director of Academic Services
	THEMATIC ACTIVITY (Section 3.2 Learning Teaching Enhancement)	Shared Enhancement Benefits	For the attention the School	Attention of University support service
7.	Assessment and Feedback Aligning assessment to learning outcomes has been an ongoing initiative since the PSR in 2014. However, in considering assessment, students and staff had acknowledged some inconsistency of approach to assessment design particularly in relation to differential workload demands across some courses. Therefore, this area was seen as a priority in the continuing review and	This will provide clarity for the students as well evidencing parity of experience. CS can demonstrate further alignment to the University Code of Assessment and with the SCQF. Sharing best practice across the College will provide an opportunity to promote good practice in CS and will provide the School with an opportunity to discuss and pilot	Head of School Director of Learning & Teaching	Head of College

	development of assessment. The Panel strongly recommends the school undertakes this work to ensure consistency and parity of experience for the students. It also recommends that they benchmark with other Schools within the College to help inform good practice when looking at developing new assessment models – in particular online assessment methods. Ref: Section 3 para 3.2.6	models used by colleagues in other Schools. The College can evidence to the University their strategic commitment to enhancement.		
8.	Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) The Panel strongly recommends the School seeks clarity with the University Academic Collaborations office regarding the new agreement with SIT. Ref: Section 2 para 3.2.11	Clarity will provide the School with the necessary information to allow them to manage strategic planning, budget and resources and for the University to continue to develop the strategic partnership with SIT. Ownership of the Agreement will reduce institutional governance risks associated with monitoring and evaluation. Working with colleagues in Academic Collaborations Office (ACO) should provide CS with a broader understanding of the University governance and provide ACO with an appreciation and clarity regarding the information required by CS and for what purpose.	Head of School Head of Administration	Head of Academic Collaborations Office. Head of College College finance
9.	Annual Curriculum Review Having established this within the annual schedule of activities the Panel recommends the School uses the event to create further innovation within the portfolio and to seek opportunities for further TNE activities. Ref: Section 2 para 3.2.4	Using space already allocated in the School diary should allow CS to have a more structured agenda taking consideration of longer-term ambitions which would inform the Strategic Planning process.	Head of School Director of Learning & Teaching	
10.	Continual Professional Development (CPD) The School should continue to build on the reflective approach taken at the Annual Learning and Teaching away day by ensuring the	Formal CPD recognition should help to raise the profile of the need for academic development.	Head of School Director of Learning & Teaching.	Head of University Staff Development Services.

	<p>outcomes are more widely shared across the School and that attendance at the event is recognised formally as CPD.</p> <p>The School is encouraged to seek advice and guidance on CPD recognition from colleagues in Staff Development Services and LEADS.</p> <p>Ref: Section 3 para 3.2.2</p>	<p>Working collaboratively with central staff development services and LEADS should help provide a shared understanding across the University of some of the unique subject related work undertaken in the School.</p> <p>Academic staff can use CPD for professional purposes e.g. promotion and professional membership.</p>		<p>Director of Academic Services</p>
11.	<p>Annual Learning and Teaching Away-Day</p> <p>The School is encouraged to invite the ECRs and GTAs in the Annual Learning and Teaching away day as a way of sharing knowledge and capturing innovation.</p> <p>Ref: Section 3 para 3.2.2</p>	<p>Will provide the ECR and GTAs with a wider School network and allows the School to share ideas and initiatives across the whole community.</p>	<p>Head of Administration</p> <p>Director of Learning & Teaching</p>	
12.	<p>Graduate Apprenticeship Programme</p> <p>The School is commended on development of this programme and positive student experience. The School is encouraged to seek support from External Relations to find methods of raising the profile of this programme and promote its added value to the School, College and University reputation.</p> <p>Ref: Section 3 para 3.2.5</p>	<p>Added value to School, College and University will help contribute to further enhance reputation and diversity.</p>	<p>Head of School GA Programme Director Head of Administration</p>	<p>Head of College Head of External Relations</p>
	<p>THEMATIC ACTIVITY (Section 3.3 The Student Voice)</p>	<p>Shared Enhancement Benefits</p>	<p>For the attention the School</p>	<p>Attention of University support service</p>
13.	<p>Student Feedback/Student Voice</p> <p>The significant work undertaken to support the Student Voice /student feedback could be further enhanced and the School is encouraged to seek support from External Relations services to help promote this work across the College and University.</p> <p>Ref: Section 3 para 3.3.1</p>	<p>Sharing across the wider University will raise the profile of CS. Working collaboratively with External Relations will provide an opportunity for them to broaden their knowledge of the institutional need to enhance student experience.</p>	<p>Head of Administration</p>	<p>Director of External Relations</p>

14.	Student Representatives The School is encouraged to look at additional methods to promote the training and development provided by the SRC. Ref: Section 3 para 3.3.2	Further promotion of training and development will hopefully encourage students to see the benefits of volunteering to be representative.	Head of Administration	SRC President?
	THEMATIC ACTIVITY (Section 3.4 Supporting Student Wellbeing)	Shared Enhancement Benefits	For the attention the School	Attention of University support service
15.	Student Support Officer and Adviser of Studies The recently introduced role of Student Support Officer (SSO) as part of a pilot project is viewed positively by staff and students however there are concerns regarding the workload and the boundaries between the role and the Adviser of Studies. The Panel strongly recommends the School reviews the role descriptor for the Adviser of Studies and makes explicit to students Ref: Section 3 para 3.4.2	Maximises the use of University professional service support staff and will raise the profile of support services provided. Provides central professional services and the School with an opportunity to develop shared ownership and understanding of the student experience and the significance this has to the University reputation and status.	Head of Administration Head of School Senior Adviser of Studies	Director of Student Support Services
16.	Student Communications The School is encouraged to look at its methods of communication with students and to make more explicit the appropriate route for key information, in particular around assessment deadlines. Ref: Section 3 para 3.4.4	This will provide clarity for the students and a better experience. The School will have an opportunity to review and streamline its communication process and reduce duplication.	Head of Administration Director of Learning & Teaching	

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 20 November 2020

**Periodic Subject Review: Response to Recommendations for
Periodic Subject Review: Review of MVLS Graduate School Animal
and Plant Sciences, and Biomedical Sciences Clusters held on 14
June 2019**

Cover Sheet

Ms Helen Butcher, Senate office

Brief description of the Paper

At its meeting on 4 October 2019, Academic Standards Committee received the Report of Periodic Subject Review of the MVLS Graduate School Cluster 1 (Animal and Plant Sciences and Biomedical Sciences). The recommendations contained within the report were approved for onward transmission to those identified for action. This report details the responses and the progress made to date in implementing the recommendations. These responses have been delayed due to the pressures on staff due to the current pandemic.

Action Requested

ASC is asked to **consider** the adequacy of the responses and the progress made.

Recommended Person/s responsible for taking action(s) forward

As identified

Resource implications

No direct resource implications have been identified.

Timescale for Implementation

As outlined.

Equality Implications

As identified above.

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 20 November 2020

Periodic Subject Review: Response to Recommendations arising from the MVLS Graduate School Cluster 1 (Animal and Plant Sciences, and Biomedical Sciences) held on 14 June 2019

Student Mental Health**Recommendation 1**

The Review Panel **recommends** that the lines of responsibility for student mental health support should be clarified across the Graduate School to ensure that all staff are aware of who students should be referred to and that all staff in the referral system are appropriately trained. [Paragraph 3.3.1]

For the attention of: The Dean of Graduate Studies

Response:

This first point of contact for a student looking for mental health support has traditionally been met by our academic advisers of studies; however, we appreciate that not all programmes use academic advisers to the same extent. In smaller programmes this role is filled by the programme lead, however in other situations a more established approach is used with small groups being assigned an advisor from within the programme team. We understand the importance of this role and will endeavour to create more structured support for all students and the staff who act in these advisor roles. In addition, we have increasingly noticed students approaching our administrative staff for support with these issues. While we are pleased that our Graduate School staff are approachable, we realise this adds additional stress and workload to these staff. As such we will also look to provide training and mapping for the appropriate escalation of these issues, within the university structure, to our administrative staff.

Applicant Self-Service**Recommendation 2**

The Review Panel urgently **recommends** that deficiencies in the Applicant Self-Service process are addressed by IT Services. [Paragraph 3.1.1]

**For the attention of: The Director of IT Services
For information: The Dean of Graduate Studies**

Response: IT Services

We went live with Applicant Self Service phase 1 on 11th June 2020. A dedicated project team was setup between MSDI and Admissions. There was also an Operational Group setup that included management and key Stakeholders around the application system. Philip Stanley was included in this operational group and I've included below the email he sent just after go-live.

To summarise the key deliverables in Phase 1:

- Portal to be made available to all applicants (Direct and UCAS)
- Increase in conversion rates

- Mobile / Tablet friendly look and feel through implementation of Fluid User Interface (Fluid UI)
- Clear and simple To Do list for applicants
- Clear and simple overview of the status of an application for applicants
- Ease of access to all UofG applicant communications
- Ability for all applicants to upload documentation
- Clear and simple way for applicants to make payments

Response: Dean of Graduate Studies

It is our understanding that this has been addressed and improvements have been made to the self-service system.

Physical Estate, Facilities and Timetabling

Recommendation 3

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Disability Equality Group should examine and, if appropriate, implement strategies to identify students with mobility issues prior to their arrival at the University to ensure that appropriate rooms can be obtained in advance of the start of teaching. [Paragraph 3.2.1]

**For the attention of: The Disability Equality Group
For information: The Dean of Graduate Studies**

Response: Disability Equality Group

This was discussed by the Disability Equality Group following the PSR of the MVLG Graduate School.

As things stand, in line with our anticipatory duties, preparations for each new academic year's teaching timetable begin in February with Schools having until the end of April to update their course requirements based on their expected new and continuing undergraduate cohort. Unfortunately, there are situations where the University is not made aware of access requirements until Freshers' Week. This, together with allowing students to choose their classes very late, causes most of the issues experienced.

It was also noted many disabled Postgraduate Taught (PGT) students experience issues as they usually arrive on campus very close to the start of their course and don't engage with the Disability Service until then. The Disability Service staff are aware that some PGT courses have a regular cohort of disabled students and the relevant course coordinators/administrators will be targeted for early accessible room allocation in the future but this will not address the totality of the problem.

While there are challenges, the Timetabling team are very aware of the issues that unsuitable rooms and cross campus journeys have on both disabled students and staff. They do try to accommodate all change requests. However, it's not always as simple as swapping one room for another; size of classes, teaching styles and any resulting knock-on effects to timetables all hamper finding solutions.

Early notification of any accessibility requirements is key to supporting our disabled students. There is scope for current University projects, such as the 'smart campus' and student forecasting and enrolment project to impact positively on this situation. A proposal for a suite of new student data collection/reporting is in development and will be put to the Equality and Diversity Strategy Committee (EDSC) with entrant's disability one of the proposed data collection points. All of this will help the situation but the Disability Equality Group recognised that there is no complete solution to the problem. Work will continue to explore further options but, in the meantime, applicants, students and colleagues will be

advised to provide relevant information at the earliest opportunity to allow appropriate arrangements to be put in place before the start of teaching.

Response: Dean of Graduate Studies

We are not aware if progress has been made on this recommendation.

Recommendation 4

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Graduate School should analyse current requirements for computing facilities across its portfolio and, on the basis of this and trend data, develop a future requirements statement to inform future facility development. This should then be shared with the Vice-Principal Academic Planning and Technological Innovation to ensure the requirements are appropriately captured in future IT facility planning. [Paragraph 4.3.2]

For the attention of: The Dean of Graduate Studies
For information: Vice-Principal Academic Planning and Technological Innovation

Response:

Before lockdown a review was initiated into the physical requirements for computer facilities, this was discussed and prioritised in the college budget, but has since been put on hold. We do appreciate in the last 6 months significant work has been done to develop the Windows virtual desktop platform, and the added accessibility of site licences off campus which have been very well received by staff. However, we hope in the coming academic year to restimulate the investment in computing facilities.

Recommendation 5

The Review Panel recommends that future timetabling and Estates developments at the University should address concerns about staff being unable to consistently access rooms that are suitable for small group teaching or technology-enabled learning. [Paragraph 4.3.3]

For the attention of: Director of Strategy, Performance and Transformation, Estates and Commercial Services
For information: The Dean of Graduate Studies

Response: Director of Strategy, Performance and Transformation, Estates and Commercial Services

The University continues to invest in its teaching spaces and to provision a variety of spaces to support evolving pedagogies.

At the present time, the majority of smaller teaching spaces are held under local management, limiting the ability of central teams and services to influence the design and use of these spaces. This is a matter which can better be addressed following the decision of SMG to transfer all general teaching rooms into central management in a phased approach.

This move, with the associated investment in upgrading and reconfiguring teaching spaces, along with the opening of the James McCune Smith Learning Hub will improve access to rooms for small group teaching and will increase the number of spaces which support technology-enhanced learning.

The Central Timetabling Team has been in consultation with academics teaching PGT courses within the College to consider their requirements and how these might best be

supported in the coming years. As a result of this a number of PGT courses will be taught in spaces better suited to their needs next year

Response: Dean of Graduate Studies

The University's investment in the new JMS learning and teaching hub offers welcome progress in this area.

Recommendation 6

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Graduate School should review the provision of loose furniture at the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital teaching facility with a view to addressing student concerns regarding facilities for group and personal study. [Paragraph 4.3.4]

For the attention of: The Dean of Graduate Studies

Response:

The Graduate School raised this issue with the teaching and learning facilities within the Queen Elizabeth estate. As this facility is equally used by NHS staff, we plan work together to make improvements. We do recognise that as student numbers have increased, it has become more difficult to manage class sizes and maintain an appropriate space within these facilities. We were in the process of investigating a possible relocation of some of our classes to the Gilmore Hill campus before the current pandemic. Now the Lighthouse lab has fully taken over the LTC at the QEUH we are accelerating these plans to relocate all teaching.

Learning and Teaching Strategy

Recommendation 7

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Graduate School reviews its approach to the provision of MSc group projects with a view to evaluating the benefits and costs of expanding this provision to alleviate project loads associated with future postgraduate student growth. The Review Panel also **recommends** that this approach should be discussed at the College Management Group to ensure that it can be embedded within future resourcing plans. [Paragraph 4.2.3]

For the attention of: The Dean of Graduate Studies

For Information: Vice Principal and Head of College, College of Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences

Response:

The provision of group projects was presented and discussed with CMG, Head of College and other members of the group were very supportive. Plans were made for additional group projects to run; additional lab space was identified, and additional equipment was purchased. Unfortunately, this was cancelled, and all projects were moved to a 'dry' format in 2019/20. We do however believe this will be essential going forward and are already making plans for more group projects to run, if possible, in 2021. Due to limitations with occupancy in research labs, this is likely to be our best opportunity to provide lab-based projects in 2020/21.

Recommendation 8

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Graduate School should identify programmes that are delivering the most effective learning experience for students in terms of good teaching practices, the provision of effective feedback, and the equality of learning opportunities, with a view to disseminating these practices to other parts of the Graduate School. [Paragraph 4.2.6]

For the attention of: The Dean of Graduate Studies

Response:

We are always looking to promote good practice within our programmes. This was one of the main drivers for establishing clusters of programmes with similar academic direction. Initially these clusters became overwhelmed with course approvals paperwork, but we have since redesigned this process to enable clusters to have the time and space to share experience and good practice. In clusters such as Biomedical Sciences, with many units contributing programmes, this has been particularly useful.

Wider dissemination occurs through the MVLS PGT away day, where we always include a session on innovative good practice, and through the MVLS Scholarship away day. As well as learning of new processes from staff first-hand and through the annual monitoring report, it is always informative to see where students feel practice has been most effective through SSLC meetings and EvaSys reports.

Course Evaluation

Recommendation 9

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Graduate School liaises with the Senate Office and consults the good practice guide on the Senate Office Website to develop a strategy for increasing student response rates for EvaSys course evaluation surveys. The Review Panel also **recommends** that the Graduate School develops a mechanism to ensure that Summary and Response Documents are completed for all courses and that these documents are made available to students on each course. [Paragraph 3.4.2]

**For the attention of: The Dean of Graduate Studies
For information: Senate Office**

Response:

In response to this recommendation we have begun to review the communications sent to students and the language we use to promote engagement. We are also developing timetables for students on when they will receive links to complete the survey. We have improved return rates for the summary and response documents to almost 100%, however this has been through continual review and reminding from the administrative team. The timeliness of these responses also needs improvement to make this a meaningful process for students. This is something we will look to continue improving.

Signposting of PhD and Funding Opportunities

Recommendation 10

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Graduate School should improve the pre and post-arrival signposting of PhD and funding opportunities to students. [Paragraph 3.4.6]

For the attention of: The Dean of Graduate Studies

Response:

PhD opportunities are continually updated on our Graduate school web page. In addition, a few years ago we began running dedicated PGT to PGR workshops where current PGR students, or institute and school academic representatives would be able to come and discuss opportunities and experiences within these areas. To expand this point a little further, we are aware that there are many other career destinations students wish to follow as well as PhD's, so we try to balance career sessions with industry speakers, scientific writers, clinicians, teachers and many other professions. This is carried out together with the UofG Careers Service and through our Graduate Skills Award.

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 20 November 2020

**Periodic Subject Review: Responses to the Recommendations
arising from the Periodic Subject Review of the School of
Engineering held on 7 and 8 March 2019**

Cover Sheet

Mrs Lesley Fielding, Clerk to the Review Panel

Brief Description of the Paper

Under Summer Powers 2019, Academic Standards Committee received and approved, the Report of the Periodic Subject Review of the School of Engineering and associated recommendations. The recommendations contained within the report were approved for onward transmission to those identified for action. This report details the responses and the progress made to date in implementing the recommendations. The response has been delayed due to pressures caused by the current pandemic.

The Convener of the Review Panel would like to commend the School for the thorough responses and developments undertaken since the Review.

Action Requested

Academic Standards Committee is asked to consider the adequacy of the responses and the progress made.

Recommended Person/s responsible for taking action(s) forward

As identified in the report.

Resource implications

As outlined in the paper.

Timescale for Implementation

As outlined in the paper.

Equality implications

As identified.

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 20 November 2020

**Periodic Subject Review: Responses to the Recommendations
Arising from Review of the School of Engineering held on 7 and 8
March 2019**

Lesley Fielding, Clerk to the Review Panel

The following recommendations have been made to support the School of Engineering in its reflection and to enhance provision in relation to teaching, learning and assessment. The recommendations have been cross-referenced to the paragraphs in the text of the report to which they refer and are **grouped together** by the areas for improvement/enhancement and are **ranked in order of priority within each section**.

Strategic Approach to Enhance Learning and Teaching

Recommendation 1.1

The Review Panel **recommends** that the School, with the support of the College, rethinks teaching support and potentially restructures the teaching teams for large classes. The review should include the role of technical staff, learning technologists and GTAs in order to optimise the School's resources and to alleviate the pressure on all staff. [Paragraph 2.4.5]

**For the attention of: The Head of School
The College Dean of Learning and Teaching
For information: Vice Principal and Head of College of Science & Engineering**

Response:

The School is currently carrying out two reviews of teaching support.

The first, internal review, considers learning and assessment in key common curriculum classes in levels 1 and 2, focussing on improving the quality of provision to students in large classes. Chaired by the Convenor of Learning and Teaching, the initial meeting of this committee was held on 7 October 2019. Consultations were held with all teaching staff in levels 1 & 2, as well as key technical staff and administrators, and a first report has been produced, and approved by the School Learning & Teaching Committee. 12 items of good practice were identified for sharing across the whole School, and a number of new initiatives flagged for action (ranging from optimising training of GTAs to further 'on-lining' of in-course formative assessments and better rotation of staff through large class teaching). Each common curriculum course is 'owned' by a Teaching Discipline, who are now actioning the initiatives and good practice, delegating to individual staff 'czars' where appropriate. The second, University review focusses on assessment practice across the whole School and is described in the response to recommendation 2 below.

Recommendation 1.2

The Review Panel **recommends** that the School reviews communication, engagement and involvement of staff to ensure all staff are actively involved in the developments in relation to strategy and engage effectively with opportunities to contribute to strategy and teaching developments in an open and transparent environment. [Paragraph 2.4.6]

**For the attention of: School Engagement Lead
For information: The Head of School**

Response:

The Weekly Advisory Group of the School has included 'communications and engagement' as one of its standing items of consideration. School management has developed a Learning & Teaching Strategy since January 2020; a document which has been the subject of widespread consultation.

Teaching Discipline Meetings are held each semester and act as a small group forum to discuss teaching matters, with policy, including local teaching initiatives then discussed at alternating monthly Learning & Teaching Committee meetings, and Heads of Discipline Strategy Meetings, to harmonise initiatives with overall School strategy.

The Staff Handbook forms a growing source of information to staff, is regularly updated, and copies are physically mailed to each member of staff yearly, along with the clearly posted online version on the School web pages.

Teaching developments are flagged at each staff meeting, presented by the Convenor of Learning and Teaching and by the local staff associated with each development. Since January 2020, bulletins reporting the business of the Learning and Teaching Committee are published to the School on SharePoint after each meeting. Similarly, bulletins are published after each meeting of the School Executive Group.

Since March 2020, in place of physical staff meetings halted due to the Covid pandemic, the School has held very successful 'Virtual Coffee Mornings' as a drop in session weekly or bi-weekly for all members of staff (including academics, technicians and MPA staff), where pertinent aspects of teaching, learning and assessment are discussed. A School newsletter has also been issued weekly or fortnightly since the beginning of the lockdown and it routinely contains L&T stories.

Assessment and Feedback

Recommendation 2.1

The Panel explored adjusting the weighting of exams and course work, however, staff considered that, in view of the large class sizes, this would impact on staff time and workload. There were justified concerns that the current system disadvantaged some students in fulfilling their potential, therefore, the Review Panel **recommends** that the School review the current first year assessment design and identifies ways to increase the level of formative assessment as well as reduce the reliance on high stakes assessments, subject to remaining within the constraints of accreditation. *[Paragraph 4.2.2]*

The Review Panel considered the scanning and printing of examination papers from UESTC to be time consuming and in view of the technology available, potentially obsolete. The Review Panel **recommends** that the School review the current processes with a view to identifying a more efficient and streamlined process if possible, to alleviate the pressure on the Teaching Office and to free staff time for other processes. The Review Panel acknowledges that opportunities for streamlining may be limited in the absence of improved online assessment of mathematical subjects and **recommends** that the issue is raised with the Chair of the Assessment and Feedback Transformation Project, Professor Frank Coton, to include within considerations of online assessment. *[Paragraph 4.4.9]*

**For the attention of: The Head of School
Chair, Assessment and Feedback Transformation Project**

Response – Head of School:

The School has taken part in a review of current assessment design at the University level, as part of the NSS Action Plan; chaired by the Vice Principal, Learning and Teaching and involving Computing Science, Engineering, Psychology, and Initial Teacher Training. As part of this review, focus groups were held with students and staff in engineering, although due to the Covid-pandemic reports from these focus groups are not yet extant. The School participated in the development of a 'methods of assessment' document now more generally available across the University, aimed at giving academic staff suggestions of how to make assessment more 'authentic' and less 'high-stakes'. These have been shared with staff and reviewed in Discipline meetings with a view to incorporating them into our practice.

Note that the move to online processes to make the assessment of degree examinations in UESTC has been radically accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Both the Glasgow and UESTC campuses have now moved to an entirely online assessment collection and marking system making use of secure OneDrive folders for each course, where administrators drop off student work for marking, academics mark using a range of annotation tools with which they are familiar, collate results, moderate the marking of others, and return annotated scripts. Students have the benefit of subsequent access to these marked scripts for feedback. Although staff are very much in the learning process for fully online assessment, feedback from external examiners at June 2020 exam boards praised the School for both rigour in the marking process and availability of examination materials for audit.

Response – Chair, Assessment and Feedback Transformation Project

I can confirm that the need for improved online assessment of all subjects, including mathematical subjects, is included within the recommendations for future development by the Assessment and Feedback project. The project has proposed a way ahead for the University which is currently being considered for approval. If the project is approved, the issue will be addressed over the next two years.

Recommendation 2.2

In view of the level of support provided by the Teaching Office and their pivotal role in relation to much of the School administrative processes, the Review Panel **recommends** that the support for the Teaching Office is reviewed to continue to streamline unnecessary processes and alleviate pressures where possible taking into account the role played by the IT team. [*Paragraph 4.4.11*]

For the attention of: The Head of School

Response:

The Head of School Administration meets regularly with the Learning & Teaching Manager to review and plan the workload and staffing of the Teaching Office. Following the Periodic Subject Review, the post of Learning and Teaching Manager was confirmed in December 2019 following the retirement of the previous incumbent at the end of March 2019. At this time, addition temporary resource was created to support the Teaching Office. The new Learning and Teaching Manager has been working closely with the School IT Manager, particularly on the move to completely online assessment (including continuous assessment). Although involving a significant initial workload, this has the prospect of reducing the ongoing workload of the Learning & Teaching Office.

Retention

Recommendation 3

The Review Panel was concerned about the high dropout rate, and whilst recognising the challenges, **recommends** that further consideration be given to the contributory factors and the potential solutions. Specifically, the Panel recommends that the School work closely with Planning and Business Intelligence to undertake an analysis of retention, progression and continuation for Levels 1 and 2 of the kind recently undertaken in Computing Science. *[Paragraph 3.1.4]*

For the attention of: The Head of School
For information: The Director, Planning and Business Intelligence
Head of School of Computing Science

Response:

Planning and Business Intelligence have carried out work specifically on the recruitment, retention and progression of students from Glasgow International College, where historically Engineering has noted poor progression rates. A qlikview model is now in place so those managing teaching in the School (including each Discipline Head) can view detailed, 'live' statistics on progression, giving us the evidence to enhance our support for these students.

Recommendation 4

The Review Panel **recommends** that the School works with the student body to enhance visibility of the formal elements of, and improve engagement with, the Advisory System and in particular, the first meeting with Advisers of Studies in order to identify those students who may need to withdraw or transfer at an early stage. *[Paragraph 3.3.3]*

For the attention of: The Head of School

Response:

We have re-iterated, both in the Staff Handbook, in messages from the Chief Adviser of Studies, and in calendaring Advising meetings by the Learning & Teaching Office at the beginning of each academic year, the expectation that staff meet with all their Advisees, to initiate interaction yearly.

Feedback Mechanisms

Recommendation 5

The Review Panel **recommends** that the School review the SSLC process in consultation with the SRC Sabbatical Officers/President to ensure sufficient dialogue and feedback between staff and students and to engage the wider student population in the process. *[Paragraph 3.4.1]*

For the attention of: The Head of School
For information: SRC President

Response:

The Chief Adviser of Studies, Dr Douglas Thomson, has held consultation meetings with members of the SSLC regarding the operation of these meetings and their fitness for purpose. In a School of the size of Engineering, SSLC meetings are only useful and tractable if held at Discipline level (we currently have 76 student representatives in six sub-SSLCs), and then chairs come together at a School level to discuss overarching items of interest. It is felt that the current system is working well.

In addition to SSLCs we have also instituted a yearly staff-student leaders dinner, where School academic and administrative leadership and SSLC and Student Society leaders meet together. This is a more relaxed forum for students to make their views known on a wide range of matters, in addition to the formal constraints of a SSLC.

Marketing

Recommendation 6

The Review Panel **recommends** that, in addition to the current practices, the School should review the marketing of the programmes, including the School website, to present a more contemporary and inclusive image. The School could compare the current website with those of other institutions, such as the University of Bristol and advice should be sought from External Relations and the Equality and Diversity Unit in the first instance, but potentially also from the School of Physics and Astronomy which has a Silver Athena Swan award, where a range of initiatives have been undertaken as part of the University's Gender Action Plan. *[Paragraph 3.2]*

For the attention of: The Head of School

**For information: Vice Principal, External Relations Manager,
Equality & Diversity Unit**

The Head of School of Physics and Astronomy

Response:

The School has held an Athena Swan Bronze award since 2016 and in November 2020 will be resubmitting an application for a Silver award. The SAT Committee is divided into four sub-groups: UG/PG Recruitment and Support; Staff Recruitment, Career Development and Promotion, Flexible Working and Career Breaks; and School Culture and Environment. The remit of the UG/PG Recruitment and Support sub-group includes the marketing of the programmes of the School to a wider audience and also to profile visible female role models as part of the outreach work of the School. The School website was updated as part of the rebranding to the James Watt School of Engineering in June 2019 and further updates included a video of student society members in January 2020. The imaging on the website is now balanced female and male, and has been updated to be more contemporary. The School's Athena Swan webpage was also updated and is highlighted as a link on the landing page for the School.

Staffing

Recommendation 7.1

In view of the pressure on staff to meet their marking obligations, the Review Panel **recommends** that the School should consider using GTAs for marking at pre-Honours, and possibly Honours level where appropriate, with suitable levels of training, supervision and support. *[Paragraph 4.2.5]*

For the attention of: The Head of School

**For information: The Director, Learning Enhancement and Academic Development
Service**

Response:

This is now the case for some pre-Honours courses (typically large Common Curriculum course in levels 1 and 2), and for those Honours courses where the numbers of students on the course justifies management of a GTA marking team by academic staff.

Recommendation 7.2

The Review Panel **recommends** that the School review the oversight and training of GTAs to ensure that more consistency in the GTA experience and consult with LEADS for guidance and advice on GTA training [*Paragraph 4.4.2*]

For the attention of: The Head of School

Response:

A senior member of staff, and ex-Head of Department, Dr Marco Vezza, was charged with leading this training for the 2020-21 academic session. Unfortunately, the Covid-pandemic had radically altered the nature of the training needing to be given to GTAs. Dr Vezza now chairs our 'on-lining' team, and one of the roles of this committee is to manage the training of GTAs in a largely on-line laboratory and tutorial environment. The work is ongoing.

Recommendation 7.3

There was some uncertainty as to how involved GTAs can be in marking at different levels and the current University policy was considered to be unclear on certain aspects of GTA marking. The Dean of Learning and Teaching expressed a willingness to work with Academic Services to clarify current policy documentation. [*Paragraph 4.4.3*]

**For the attention of: The Convenor of Academic Standards Committee and
the Head of the Senate Office**

The Dean of Learning & Teaching, College of Science & Engineering

Response: Senate Office

Unfortunately this action has not yet been progressed. While there are some online resources referring to GTA marking and support for GTAs in the marking process, e.g. in the Assessment and Feedback Toolkit, there is a need to articulate University policy regarding GTA involvement in marking at different levels of study. This will be developed through the Assessment and Feedback Working Group; the Senate Office will prepare a discussion paper on approaches to GTA marking in order to facilitate development of a policy statement. The Dean of Learning and Teaching, College of Science & Engineering, is a member of AFWG and will therefore be involved in this work.

Response: Head of School

Details have now been provided, and as noted above, some pre-Honours and Honours courses now have GTA marking teams.

Recommendation 8

The Panel recommends that the PSR Convenor raises the ECDP and PGCAP feedback with the University's ECDP Lead (Prof Murray Pittock) and with the Director of LEADS in order that the feedback is acted on appropriately through the ECDP Champions in the Colleges and other appropriate ECDP committees as part of the wider governance of the ECDP programme. The Panel also recommends that the review of PSR that is currently underway within Academic Services, gives consideration to how issues relating to broader University initiatives (such as ECDP), but that don't lend themselves to specific recommendations that ASC might follow up on, could be more meaningfully recorded and addressed in future. [*Paragraph 4.4.7*]

For the attention of: the PSR Convener and the Manager, PSR, Senate Office

For information: ECDP Lead

Director of Learning Enhancement & Academic Development Service

Response:

This Recommendation has been shared with Professor Richard Hartley, the ECDP Champion in CoSE, and he will discuss as necessary with LEADS. LEADS does in any case regularly report on feedback, exemptions, PGCap design etc through the ECDP governance process.

Response: Academic & Digital Development (LEADS)

I'd just like to confirm that there have been changes made to the core courses of the PGCAP and hence to Course 1 which is the one the points were made, which have come in effect with the start of this academic year.

Response: Senate Office

The review of the PSR process is nearing completion, and in its revised form the structure of the Reflective Analysis which is prepared by the Subject undergoing review will allow any issues they wish to be explored, including those relating to broader University issues, to be raised. In terms of output from the PSR and ensuring capacity to report on broader University issues even when they do not necessarily involve specific recommendations or actions, this question was also raised at the last meeting of ASC in October 2020. In response, steps have been taken to ensure that the format of the PSR report allows issues which are not linked to specific recommendations to be logged for the purposes of allowing common University-wide themes to be identified across reviews taking place in any given session. It is envisaged that University initiatives (such as ECDP) could be included in this space.

Feedback Mechanisms

Recommendation 9

At the meeting with students, it was confirmed that staff responded informally to student feedback via email. However, there were no student summary response documents to course evaluation questionnaires, a requirement of the University's Course Evaluation policy. The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject provides summary response documents to course evaluation questionnaires and that these are placed on course Moodle pages as well as provided to SSLCs. [*Paragraph 3.4.3*]

For the attention of: The Head of School

Response:

This requirement has now been flagged at School Learning & Teaching Committee, and with Heads of Discipline in local Discipline meetings, and will be included in the next physical copy of the Staff Handbook to ensure that academic staff understand our expectations.

Accreditation

Recommendation 10

The Review Panel **recommends** that the School encourage and assist staff to assume active roles within the accreditation bodies to contribute and influence future policy and accreditation requirements in relation to teaching and assessment in Engineering.

[*Paragraph 4.2.3*]

For the attention of: The Head of School

Response:

This has been flagged at School staff and Discipline meetings.

We note the successful 5 year accreditation round for the School of Engineering. As of June 2020 all but our Mechanical Engineering degrees have been fully accredited for the next five

years (the visit from IMechE was delayed because of the Covid pandemic – but accreditation for those degrees has been extended by the IMechE).

Staffing

Recommendation 11

The Review Panel **recommends** that the College review the staffing and recruitment practices with the School to identify ways to improve the process and reduce the impact on existing staff. There may also be the opportunity to feed into the World Changing Glasgow project on recruitment. [Paragraph 4.3.2]

For the attention of: The Head of College HR

For Information: Vice Principal and Head of College of Science & Engineering

The Head of School

For information: Ms Emma Pickard, World Changing Glasgow Transformation Team

Response:

A more holistic workforce planning approach is being developed with the School working in partnership with College HR and Finance colleagues to define requirements in line with strategic goals and the drive to achieve a sustainable SSR. This work will be challenging in the context of the potential impact of C-19 on student numbers. New posts are built into the budget on an annual basis as well as posts which become vacant due to a variety of reasons, such as resignation and retirement. Recently, the School has undertaken two large recruitment campaigns to backfill vacancies. It is our usual practice to include the Convenor for L&T (or a representative) as a member of the interview panel. The two rounds took place in October/November 2019 and April-July 2020. Applicants were required to present an example of their teaching as well as their research background as part of their presentation. As some roles are particularly specialist, it can often be difficult to fill them in the first round and they then need to be re-advertised. The new Head of College HR is keen to work with the School on succession planning and workforce planning and embed this into the business of the College and the School. The Head of College HR is also working closely with central HR colleagues to feed into World Changing Glasgow projects focused on improving HR processes. This collaborative partnership approach between the School and College will continue to focus on improving the School's SSR and addressing any potential gaps in the teaching provision.

Recommendation 12

The staff advised that several essential processes required by the University presented challenges. These included the Tier 4 monitoring system for students and GTA recruitment. The staff indicated that although they believe their approaches to be robust, they were aware that each School has developed individual solutions with no means of sharing expertise. The team considered that as the processes and challenges in managing them were not unique to the School of Engineering, and rely on specialised knowledge, that it would be beneficial to approach them more centrally and consistently across the University. The Panel **recommends** that guidance on best practice in these matters be explored with College of Science and Engineering HR, and with the Central Services HR. [Paragraph 4.4.10]

For the attention of: The Head of College of Science and Engineering, HR

Head of Central Services HR

For Information: The Head of School

Response: HR

With regard to Tier 4 Monitoring for GTA Recruitment there is no option for this to be managed centrally, it is a locally managed process, in line with accurate reporting to the Home Office whilst also being mindful of GDPR restrictions.

Each school requests that their Tier 4 holders taking up a GTA appointment complete and submit a Tier 4 Declaration Form as well as presenting their current BRP to ensure we are compliant with UKVI regulations each year.

As the Sponsor, we have a responsibility to monitor hours of work allocated to ensure our students do not breach their restrictions (usually 20 hours).

The guidelines are already in place for staff follow the same process set out by both the GTA Recruitment Policy and in line with UKVI compliance therefor best practice is already in place, this is backed by a robust audit last year by the home office and an internal review of the GTA recruitment process last year, which was managed by Central HR with input from both local HR and GTA's. An independent audit (by PWC) of the GTA process subsequently commenced and concluded in Feb 2019.

Response – Head of School:

Tier 4 monitoring of students continues as it was as there is no University system available to support this monitoring activity. With regards to GTA recruitment, the School built a bespoke system to advertise opportunities to demonstrators and the recruitment process is through this bespoke system. The Schools have worked with HR colleagues to agree a standard contract and in CoSE the contract can be for up to 3-years (the duration of the PhD) and for a minimum number of hours. Students then submit their timesheets onto CoreHR and these are approved within the School. Discussions will start to take place about improving the reporting of the information on these timesheets.

Recommendation 13

Early career staff commented to the Panel that it would be useful to have a School induction handbook and an annual calendar of events. The Head of School advised that there was such a handbook which included these headings together with a checklist and was available on the web. In view of the uneven awareness of the handbook, the Review Panel **recommends** that the School seeks input from Early Career Staff on the contents and the dissemination of the information. [Paragraph 4.4.6]

For the attention of: Senior Administrator, School Office

For the attention of: The School Engagement Lead

For information: The Head of School

Response:

A physical copy of the Staff Handbook is sent to each academic, technician, and MPA staff member of the School, and is sent yearly. This handbook is also on the School's staff webpages. The School's ECR committee will be invited to suggest items for inclusion.

TNE

Recommendation 14

Given the maturity of the TNE relationships at this point, the Review Panel **recommends** that the School takes the opportunity to consider how to reprofile this activity so as to incorporate TNE more prominently, recognising its importance as part of the School's strategic contribution to research and teaching, and considers how to strengthen partnerships around research and teaching initiatives. [Paragraph 6.4.1]

For the attention of: The Head of School

Response:

The Head of School has instituted monthly strategy meetings with the Dean of Glasgow College UESTC to ensure strengthened partnerships in both research and teaching.

As an example of the efficacy of these meetings is the integrated response to 'on-lining' our learning and teaching materials, with a number of initiatives producing materials for **both** the Glasgow and UESTC campuses, created by **both** UESTC fly-in and locally based staff.

Recommendation 15

The Panel would have valued more time with the TNE staff and students and, therefore, the Review Panel **recommends** that, in future, Student and Academic Services and the School, give consideration to whether the Engineering TNE activity is reviewed separately or that the review visit is extended. The Panel acknowledges there is a trade-off between considering the School holistically and giving due attention to TNE but certainly given the scale of endeavour, there is a need for further time to explore and acknowledge in full, the TNE activity in the future. *[Paragraph 6.1.1]*

**For the attention of: The Head of School
Transnational Education Deans
Vice Dean Glasgow College UESTC**

For information: Vice Principal and Head of College of Science and Engineering

Response: Joint Response

Currently Most of the UESTC dedicated staff are based in Glasgow and deliver teaching at UESTC on a fly-in basis. They are also members of a Research Division and contracted to be based at Gilmorehill. While TNE activities in both Singapore and China could be considered separate entities, the synergies between the School and both TNE activities is important to place within a School context. Staff are also significantly involved in research and scholarship, and it would be contrary to the School's overall strategy to disaggregate research structures along teaching-only lines. Therefore, we believe the review of Glasgow College UESTC and UGS should be conducted as part of the overall review of School of Engineering, but accept that an extended and dedicated session on the TNE activities would be extremely beneficial to both the panel and our dedicated TNE staff. Addressing the specific point regarding more time with the TNE students, this might be best addressed most effectively by a face-to-face meeting at the TNE location by panel members.

Recommendation 16

The Review Panel **recommends** that the University review the support models for the TNE students and staff to recognise the different requirements of these institutions to Glasgow and to ensure that these requirements are understood and met. Additionally, the Review Panel recommends that the School review how to achieve wider awareness of TNE partners through representation at key School committees. *[Paragraph 6.4.2]*

**For the attention of: Executive Director, Information Services
For information: Transnational Education Dean
Vice Dean Glasgow College UESTC**

Response: Executive Director, Information Services

Information Services staff have met with colleagues from the Academic Collaborations Team to understand the requirements of TNE institutions.

The Library has increasingly been purchasing electronic content to support learning and teaching and research. We are continually investigating how we can broaden our access to electronic content, in particular e-textbooks where the models are currently problematic and very expensive. The current crisis has led to publishers re-thinking these models and the possibility we may be able to offer more access to e-textbooks in the future. E-content is available to staff and students wherever and whenever they study. The Library has a close relationship with the Library Service at UESTC.

We have staffed the UofG Helpdesk 24-hours during the recent examination period, in order to support students sitting exams in locations across the world. The 24-hour Helpdesk will run again during the resit period. This is a model that is likely to continue into the future.

We are developing a Virtual Desktop Infrastructure which may make it easier to offer specialist software to students and staff wherever they may be located.

Response: Transnational Education Dean

It is gratifying that the panel recognise the importance of our TNE activities in the context of the University's internationalisation strategy and the impact of support infrastructure in delivering exceptional student experience. Within a School context the TNE activities are well recognised but beyond the College the scale and significance is less well understood. Given the differing demands on infrastructure and support from TNE students, it may be prudent to appoint experienced TNE staff to central committees (such as IT services etc) to represent the views and requirements of both staff and students involved with TNE activities.

At a School level, Dr Kelum Gamage has recently been assigned as the School Quality Officer – one of the most senior learning & teaching positions in the School (thus ensuring two fly-in staff as members of the School Learning & Teaching Committee). Dr Sajjad Hussain has recently been appointed to the School 'on-lining' committee, a key in transitioning our teaching to blended provision in the 2020-21 session as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Recommendation 17

Also in relation to TNE, the Review Panel **recommends** that a review of the marking process be undertaken to ensure consistency of approach in terms of explaining the grading criteria when providing feedback on assessment. [*Paragraph 6.3.1*]

**For the attention of: Transnational Education Dean
Vice Dean Glasgow College UESTC
For information: The Head of School**

Joint Response:

We recognise the importance of consistency of approach in terms of explaining the grading criteria when providing feedback on assessment and we made some significant changes to improve the consistency of the marking and feedback process. A further example of TNE activities influencing School procedures is the updating of the exam moderation process where moderators are required to comment and confirm grading criteria as part of the moderation process – this will be introduced school-wide from the 2021 session. We have also introduced a "continuous Assessment Guideline" document to ensure consistency of approach during the marking and feedback process. In response to advice from our accreditation body, we now review continuous assessment marks for each module using scatter plots during the exam board. This ensures coursework is suitably discriminatory and consistent across different modules.

Recommendation 18

Also in relation to TNE, the Review Panel **recommends** that there is a general review of the curriculum and teaching approach to address the issues identified in relation to overlapping content, opportunities for more interactive teaching and students' understanding of the material at UGS on an ongoing and formative basis. *[Paragraph 6.2.1]*

For the attention of: Transnational Education Dean
For information: The Head of School

Response: Head of School

In the past academic year, a review of teaching was initiated as part of a School Learning and Teaching Day, held whilst UGS staff were in Glasgow as part of the student Overseas Immersion Programme. Staff from UGS and GCU, as well as Glasgow campus staff, presented in the areas of: curriculum development, on-line teaching and the use of technology in enhancing interactive teaching techniques.

Note that our TNE offering in Singapore is transitioning from a Glasgow-driven to an SIT-partnership model, as SIT itself transitions to a fully-fledged University. Degrees associated with mechanical and aero engineering will transition in the 2021 academic session. This has resulted in a broad curriculum review and restructure, involving consultations with students, external academic experts, the Singaporean ministry of education, and industrialists, as well as academics in GCU, SIT and the Glasgow campus. We are confident that the resulting course curricula are fit for the future.

University of Glasgow
Academic Standards Committee – Friday 20 November 2020
Discretion and Rounding
Cover Sheet

Professor Jill Morrison, Clerk of Senate

Brief Description of the Paper

At its meeting on 22 November 2019 ASC approved a proposal to consult across the University on possible changes to policy on (1) the operation of discretion in the award of honours and masters degree classifications and (2) the use of rounding in aggregation.

The consultation was issued in January 2020 with all Schools and Research Institutes invited to respond by the end of February. Collation of responses and formulation of proposals was put on hold as the pandemic took hold but has now been taken forward. (Full responses are attached in Appendix 1.)

Action Requested

ASC is asked to:

- Consider the responses received to the consultation undertaken in January/February 2020 and the various points summarised in the paper.
- Contribute any further reflections on these issues arising from events over the No Detriment period.
- Consider two possible proposals for amending the operation of discretion.
- Approve, in principle, the proposal to determine promotion by reference to GPA alone.
- Consider a proposal that for the time being no action is taken in relation to rounding.

Recommended Person/s responsible for taking the action(s) forward

The Clerk of Senate and Senate Office staff will take forward the development and dissemination of amended regulations and guidance, as required.

Resource Implications (where appropriate)

None identified.

Timescale for Implementation (where appropriate)

It is anticipated that agreed changes would be implemented in session 2021-22, with transition arrangements for continuing students considered separately.

Equality Implications (where appropriate)

None.

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 20 November 2020

Discretion and Rounding

Professor Jill Morrison, Clerk of Senate

Background to consultation

At its meeting on 22 November 2019 ASC approved a proposal to consult across the University on possible changes to policy on (1) the operation of discretion in the award of honours and masters degree classifications and (2) the use of rounding in aggregation.

The consultation was issued in January 2020 with all Schools and Research Institutes invited to respond by the end of February. Collation of responses and formulation of proposals was put on hold as the pandemic took hold.

Consultation responses

Responses were received from a range of different levels: Colleges, Schools/RIs and subject areas, and from the SRC. In some cases a mix of different views was reported so it has not been possible to give specific tallies of 'for' and 'against' views.

Not all Schools and RIs responded. A couple of areas commented on a lack of time to respond given industrial action taking place at the start of the year.

Discretion

The majority view was in favour of simplifying the decision-making in relation to degree classification. There were several comments about the importance of removing unfairness and inconsistency, and improving transparency. There was a small number of opposing views, suggesting that GPA and algorithms alone are not sufficiently sensitive means of arriving at sound academic judgements.

One response noted the high proportion of students who fall into the current discretionary zones meaning that it is a very significant issue.

Some in favour of simplifying the operation of discretion felt this way because the extent of 'discretion' currently available is so limited.

Some were in favour of simplifying the operation of discretion only if changes were also introduced in rounding, i.e. that component results rather than overall course grades were aggregated.

The question was raised as to whether, if exit velocity was no longer a permitted discretionary criterion, it would still be possible to weight Junior Honours and Senior Honours differently. There is no proposal to prohibit such weightings.

In relation to the proposal that promotion should be automatic where the GPA was equal to or above .5 in the relevant zone, responses were largely in agreement. However, a number suggested combining automatic promotion from $\geq .5$ with the use of a single criterion across the University: grade profile of $\geq 50\%$ in the higher classification. A number of responses proposed this as a means of minimising the impact of, say, one very poor assessment.

A small number of responses suggested that different approaches should be in use for PGT from those for UG.

Rounding

Responses indicated that using component results rather than overall course results for aggregation would be a fairer approach, though one view was that this was not appropriate as the 'unit of learning' is the course not the component. One response reported having used unrounded mean as a discretionary criterion over a number of years. Their experience was that it never resulted in the promotion of a candidate who would not otherwise have been promoted. This raises the question of whether it is necessary to move to the unrounded mean.

Responses suggest that using component results rather than course results might make it more difficult for students to calculate/understand their own GPA. One response suggested that using/displaying unrounded grade points from course results would address this.

It was also noted that rounding would need to be applied consistently to all significant values (e.g. progress requirements, entry to honours) not just to final programme GPAs.

Rounding first to course grades tends to slightly favour students as 0.5 is rounded up, so moving to the aggregation of component grades could bring overall results down. Would unfairness arise from the fact that some courses have many components while some have only one? One response noted that results from study abroad are received as overall course grades; component grades are not made available even where multiple components of assessment have been completed by the student.

Responses noted the importance of clarity about the way rounding would operate: the number of decimal places to be used at each stage; the definition of a 'component' of assessment. There was concern at the unwieldy nature of spreadsheets where calculating from components (though this is what was required with the No Detriment approach) and a note that appropriate training would need to be provided.

Not surprisingly, significant anxiety was expressed about the workload associated with novel calculations and the imperative of systems being able to manage the relevant data in a reliable way. Under the WCG project a system is currently being developed to handle course component results, and calculate and display to students overall course results. Currently the project is not developing a system to carry out programme aggregation.

Modelling of proposed changes

Some of the responses suggest that the impact of any proposed changes should be modelled. In relation to discretion, the response from Life Sciences included interesting information on the impact of (a) using only automatic promotion from $\geq .5$ and (b) using automatic promotion from $\geq .5$ in combination with $.1 - .4$ where $\geq 50\%$ grade profile is in the higher class.

Since the consultation

It should be noted that temporary arrangements under the No Detriment policy included amendments to the usual position on discretion and on rounding:

- Discretion: under the No Detriment policy, where the final programme GPA was at $\geq .5$ in a discretionary zone, promotion was automatic. Where the final GPA fell in the $.1 - .4$ range promotion was permitted, in effect, where the student would normally have been promoted if the discretionary criteria that had been published at the start of the programme were applied.

While the consultation responses were received before this temporary change, anecdotal feedback regarding automatic promotion has been positive.

- Rounding: under the No Detriment policy, final GPAs were calculated by aggregating by component rather than by course result. This reflected the fact that on any individual course some components of assessment may have been affected by the pandemic and some not.

Again, the responses pre-date this change. It is perhaps difficult to draw anything from the experience of working with component grades as some were simply disregarded in calculation of final GPAs.

ASC is asked to:

- **Consider the responses received to the consultation undertaken in January/February 2020 and the various points summarised above.**
- **Contribute any further reflections on these issues arising from events over the No Detriment period.**

Discretion: In view of the fact that the majority of responses favour a simplification of the operation of discretion, **ASC is asked to consider two possible proposals:**

1. Promotion of candidates to the award of a higher classification would be determined by GPA alone. The threshold for promotion would be as follows:¹

First class/ PGT Distinction: ≥ 17.5

2.1 / PGT Merit: ≥ 14.5

2.2: ≥ 11.5

Third class: ≥ 8.5

OR

2. Promotion of candidates would be determined firstly by GPA as described in (1.) but in addition would be determined, for those in the following bands, by the course grade profile. Where 50% or more of the profile lies in the higher classification the student would be promoted.

First class/ PGT Distinction: $\geq 17.1 - 17.4$

2.1 / PGT Merit: $\geq 14.1 - 14.4$

2.2: $\geq 11.1 - 11.4$

Third class: $\geq 8.1 - 8.4$

Proposal (1.) is recommended. A student whose final programme GPA is 17.5 or above has, on average, demonstrated performance at the level of First class. The same is not true for a student with a GPA of 17.4. Requiring a GPA of 17.5 for a First would be clear to students and to staff, and would be administratively straightforward. This would also support current plans to develop a more simplified approach in our degree regulations wherever possible. The need for this was underlined by our recent experience of the challenges in developing the No Detriment Policy which required a consistent approach across the University.

Some of the responses recommended the use of modelling to understand the likely impact of change. While there is a clear rationale for proposing thresholds set at 17.5, 14.5 etc, it is

¹ Thresholds where there is currently no discretionary zone would be unaffected, e.g. requirement for a GPA of 9.0 for the award of an ordinary/designated degree, and progress/award requirement of a GPA of 12.0 in the taught courses component of a PGT Masters degree.

proposed that at the January 2020 meeting ASC should consider modelled outcomes from a sample of subject areas showing classifications that would have been obtained from 2018-19 results if the thresholds for promotion had been set for First Class/Distinction at 17.1, 17.5 or 18.0, 2.1/Merit at 14.1, 14.5 or 15.0, and so on. **ASC is therefore asked to approve, in principle, Proposal (1.) above, with a final decision to be taken at the January 2020 meeting in light of the outcomes from suggested modelling.**

Rounding: A clear majority of responses favoured the aggregation of component results in place of overall course results, with the view being expressed that this would give a more reliable final GPA. While this principle is accepted, **ASC is asked to consider a proposal that for the time being no action is taken in relation to rounding.** Great concern has been expressed about the potential for confusion and the impact on staff workload arising from such a change. For the foreseeable future there is no prospect of the introduction of a centralised system that will manage the aggregation of component grades into grade point averages.

If ASC accepts the proposal not to move to an unrounded GPA at the present time, it is suggested that some modelling is undertaken on GPAs of .4 and .3 in the current discretionary zones to understand the impact of rounding. Results from such modelling could lead to a modification of the proposal above on discretion, for example, to allow unrounded mean to be considered where the GPA was close to the .5 threshold.

Academic Standards Committee Consultation on the Operation of Discretion and Rounding

COLLEGE OF ARTS

School of Critical Studies

We consulted members of the Postgraduate Committee and the Learning and Teaching Committee (the former by email and the latter at a meeting). We also circulated the consultation document to all School staff. There was rather little time for colleagues to respond, because of the industrial action. We received email responses from six members of academic staff and one member of administrative staff.

Question 1: Do you agree that the University should remove discretion in the award of degree classifications? This would involve removing discretionary/borderline zones and instead determining classification solely by reference to grade point average.

Responses to this question were mixed. A narrow majority responded “yes”. The main reason given was concern about the potential unfairness arising from different ways of exercising discretion between different subject boards in the case of Joint Honours, which the new approach would resolve. One respondent who agreed with question 1 commented that they actually favoured academic discretion in principle, but felt that the options to exercise academic judgement of the range and depth of a candidate’s performance are so limited under the current system, that the new system would be preferable on grounds of fairness. Another respondent agreed with question 1 and 2, but only on condition that 3 was also agreed.

To qualify this majority view:

- One respondent felt that discretion should be maintained, because it allows us to recognise the merits of students whose work is borderline or whose performance may have fluctuated a little, and because the practice of asking externals to read a full run of a candidate’s work is a very useful form of scrutiny and quality assurance
- Another respondent felt that the *breadth* of the current zone of discretion is what is problematic, rather than its existence, and was in favour of shrinking the zone of discretion, but not removing it entirely.

Only one respondent commented on the question of whether the change would leave externals and exam boards with enough to do. This respondent noted that externals in their subject area had for some time been asking for the opportunity to see runs of marks from across particular courses, and removing discretion from them would free them up to a) focus on consistency and rigour of marking across and within courses and b) provide us with valuable feedback.

Question 2: If discretionary/borderline zones are to be removed, would you agree with the following proposed grade point average thresholds?

- 1st class/PGT Distinction: GPA of 17.5
- 2.1/PGT Merit: GPA of 14.5
- 2.2: GPA of 11.5
- 3rd class: GPA of 8.5

No-one raised any objection to these thresholds.

Question 3: Do you agree that on Honours and Masters programmes, Grade Point Average should be calculated using all the assessment component grades, appropriately weighted, from all of the contributing courses? This would replace the current method of calculating GPA from overall course grades.

Some important clarifications were requested (see below). Beyond these, those who responded to this question had mixed views. One respondent felt that the proposed method of calculation would be essential if discretion were removed. Another felt that this method would be cumbersome, and could lead to confusion among students who were trying to calculate their running GPA in order to make strategic decisions about how to prioritize their coursework. This respondent also noted that the “double-rounding” that results from calculating GPA from overall course grades, tends to help rather than hurt students, in the aggregate (because 0.5 rounds up rather than down). It was observed that modelling the consequences of the change using past data would help to clarify these issues and would establish whether there are any unintended consequences.

It was observed that admin teams would need very clear guidance on implementing the change. In particular, displaying a response (in Excel) to 1 decimal place does NOT give the same results as rounding. 17.466, shown to 1dp, appears as 17.5, but if this were the final GPA then for purposes of degree classification, then it should round down rather than up. Great care would be needed to ensure that new formulae are correctly expressed in spreadsheets.

We request the following **clarifications**:

1. Clarification of **how “assessment component grades” are defined**. For instance, in the case of an examination, is it (a) the overall grade for the examination, or (b) the grade for each examination question, or for each sub-component of an examination question? In the case of a multi-part portfolio (such as a series of moodle quizzes), is it (a) the overall grade for the portfolio, or (b) the grade for each component of the portfolio? The principle of the section on Rounding seems to point towards (b), but my concern is that students are usually (I think) only given their overall examination grade, and may justifiably feel aggrieved if it does not match up with their degree result.
2. Clarification of whether subjects that currently **weight Junior Honours and Senior Honours courses differently** would still be able to do so. (The option to use exit velocity as a criterion for performances in the zone of discretion would presumably no longer apply.)
3. To **how many decimal places** would the final GPA be expressed?

We would further **recommend**:

- That ASC thoroughly **model and discuss the outcomes** before deciding whether to go ahead – eg by taking the 2019 degree results for four or five degree programmes across the university and seeing what will happen if we apply this new process, to check it doesn't disadvantage students or have other unintended outcomes
- That if ASC decides to go ahead with the change, very clear **guidance and training** should be provided to Admin teams on GPA calculations and rounding

School of Culture & Creative Arts

Subject Area Response	Question 1: Do you agree that the University should remove discretion in the award of degree classifications? This would involve removing discretionary/borderline zones and instead determining classification solely by reference to grade point average.	Question 2: If discretionary/borderline zones are to be removed, would you agree with the following proposed grade point average thresholds? - 1st class/PGT Distinction: GPA of 17.5 - 2.1/PGT Merit: GPA of 14.5 - 2.2: GPA of 11.5 - 3rd class: GPA of 8.5	Question 3: Do you agree that on Honours and Masters programmes, Grade Point Average should be calculated using all the assessment component grades, appropriately weighted, from all of the contributing courses? This would replace the current method of calculating GPA from overall course grades.	
Film & TV Studies	Yes	Yes	Yes	FTV agree with all the questions and would particularly appreciate the added transparency that would be afforded by this process.
Theatre Studies	No	n/a (see question 1)	No	
Music	Yes	Yes	Yes	
History of Art	Yes	Yes	Yes	
CTCTAH	See L&T Committee response	See L&T Committee response	See L&T Committee response	
CCPR	We think yes to ending discretion in favour of consistent application of rules. It's fairer, in our view, and less contentious from students' point of view, but in terms of the eligibility requirements for award of distinction and merit for PGT students, we think it is better to stick with the existing requirements than move to the much more lax suggested new requirements for (lower) GPAs. On rounding, yes, it is better to do this at aggregate level as suggested.			
Learning and Teaching Committee	There was not a consensus. We felt the use of GPA alone is a basic way of calculating a degree result. Other institutions do not use discretion, but do have a set of rules governing degree classification that are not just based on GPA e.g. preponderance could be written into the rules for classification, rather than being left to discretion.	These seem reasonable, but they could be augmented by additional stipulations (e.g. a 17.5 gets a First no matter what, but a 17.3 with preponderance also gets a First)	Yes. However, the university should provide a reasonable method for producing an assessment board report which can contain the complexity of the mathematics required. Though elemental grading in my campus, then producing a standard report for meetings for example.	

School of Modern Languages & Cultures

This matter was discussed on 19 February at SMLC Board of Studies. The committee would like to pass on feedback as follows:

Question 1: Do you agree that the University should remove discretion in the award of degree classifications? This would involve removing discretionary/borderline zones and instead determining classification solely by reference to grade point average.

YES

Question 2: If discretionary/borderline zones are to be removed, would you agree with the following proposed grade point average thresholds?

- 1st class/PGT Distinction: GPA of 17.5
- 2.1/PGT Merit: GPA of 14.5
- 2.2: GPA of 11.5
- 3rd class: GPA of 8.5

YES

Question 3: Do you agree that on Honours and Masters programmes, Grade Point Average should be calculated using all the assessment component grades, appropriately weighted, from all of the contributing courses? This would replace the current method of calculating GPA from overall course grades.

Members of the Committee were unsure how to interpret this proposal. If students' GPAs are to be calculated using all the assessment component grades this would lead to very unwieldy and complex spreadsheets at Honours level. The Committee were in favour of using unrounded grades at course level and of calculating the GPA from these grades - in which unrounded component grades are contained.

The Committee would also like to request guidance on how many digits after the decimal point would be used in calculations.

COLLEGE OF MEDICAL, VETERINARY & LIFE SCIENCES

Institute of Biodiversity, Animal Health & Comparative Medicine (Teaching Lead)

Question 1: Do you agree that the University should remove discretion in the award of degree classifications? This would involve removing discretionary/borderline zones and instead determining classification solely by reference to grade point average.

Yes. Given that this is already the practice in majority of the cases, it would not be a big change.

Question 2: If discretionary/borderline zones are to be removed, would you agree with the following proposed grade point average thresholds?

- 1st class/PGT Distinction: GPA of 17.5
- 2.1/PGT Merit: GPA of 14.5
- 2.2: GPA of 11.5
- 3rd class: GPA of 8.5

This might need some checking, for instance by looking at previous years' degree classifications and seeing how much this practice would have affected them: it has happened in the past that a person with 17.1 GPA has been promoted to 1st class degree but, if the current proposal is accepted, this would no longer be possible. If continuity in degree classifications standard is a goal, the threshold should be set accordingly.

Question 3: Do you agree that on Honours and Masters programmes, Grade Point Average should be calculated using all the assessment component grades, appropriately weighted, from all of the contributing courses? This would replace the current method of calculating GPA from overall course grades.

Again, without doing some calculations with existing data, it is not possible to know what the actual impact of this practice would be. But, in principle, this does not sound bad.

Institute of Cardiovascular & Medical Sciences

“My first thought is that at PGT we already don’t use discretion, we just use a slightly complicated rule (which we call ‘discretion’), whereby if GPA is above a certain level (18.0 overall with over 17.0 in both taught and project components, for distinction) we award the higher grade, and if they are just below this ‘in the zone of discretion’ (17.1-17.9 from memory) AND they have at least 50% of credits above 18.0, we award a distinction. So, there is no real ‘discretion’ in the zone of discretion here – we just apply a consistent rule in two stages. I’m happy with the rule the way it is and would not favour a change here at PGT, but we can reword our current practice to remove mention of the word discretion. For UG degrees, I am happy with this change.

I would NOT favour using unrounded grades. Different courses have different numbers of assessments contributing to the course grade. If there is only one piece of work, then the grade will be an integer, if there is more than one, then rounding is possible. I can imagine the potential for inconsistency here where some components of the final grades are roundable and others not – this will differ between students taking different courses, so I can imagine some theoretical unfairness creeping in here.”

Other comments.

“My response to the questions posed would be a strong No to Q1. As for Q2, it is predicated by a positive response to Q1 yet I still think it is wrong. As for Q3 it is Yes. The rationale for my negative responses for the first two is...

The 22-point scale is designed not to be linear, therefore the way we average grades in the first place is mathematically incorrect. The discretion is the only way we have of dealing with this given preponderance of grades or with a review of work by the external examiner. It is easy to see how just saying 14.5 is the cut off for a PGT merit (or indeed a 2.1 in the case of undergraduates) can exclude those that have had a train wreck in one exam/course. For example, if a student took 5 courses and got B2 in four of them but an E1 in the other, they would come out with a GPA of 14.4 and using the cutoffs in Q2 would get the lower grade. This heavy penalty would likely not happen were a student to be marked under the percentage-style schemes of most other universities. The mathematical system of GPA we have really does penalise heavily students that have a bad course/exam. At the moment, if they had 14.4 they would automatically be elevated to an upper second/merit based on preponderance. If you were to set arbitrary values, you should go for 17.1, 14.1, 11.1 etc, as they are better than the highest grade in the band below – 17.0, 14.0 and 11.0. Why the grade boundary would have to be half way in-between on a non-linear scale does not have a logical basis, it is arbitrary. “

Institute of Health & Wellbeing

Question 1: Do you agree that the University should remove discretion in the award of degree classifications? This would involve removing discretionary/borderline zones and instead determining classification solely by reference to grade point average.

Response: Given the potential for unfairness in the application of discretion it seems appropriate to remove discretionary zones.

Question 2: If discretionary/borderline zones are to be removed, would you agree with the following proposed grade point average thresholds?

- 1st class/PGT Distinction: GPA of 17.5
- 2.1/PGT Merit: GPA of 14.5
- 2.2: GPA of 11.5
- 3rd class: GPA of 8.5

Response: We query the need for these thresholds and whether the Schedule A grade thresholds of 18, 15, 12, 9 would not be most appropriate. It is not clear from the consultation document whether there really is a need to have a 0.5 point threshold below the current grade cut-offs.

Question 3: Do you agree that on Honours and Masters programmes, Grade Point Average should be calculated using all the assessment component grades, appropriately weighted, from all of the contributing courses? This would replace the current method of calculating GPA from overall course grades.

Response: There is some concern about the potential complexity of each assignment contributing individually (and harder for the student and staff to understand). However, it does seem fairer for students to use individual components or at least the unrounded course grade points. Preference would be for the unrounded course grade points to be used as this would make final GPA calculations more straightforward and transparent than using individual components with various weights attached. An additional concern is that a similar approach would need to be set-up for determining the GPA at the time of progressing onto a PGT research project (currently a GPA of 12 based on rounded end of course grade points is used) to ensure consistency.

Institute of Infection, Immunity & Inflammation

Question 1: Do you agree that the University should remove discretion in the award of degree classifications? This would involve removing discretionary/borderline zones and instead determining classification solely by reference to grade point average.

YES

Question 2: If discretionary/borderline zones are to be removed, would you agree with the following proposed grade point average thresholds?

- 1st class/PGT Distinction: GPA of 17.5
- 2.1/PGT Merit: GPA of 14.5
- 2.2: GPA of 11.5
- 3rd class: GPA of 8.5

YES

Question 3: Do you agree that on Honours and Masters programmes, Grade Point Average should be calculated using all the assessment component grades, appropriately weighted, from all of the contributing courses? This would replace the current method of calculating GPA from overall course grades.

YES

School of Life Sciences

We consulted widely with academic staff across the School and with affiliated academic staff in the MVLS Research Institutes who teach on our programmes.

Our School of Life Sciences (SLS) has >2,000 undergraduates, ~1/10th of the university total, with ~500 graduating each year. Of those, ~1/3rd fall into what is now a "zone of discretion". A lot of students may potentially be affected by the proposed changes.

Any change to policy should be done for sound theoretical and operational reasons, but any negative impact of a change to degree outcomes should not be ignored (not least because such outcomes are key metrics for some University League Tables). The ASC proposal, when modeled on 2018-2019 data for our school, would result in ~10% of ALL graduates coming out with a lower degree class (fewer firsts, fewer 2i).

We propose an adjustment to the ASC algorithm in the attached document that is (we feel) more sound theoretically, better fits the assessment for non-professional subjects, and happens to also mitigate much of that potential hit to degree outcomes. A win-win. We hope the ASC gives the attached serious consideration.

I can provide a summary of detailed modeling of degree outcomes for SLS students if the ASC requests it.

Background

We, as a School, are collectively and overwhelmingly in favour of the philosophy and principles behind the proposals:

- **An ALGORITHMIC approach** to degree award ... although not necessary to the simple algorithm based only on GPA
- **The “balance of evidence”** to decide degree award, as is implicit in the proposal to use GPA boundaries between grade points (17.4, 14.5 etc.)
- **Use unrounded course GPA.**

We **propose an amended** scheme that would address all of our collective concerns.

School response to the consultation

Question 1: YES

Question 2: NO – but we propose an alternative algorithm (see below)

Question 3: YES – workable only if MyCampus (or descendant) can store course grades to one decimal place (and not as integers as at present)

Proposed altered algorithm

For each boundary as proposed (“XX.5”: 17.5, 14.5 etc.):

1) Is unrounded GPA at XX.5 or above?

If YES, award higher class. If NO, proceed to 2)

2) Is unrounded GPA between XX.1 and XX.4?

If NO, award the lower class If YES, proceed to 3)

3) Are 50% or more of the rounded course grades at the higher class?

If YES, award the higher class If NO, award the lower class

Justification for the proposed amendments

This altered algorithm **remains true to the two key principles** of the current ASC proposal

- There is no subjectivity: the calculation is fully algorithmic.
- The decision is based on the “balance of evidence” – but with a complementary, supplementary extra estimation of that balance.

Our grading system has a dual nature:

- We grade by class... A, B, C, D etc, i.e, on an “Ordinal” scale. These classes have an order (highest to lowest) but not necessarily equal (or

- knowable) spacing
- We make a numerical translational of the ordinal grade scale onto a linear 22-point “interval” scale. This translation is a transformation, an approximation: it is imperfect.

Mathematically:

- ***The best measures of centrality for Ordinal data are the median and (its relation) preponderance.***
 - Advantage: Preponderance and median are resistant to outliers.
 - Disadvantage: Preponderance and median are not very sensitive
- ***The best measure of centrality for an Interval data is the arithmetic mean***
 - Advantage: The arithmetic mean is very sensitive
 - Disadvantage: The arithmetic mean is highly sensitive to outliers.

Better to use **both measures** of centrality together (GPA and preponderance) and thus combine their advantages.

Case studies

Consider a degree programme decided by 6 equally-weighted courses, each assessed by 2 or 3 high value items (e.g. high value essay, reports, proposals etc.):

Three cases that would be awarded a first based on the current ASC proposal (and based on our altered algorithm):

Case I:

A4, A4, A4, B2, B2, B2: GPA 17.5 – **first class** on GPA alone, and **50% of work** is at first class honours standard = also meets preponderance threshold.

The balance of evidence measured either by GPA or by preponderance is in favour.

Case II:

A4, A4, A4, A4, B2, C2: GPA 17.5 – **first class** on GPA alone, and **67% of work** is at first class honours standard = also meets preponderance threshold.

The balance of evidence measured by GPA or by preponderance is in favour, but preponderance is much more persuasive.

Case III:

A1, B1, B1, B1, B2, B2: GPA 17.5 – **first class** on GPA alone, but **only 17% of work** is at first class standard but does not meet the secondary preponderance threshold.

Preponderance argues against award of a first, but it is impossible for a student to attain A1 on a course by accident. That outstanding performance is not accidental and dominates (as an outlier) via GPA.

Two cases that would be awarded a 2i based on current ASC proposal but would be promoted based on our alternative algorithm:

Case IV:

A4, A4, A4, A5, B2, B2: GPA 17.3 – **upper second** on GPA alone, but **67% of work** is at first class standard. This case would be promoted based on our alternative proposed algorithm.

Case V:

A5, A5, A5, A5, A5, C1 GPA 17.3 – **upper second** on GPA alone but **84% of work** is at first class honours. This case would be promoted based on our alternative

algorithm.

This is an approximate mirror image of *case III* above – but here, one outlier has a devastating effect via GPA alone but one that would be mitigated by considering preponderance. It is very easy for a student on such a programme to score a low grade on one course by simple misinterpretation of one question (= one small cognitive error).

School of Medicine, Dentistry & Nursing (UG)

I chair the LTC for the School of Medicine, Dentistry and Nursing. For context – the undergraduate “professional” programmes have historically, and indeed to continue in many ways, had a differing approach to the summation of “credit”, whereby in essence students are required to pass everything, in order to ensure they meet the standards laid out by the accrediting bodies. Furthermore, the awards are usually not classified along the lines of the standard outcomes. Finally, the GPA system is not generally used to determine final outcomes either, as officially the course structures are not “credit weighted” in the usual way. The curricula and associated learning outcomes are integrated both vertically and horizontally across the duration of the programmes

Taken together, in practical terms this means the proposals around discretion do not really impact on current practice at undergraduate level within this school. The school does have a significant portfolio of PGT programmes, however my understanding is that a collated response from MVLS Graduate School was being submitted on behalf of the College, therefore I won’t muddy the waters further on that area.

Nonetheless, the proposals were debated in the round. The feeling is that we would view the questions as follows:

Q1 – yes

Q2 – yes

Q3 – no: the unit of learning is the course, not the individual assessment. Different numbers of courses (with differing numbers of assessments) between programmes would seem to make this an over-complicated approach. Retaining a grade (integer) for each course would seem to be the more intuitive and sensible approach.

School of Veterinary Medicine

These proposals were discussed by the SoVM L&T committee on 26th February 2020.

The consensus was to support the proposals.

The committee did think that the phrase “assessment component grades” needed further clarification.

In the context of the BVMS, which like many professional programmes, is a non-honours programme we assumed that it might fall under proposal 3.

COLLEGE OF SCIENCE & ENGINEERING

James Watt School of Engineering

The note from the L&T Committee was:

The committee supported the removal of the discretionary band and the proposed GPA thresholds.

The university is also proposing to review rounding. The Code of Assessment currently states that grade point average is calculated by aggregating the integers associated with the relevant overall course grades. These overall course grades are usually the product of aggregating assessment component grades. Therefore, the final GPA usually reflects at least two stages of rounding. This causes discretisation effects. In considering discretionary zones and classification thresholds, the university feels it is timely to reconsider the means by which the GPA is determined. It is suggested that an 'unrounded' GPA is more reliable, that is, the programme GPA should be calculated using all the assessment component grades individually, appropriately weighted, from all the contributing courses.

The committee are interested in this however until My Campus has the capability to support this i.e. by storing detailed component marks then the board would not support this change. Without the support from My Campus this would have to be completed by excel spreadsheets and the chance of structural error is very high.

School of Chemistry

Question 1: Do you agree that the University should remove discretion in the award of degree classifications? This would involve removing discretionary/borderline zones and instead determining classification solely by reference to grade point average.

do not agree for the following reasons:

Academic discretion and judgment are essential and constitutive features of any (academic) grading system. They become all the more important the coarser the grade scale is and the weightier the award in question. E.g., for an assessment that contributes a fraction to a course grade that in turn is one of many components contributing to the GPA, it is usually fine to apply a blind algorithm that spits out a mark; whether that mark is 62% or 63% is not a matter of judgment. On the other hand, the decision whether the candidate is worthy of receiving a PhD degree based on the thesis presented and her performance in the viva voce examination is almost entirely a question of academic judgment and requires a finely balanced consideration of a multitude of factors in the round.

The classification of undergraduate degrees falls somewhere in the middle between these two extremes, but is in my view closer to the latter scenario. If a rigid algorithm is applied, the "decision" about whether a student falls on this or that side of the line is left to the random outcome of aggregating dozens of components. A single marker, by awarding 0.5 or 1 mark more or less for a single question in a single paper may ultimately have decided the classification, without any consideration being given to the student's overall performance in the round. Such an approach ignores the importance of academic judgment and would be an abdication from academic responsibility.

The proposal implicitly acknowledges the importance of discretion and judgment. However, it erroneously presumes that discretion and judgment are applied at the level of each assessment (see p. 2, para 2, last 3 lines). This presumption is flawed. It is not only unrealistic, but unfeasible: the individual marker only sees his own question. He does not need to consider the student's performance in the round, nor is he in a position to do so, when he decides, within the constraints of the marking scheme applicable for that question, whether to deduct 0.5 marks for a minor mistake. However, over the set of questions in a paper, 1 or 2 marks may be decisive for the course grade on the 22-Point scale, which may in turn may decide on which side of the borderline the student lies.

In summary: (1) Discretion and academic judgment are essential. (2) They necessarily require a consideration of the students' performance in the round. (3) Such an integrated overview is not available at the level of individual assessments.

Question 2: If discretionary/borderline zones are to be removed, would you agree with the following proposed grade point average thresholds?

N/A: see response to Q1.

Question 3: Do you agree that on Honours and Masters programmes, Grade Point Average should be calculated using all the assessment component grades, appropriately weighted, from all of the contributing courses? This would replace the current method of calculating GPA from overall course grades.

There is some disagreement relating to this point e.g.

Q3: Mainly the Teaching Committee agree for the following reasons:

In many (quantitative) subjects, assessments are routinely marked on a percentage scale. Currently, the finely resolved marks (on a scale 0–100) are then mapped onto a much coarser grade scale (0–22). The various component grades are then aggregated and again rounded to an integer course grade.

In most cases, the mapping will involve a cut-off at the top (and at the bottom). That is, all marks above, e.g., 85% are mapped to 22 Points (and all marks below, e.g., 10% are mapped to 0 Points). The consequence is that the top 15% of performance are irrecoverably lost. This distortion is currently compensated for by wide bands of discretion and the rule of unrounded means. However, it is principally unsatisfactory to discard good data in the first place and then to apply a set of fairly complicated exception clauses to correct for the artifacts thus introduced.

As a footnote, I am not entirely convinced by the scenarios in the proposal. It would appear to me that they only apply if the “unrounded means” rule is not used.

Q3: **disagree** and caution for the following reasons;

this change would present practical problems, create administrative burden with more complex spreadsheets to maintain, and increase the risk of miscalculations:

- There is no University system to safely store all these individual grade components across students' years of study. Mycampus, while incredibly cumbersome, at least gives class heads a reliable repository of the final course grades to be used in degree classification calculations - this is needed to retrieve Level 3 grades (one may argue that these grades can be retrieved from L3 Class Heads - but there is a danger data can be lost when people change roles/leave/die, or incorrect/outdated files can be sent, etc.)
- This is also a bigger burden for anyone calculating results for combined subject degrees (e.g. chemical physics). Class heads from different years and different schools would have to bring all these results together - having to keep track of a myriad of different course components and different combinations for different students creates greater risk of making mistakes in spreadsheets when merging grades together. This sounds like it would be extremely complex!

Query:

The document seems to be about GPA's for Hons and Masters degrees. So for students graduating with a Designated Degree would we still use the current method? (Ditto for calculating GPAs for Certificates and Diploma). Seems inconsistent and would create difficulties when trying to calculate a student's GPA and try to decide if they're eligible for distinction/merit using this new method)

School of Computing Science

This is the feedback from the Learning and Teaching Committee of the School of Computing Science:

Question 1: Do you agree that the University should remove discretion in the award of degree classifications? This would involve removing discretionary/borderline zones and instead determining classification solely by reference to grade point average.

Yes.

Question 2: If discretionary/borderline zones are to be removed, would you agree with the following proposed grade point average thresholds?

- 1st class/PGT Distinction: GPA of 17.5
- 2.1/PGT Merit: GPA of 14.5
- 2.2: GPA of 11.5
- 3rd class: GPA of 8.5

Yes.

Question 3: Do you agree that on Honours and Masters programmes, Grade Point Average should be calculated using all the assessment component grades, appropriately weighted, from all of the contributing courses? This would replace the current method of calculating GPA from overall course grades.

If by this is meant that we use the unrounded GPAs for each course, then we can agree. I.e. we compute an unrounded mark from the weighted assessment components for each course, and then we compute the unrounded GPA based on the weighted sum of these unrounded course marks.

School of Mathematics & Statistics

As Convenor of the School's Learning and Teaching Committee, I asked the committee to feed any comments to me on this consultation. The unanimous view of those who commented was a "yes" to all three questions.

Two particular comments related to questions 2 and 3:

2) "Although the rules allow joint boards to come up with different promotion criteria to the single honours boards we saw a case in Maths last summer where it wasn't clear what criteria were being applied and a protracted appeal dealing with it. I think for clarity for students it is better to have the very simple boundaries proposed."

3) "In cases of Good Cause, we already have to drill down to the individual assessment components to calculate the GPA (and determine whether 60% of the assessment has been completed); it always seemed strange to do such a fine calculation for students with Good Cause in a few components but then the coarse one for students without Good Cause."

I would further add that, once a board has decided to use course profile in discretionary zones, discretion has essentially disappeared anyway and one is left with a complicated but deterministic algorithm which has no demonstrated advantages over the straightforward rule that is being proposed.

School of Physics & Astronomy

The School of Physics and Astronomy Teaching Committee discussed these proposals on 20th February 2020 and reached the following conclusions.

Question 1: Do you agree that the University should remove discretion in the award of degree classifications? This would involve removing discretionary/borderline zones and instead determining classification solely by reference to grade point average.

We first discussed the name “discretionary zones”. We felt that there is little discretion left in the borderline degree classifications, so we should use the terminology “borderline zones” or “boundary zones” rather than “discretionary zones”, since it sends the wrong message that degree classifications are completely at the discretion of the academics.

Indeed, the only discretion is in the adoption of an algorithm, which could differ from School to School, and which is applied rigorously to determine whether a student’s degree classification is in the higher or lower band.

The university should not remove the boundary zones for the award of degree classifications:

- 1) Academic discretion to define added criteria for the award of degree classifications for students in the boundary zones is essential to ensure robust decision-making in the final degree classification for students studying at the University of Glasgow. These criteria are transparent and published in advance, so students are well aware of the algorithm that will be used. In Physics and Astronomy, we use the course grade profile (percentage of credits at the higher classification) and an improvement of grades in the final year (exit velocity) criteria to justify a degree classification in the higher band. Note that Physics and Astronomy calculate the GPA strictly according to credit weights, rather than by putting more weight on the later years, so exit velocity is a valid grade boundary criterion. These criteria are well known to students in advance.
- 2) The granularity afforded by the university’s 22-point scale is not well suited to a sharp cut off between degree classifications based on a calculation of the Grade Point Average (GPA). The uncertainty and level of consistency associated to the grading of individual courses is approximately one grade point, which is part of the rationale for the 22-point scale. A sharp cut off to determine the degree classification, would be much smaller than this uncertainty and would depend on the number of decimal places one keeps for rounding the GPA. If the GPA is rounded to one decimal place, then a GPA of 17.46 would be rounded to 17.5, which then would be rounded upwards to 18.0. However, if the same GPA were kept to two decimal places, it would be rounded down to 17.0. It is manifestly absurd that two completely different outcomes depend on the number of decimal places to which one needs to carry out the rounding. Therefore, we argue that the flexibility in the boundary regions between degree classifications should be similar to the uncertainty associated to the award of grades in courses, which is approximately one grade point.

Question 2: If discretionary/borderline zones are to be removed, would you agree with the following proposed grade point average thresholds?

- **1st class/PGT Distinction: GPA of 17.5**
- **2.1/PGT Merit: GPA of 14.5**
- **2.2: GPA of 11.5**
- **3rd class: GPA of 8.5**

The university should not reduce the discretionary range in the award of degree classifications to one-half of a grade point:

- 1) As mentioned in the answer to question 1, the uncertainty and consistency associated to the grading of individual courses is approximately one grade point, so the degree classification discretion should encompass a similar range. Therefore, the discretionary range for each of the degree awards should remain as:
 - 1st class/PGT Distinction: GPA between 17.1 to 17.9
 - 2.1/PGT Merit: GPA between 14.1 to 14.9

- 2.2: GPA between 11.1 to 11.9
 - 3rd class: GPA between 8.1 to 8.9.
- 2) Over many years of applying discretionary criteria to our Honours and Masters students in Physics and Astronomy, we have had many examples of students that have a GPA between .1 and .4 of the boundary range and have a course grade profile that is 50% or above, so they have been promoted to the higher degree classification. The reason for this effect is that these are students that consistently achieve the higher grades but one or two courses where they have not performed well reduce the GPA to the lower half of the discretionary range. Therefore, the student consistently performs at the higher level, but due to a bad day at an exam or to one or two courses not well suited to the student, their GPA is much lower. Adding the course grade profile criterion as part of our discretionary judgement allows us to treat all students in a fairer manner and allows to track consistent performance.

Question 3: Do you agree that on Honours and Masters programmes, Grade Point Average should be calculated using all the assessment component grades, appropriately weighted, from all of the contributing courses? This would replace the current method of calculating GPA from overall course grades.

This proposal is not feasible in our School, as we do not have the resources to track every single course component assessment that contributes to the grades for every course that contributes to the GPA. Currently, it is already very challenging to keep track of all the published grades for all the overall course grades, which implies tracking dozens of courses over two or three years for all students. Adding all the assessment components from every single course to the global calculation imposes an undue burden in the centralised record-keeping, with potentially hundreds of assessment components that contribute to the GPA calculation, thereby increasing the probability of errors.

Furthermore, what constitutes an assessment component is not well defined. Assessment for a given course could be a combination of laboratory experiments, reports, homework assignments or workshops and one or more exams. Potentially there could be dozens of individual pieces of assessment in a given course. Should each laboratory or workshop be considered an assessment component, or should there be larger units within the course? What constitutes a unit of assessment therefore is not clear, so it is left up to course coordinators to perform this calculation and to take into account any special circumstances, if required. This would not be manageable if all the course component assessments were included in the GPA calculation, leading to inconsistencies in applying the overall GPA and special circumstances.

One argument in favour of including all course components in the GPA is that it avoids rounding errors. The wide borderline regions of between .1 and .9 around the grade boundaries mitigates against rounding errors due to the integer grade point for each course. In Physics and Astronomy, we included in our discretionary criteria for a number of years the idea of an unrounded mean (ie. calculating a GPA using the grade point for each course rounded to one decimal place instead of an integer) to ascertain whether a student's GPA would no longer be in the discretionary region. In more than five years, this extremely rare case only happened once, and even in that case, the student would have met the higher degree classification by other criteria, so we have now removed this from our borderline calculations. Since our empirical evidence suggests that the discretionary range covers any rounding error due to each course grade contributing with an integer grade point, we feel that it is not necessary to include all the assessment components of a course into the global calculation of the GPA.

School of Psychology/Institute of Neuroscience & Psychology

School of Psychology/Institute of Neuroscience considered the three questions included in the Academic Standards Committee Consultation on the operation of discretion and rounding, at the meeting of Teaching Management Group held on 11 February 2020. There was a positive response to the first and second questions regarding the proposed removal of the discretionary/borderline zones and detailed grade point average thresholds, which members considered would simplify exam board procedures, whilst maintaining academic standards and fairness to students. The response to the third question on GPA calculation using all assessment component grades was also positive.

However it was noted that in making these changes to focus on GPA, the inaccuracy of the data on MyCampus regarding student GPA becomes even more problematic and, as our understanding is that this inaccuracy cannot be resolved, we would ask that this is hidden on MyCampus, so as not to cause confusion with students.

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Adam Smith Business School

The School has consulted widely with colleagues and external examiners on the proposals concerning the use of discretion and rounding from the ASC. In addition to circulating the documentation to staff, meetings were held with undergraduate and postgraduate programme team members to discuss and respond to the issues arising. The proposals were also considered at the February meeting of our School Learning and Teaching Committee.

Colleagues were generally concerned about the proposals, expressing reservations and tended to offer negative responses to each of the three questions. While there was some appreciation for the aim of simplifying the process and ensuring consistency, the case for removing discretion was considered to be advanced on the basis of exceptional cases and relatively rare examples of unfairness that are remote from our own experience across the three subject groups in the School. Our external examiners have expressed concerns about existing restrictions on the use of discretion and the administrative processing of awards, leaving limited scope for academic scrutiny to ensure that the boundary lines between different outcomes are appropriate, especially in light of good cause decisions and evidence about individual grades that are out of line with broader patterns of performance. Most of our colleagues considered academic judgement to be a central element of fair practice, providing a source of informed scrutiny and familiarity with appropriate standards that is functional rather than dysfunctional. We remain to be convinced that academic judgement is a source of weakness and an impediment to the effective alignment of awards and patterns of student performance.

The following comments are drawn directly from the views expressed by academic staff and external examiners, offering some additional details to support this overall evaluation.

The GPA, considered with the preponderance of courses over a certain grade, is a reward for constant effort over the duration of the programme”.

‘The problem with applying discretion is the differential application across different course exam boards and from year to year.

Consistency is important and colleagues should be reminded of this as they enter exam boards, with Programme Leaders monitoring this across years and semesters to raise any issues or explanations for the academics in the final/classifying exam board’.

'There are at least two significant flaws in the logic of the rhetoric in this paper:

1 – that this solution would be both simple and fair” – being simple does not necessarily make it fair – in fact often the opposite is often true.

2 – the concentration within the two parts of Q1 is far from logical - the removal of discretion does NOT necessarily lead to the implied conclusion that classification [has to be] solely by reference to grade point average.'

'The "rules" we use for discretion are calculative - based on preponderance etc. - are in their operation discretion-free. They are less simple than just GPA but they are not so complex that they could not be readily applied across all programmes. Arguably they are fairer in allowing for, for example, a student's degree classification not to be adversely affected by a single "blip" in their record.'

'There is a false sense of precision in using figures with no discretion (and where even now there is actually very limited discretion given the tests we are advised to use if a student is in the zone of discretion)'

Based on the outcome of the School's consultation, we do not believe the proposals are progressive. Our preference is to retain discretion and trust in the academic judgement of colleagues - who can take subject-specific aspects into account (contextualisation: students do not perform in a vacuum). Instead of centralising assessment-related decision-making, the University could strengthen the role of the exam boards in the Schools.

These comments capture much of the detail expressed by colleagues when responding to the consultation document. Most of the attention focused on question 1, producing a consensus on disagreeing with the proposal. Negative reactions were also evident when questions 2 and 3 were discussed.

School of Interdisciplinary Studies

Q1: Do you agree that the University should remove discretion in the award of degree classifications? This would involve removing discretionary/borderline zones and instead determining classification solely by reference to grade point average.

Response

In our School the grades are awarded consistently when the GPA is in the 0.1-0.9 value, as only students who have half or more of the credits at the higher value are promoted. A student who has performed consistently well but has had a reduced result in one course, which lowers the GPA, still has a chance of being promoted if 50% or more of the credits are in the higher band. Removing these zones of discretion will ultimately disadvantage this student. However we appreciate the value of a consistent approach across the University and would not object to determining classification solely on grade point average.

Q2: If discretionary/borderline zones are to be removed would you agree with the following proposed grade point average thresholds?

- 1st class/PGT Distinction: GPA of 17.5
- 2.1/PGT Merit: GPA of 14.5
- 2.2: GPA of 11.5
- 3rd class: GPA of 8.5

Response

The School believes this to be reasonable. It will be easier to implement and possibly fairer as it removes the 50% requirement. The 50% requirement is out of sync for students on one of our Degrees due to the school experience credits not being taken into account. We

recognise that this could potentially disadvantage a student (as outlined at Q1 above) but it would streamline the process.

Q3: Do you agree that on Honours and Masters Programs, Grade Point Average should be calculated using all the assessment component grades, appropriately weighted, from all of the contributing courses? This would replace the current method of calculating GPA from overall course grades.

Response

We do not agree. Administratively this would be a very substantial undertaking, and provide too many opportunities for human error. If the zones of discretion are removed then course grades/assessment grades should also be calculated to one decimal point which would then address the issues of the students in examples 2O and 2P in the Code of Assessment.

School of Law

Question 1: Do you agree that the University should remove discretion in the award of degree classifications? This would involve removing discretionary/borderline zones and instead determining classification solely by reference to grade point average.

We would not support removing discretion since this may lead to unfairness. The Boards of Examiners in the School exercise discretion in a clear and consistent way and we believe it satisfies the criteria set out in the ELIR report, viz.

“Develop a systematic way of monitoring and analysing the use of discretion by examination boards in order to have a clear view of the effectiveness of these arrangements and to have clearer and more detailed information about the consistency with which this aspect of the assessment regulations is applied across the University.”

A hard borderline does not, for LLB students, take into account potential unfairness. Here is an example. Anna goes to Helsinki in Year 3. The LLB requirement for Honours is 180 credits, with 60 taken from year 3 and 120 from Year 4. She achieves the following results:

Honours Course	Unrounded course score	Grade	Credits	Grade points	Unrounded aggregation score
A (abroad)	20	A3	30	20x30 = 600	600
B (abroad)	20	A3	30	20x30 = 600	600
C	17.1	B1	30	17x30 = 510	513
D	16.4	B2	30	16x30 = 480	492
E	16.2	B2	30	16x30 = 480	486
F	15.8	B2	30	16x30 = 480	474
Totals			180	3150	3165

Anna’s gpa is **17.5** based on grade points or **17.58** based on the unrounded aggregation. In either case, if there were no discretion, she must be awarded a First Class Honours degree. However, the preponderance of her grades is in the 2.1 classification and this includes all of the grades she achieved in Glasgow. Under the current system, she would fall within the Board’s discretion and the Board, on the basis of its consistent practice, would award a 2.1 due to the preponderance of papers falling in the lower of the two possible classifications.

We would respectfully disagree with the view that it should be a matter of concern that ‘the existence of any discretion can itself lead to a lack of fairness in degree outcomes’. Discretion exercised properly and consistently need not lead to unfair results. On the other hand, removing discretion entirely can create a rigidity and that may promote unfairness.

While we recognise that different Boards, exercising discretion in a consistent way, might not develop a practice in line with a fellow Board, it is not clear to what extent this is actually a problem. In Law, we have several joint degrees and the Assessment Officer whenever possible attends the Board of Honours Examiners in the joint subject to ensure that an appropriate outcome is reached (this is particularly important given the fact that the LLB regulations differ from the MA regulations).

Question 2: If discretionary/borderline zones are to be removed, would you agree with the following proposed grade point average thresholds?

- 1st class/PGT Distinction: GPA of 17.5
- 2.1/PGT Merit: GPA of 14.5
- 2.2: GPA of 11.5
- 3rd class: GPA of 8.5

See above.

Question 3: Do you agree that on Honours and Masters programmes, Grade Point Average should be calculated using all the assessment component grades, appropriately weighted, from all of the contributing courses? This would replace the current method of calculating GPA from overall course grades.

No. Assessment component grades are only available for students who study in Glasgow in their third year. For students who study abroad, grade conversion is based on final grades as indicated on student transcripts supplied by the partner institution. These will often be the sum of grades achieved in more than one individual assessment but the grades in each assessment will not be stated. Therefore, this proposal will not treat all students alike. In Law, the majority of students will have their grade point average calculated on the basis of overall converted course grades from Year 3 and the minority who do not study abroad will not. It would appear to be fairer to treat students the same in this respect.

School of Social & Political Sciences

Most of this response from the School of Social & Political Sciences comes from one Subject. The industrial action has delayed matters.

Question 1

Approximately 50% agreed (because the system is simple) and 50% disagreed (because the suggested change does not appear to be supported by evidence and it may be better to have a trial period first with monitoring).

Question 2

Although there was some satisfaction with the thresholds, there was uncertain support for these proposals. It was suggested that monitoring and analyzing practices as recommended by the ELIT Technical Report over the next two sessions would be a more effective measure (as the report recommended). This could potentially even include a pilot where one College uses these proposed guidelines and the others continue their practice.

Could we have further explanation about the thresholds and why these have been chosen?

If the policy is to remove discretion and 'potential unfairness' why are the boundaries for each classification not at the actual grade? To be exact, if we're using GPA, why isn't it 18.0 for 1st, 15.0 for 2:1 and so on? It does also seem that moving a 1st down to 17.5 then we have a huge boundary of GPAs, might the University consider introducing a starred first for a GPA of 20 or above as part of this? A student with this average, and one with a GPA of 17.5 which could largely be made up on B grades, would seem to be in a different classification.

Question 3

There was extreme concern expressed about the workload implications of this. On that basis, the University MUST provide the necessary IT and software to manage and support what is being proposed.

SRC

Question 1: Do you agree that the University should remove discretion in the award of degree classifications? This would involve removing discretionary/borderline zones and instead determining classification solely by reference to grade point average.

No, we felt that whilst there are issues with discretion it does add a human element to the process which is welcomed and so discretion should not be removed completely. The human intervention in this is essential because life isn't as simple as a GPA and to solely base the whole process on this is doing a disservice to the individual experience of each student.

One idea that came forward which was well received was that those with a GPA of 17.5, 14.5, etc. would automatically get rounded up so they're in the next degree class and then the .1 - .4 zone is where discretion comes in.

There was an example given from Chemistry where students that do fall in this borderline zone are given the option of meeting with staff to fight their case and explain their reasoning or circumstances for why they should be the higher degree class so it would be interesting to hear from staff in the school how they think this works.

Question 2: If discretionary/borderline zones are to be removed, would you agree with the following proposed grade point average thresholds?

- **1st class/PGT Distinction: GPA of 17.5**
- **2.1/PGT Merit: GPA of 14.5**
- **2.2: GPA of 11.5**
- **3rd class: GPA of 8.5**

Yes. It seemed most students thought this was the case anyway.

Question 3: Do you agree that on Honours and Masters programmes, Grade Point Average should be calculated using all the assessment component grades, appropriately weighted, from all of the contributing courses? This would replace the current method of calculating GPA from overall course grades.

The 'unrounded' GPA seems to be the fairest option. An issue that came up is that a student's GPA isn't presented to them or easily accessed, and the process of calculating it isn't entirely straightforward. I know this is something probably more suited to the Assessment & Feedback Transformation Project Board but I thought it was worth noting in the discussion here.

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 20 November 2020

**Audit Report on Programme Approval Activity undertaken by
Colleges**

Cover Sheet

Mrs Ruth Cole, Senate Office

Brief Description of the Paper

A report detailing the findings of spot-checks of programme proposals approved by Colleges during the 2019-20 session.

Action Requested

Academic Standards Committee is asked **to receive the report and note** that the findings will be reported back to the relevant Colleges.

Recommended Person/s responsible for taking the action(s) forward

Senate Office/Colleges.

Resource Implications

None identified.

Timescale for Implementation (where appropriate)

Any actions agreed by Academic Standards Committee should be implemented as soon as possible, in order to Schools and Colleges can be advised in advance of their scheduled Boards of Studies.

Equality Implications

None identified.

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 20 November 2020

**Audit Report on Programme Approval Activity undertaken by
Colleges**

Mrs R Cole, Senate Office

Colleges have responsibility for considering and approving all programme proposals (new, amend and withdraw). However, Academic Standards Committee is required to audit this approval activity to ensure that the standard of proposal documentation remains high and that Colleges are adhering to the published procedure.

In line with this recommendation, the Senate Office has spot-checked a sample of proposals, for which the full documentation for the proposals have been examined. Issues identified through spot-checking will be reported back to the Colleges.

Proposals approved by Colleges during 2019-20:

<i>Proposal Type</i>	<i>Number of proposals</i>	<i>Number of proposals audited</i>
<i>New programme</i>	7 (Arts) 9 (MVLS) 6 (Science & Engineering) 9 (Social Sciences) Total: 31	2 (Arts) 2 (MVLS) 2 (Science & Engineering) 2 (Social Sciences) Total: 8
<i>Amend programme</i>	3 (Arts) 2 (MVLS) 3 (Science & Engineering) 3 (Social Sciences) Total: 11	1 (Arts) 1 (MVLS) 1 (Science & Engineering) 2 (Social Sciences) Total: 5
<i>Withdraw programme</i>	12 (Arts) 1 (MVLS) 5 (Science & Engineering) 5 (Social Sciences) Total: 23	1 (Arts) 1 (MVLS) 1 (Science & Engineering) 1 (Social Sciences) Total: 4

The following **new programme** proposals were audited:

MSc Global History (School of Humanities/College of Arts)

The Programme Specification was of the required standard and it was clear that all appropriate consultations had been completed and considered. The programme had been approved in PIP in advance of the deadline date of 31 July 2020. However, there was no College Board of Studies minute confirming that outstanding issues had been addressed and that the College had therefore approved the proposal. An earlier set of minutes indicated that provisional approval had been given subject to resolution of queries. It was not clear if two of those queries had been addressed (running one course over two years and details of an external partner).

MA Hons Gaelic with Immersion (School of Humanities/College of Arts)

This is the introduction of a new third year of Gaelic immersion in the established Gaelic honours programme. The Programme Specification was of the required standard and it was clear that all appropriate consultations had been completed. The College Board of Studies minute

confirming approval was available in PIP. The programme was approved in advance of the deadline date.

MSc Palliative Care (Cancer Sciences/College of Medical, Veterinary & Life Sciences)

The Programme Specification was of the required standard and all appropriate consultations had been completed. The College Board of Studies minute indicated that the proposal was initially approved subject to changes to the programme specification and that these changes had been made. The programme had been approved in PIP in advance of the deadline date.

MSc Digital Health Interventions (Research Institute of Health & Wellbeing/College of Medical, Veterinary & Life Sciences)

The Programme Specification was of the required standard and it was clear that extensive consultation had been undertaken and feedback considered. The College Supercluster meeting minute from November 2019 was available. This stated that a number of changes were required. A later Board of Studies minute had been uploaded to PIP but this related to a different programme so it was not clear that final Board of Studies approval had been given.

MSci Environmental Geoscience (School of Geographical & Earth Sciences/College of Science & Engineering)

The Programme Specification was of the required standard and appropriate consultations had been completed. A minute was provided for both School and College meetings at which the proposal was considered. Approval was confirmed before the deadline.

MSc Medical Device Engineering (School of Engineering/College of Science & Engineering)

The Programme Specification was of the required standard and all appropriate consultations had been completed and considered, with detailed consideration of issues that had been raised by the external examiner. Final approval was confirmed through the Board of Studies minute before the deadline date.

MSc Digital Society (School of Social and Political Sciences/College of Social Sciences)

The programme specification was of the required standard and comprehensive consultation had been undertaken. A College Board of Studies minute was available but the programme title in the minute was different from the final form and a number of required amendments were listed. There was no confirmation that final approval had been given by Board of Studies. Approval was confirmed in PIP in advance of the deadline date.

MSc Data Analytics for Economics and Finance (Adam Smith Business School/College of Social Sciences)

The Programme Specification was of the required standard and all appropriate consultations had been completed and considered. A College Board of Studies minute was available but a number of required amendments were noted including a query regarding non-credit bearing courses. There was no subsequent confirmation that these had been addressed and that final approval had been given by the Board. The programme was approved in PIP in advance of the deadline.

The following **amend programme** proposals were audited:

MA (Hons) Theatre Studies (School of /College of Arts)

The Programme Specification was of the required standard and consultations had been completed. The external examiner had provided general comments on the programme but not on the proposed amendment. A College Board of Studies minute confirming approval of the change was available. The changes had been approved in advance of the deadline date.

MBCChB (School of Medicine, Dentistry & Nursing /College of MVLS)

The Programme Specification was of the required standard and consultations had been completed. The student consultation was very brief with no background information as to how the students had been consulted. There was some confusion in the documentation as the Programme Proposal Support Document and the Programme Change Report rationale both referred to the Bachelor of Nursing. There was a statement that the College had approved the changes but many comments from Board members were noted without clarity on how they had been resolved. The comments included reference to a concern raised by one of the externals that had not been properly addressed. The changes had been approved in PIP in advance of the deadline date.

BSc/MSci Mathematics & Statistics programmes (School of Mathematics & Statistics/College of Science & Engineering)

The Programme Specifications were of the required standard and consultations had been completed. The College Board of Studies minute was provided and the changes had been approved in PIP in advance of the deadline date.

BSc (Hons) Environmental Science & Sustainability (School of Interdisciplinary Studies/College of Social Sciences)

The Programme Specification was of the required standard. The external examiner consultation made no reference to the proposed changes, only to the programme in general. A Board of Studies minute was available which indicated approval subject to a number of points. A response on behalf of the programme was uploaded but there was no confirmation that final approval had been given by the Board. Approval had been confirmed in PIP in advance of the deadline.

PgD/MEd Childhood Practice and Leadership (School of Education/College of Social Sciences)

The Programme Specification was of the required standard and detailed consultations had been completed. A Board of Studies minute was available noting approval of the changes subject to one query, the response to which was provided in the minute. The changes had been approved in PIP in advance of the deadline.

The following **withdraw programme** proposals were audited:

BDivinity (Min) (School of Critical Studies/College of Arts)

Appropriate consultations had been carried. A Board of Studies minute confirmed approval. Approval was confirmed in PIP in March 2020, which is later than the deadline. However, the reason for withdrawal was that the content of the degree was essentially the same as the BD General so it was unlikely any issues would have arisen from this.

PgD Child Health (School of Medicine, Dentistry & Nursing/College of MVLS)

The withdrawal report noted: 'This programme has not run for many years and is no longer advertised. There are no students enrolled on the PGDip nor any applications for it.' There was no Board of Studies minute and no evidence of any consultations having been completed.

MSc Software Engineering (School of Computing/College of Science & Engineering)

A Board of Studies minute from February 2015 showed the decision to withdraw the programme due to low student numbers. In November 2017 the external examiner had been consulted and approved the decision. There was no evidence of student consultation having been undertaken. The last intake of students was 2017-18. The withdrawal was approved in PIP in September 2019.

MSc Chinese Studies (School of Social & Political Studies/College of Social Sciences)

A Board of Studies minute dated 20 June 2020 simply noted that the withdrawal was approved. The withdrawal report stated that this was due to 'Covid-related reasons'. A student and external consultation had been uploaded that related to the MRes/MSc International Relations programmes but there was no explanation of how this related to the withdrawal of MSc Chinese Studies.

Points to note:

- Documents uploaded to PIP should show how queries raised through consultations or by the Board of Studies were responded to, and that in light of the responses the Board of Studies has given final approval to the proposal.
- Where programme amendments were being made, consultations should explicitly refer to the proposed changes rather than just asking for comments on the programme as a whole. (Review of the consultation templates may assist with this.)
- Processing of programme withdrawals in PIP should be timely.

Feedback on these points, together with issues arising from specific audited proposals, will be fed back to the Colleges.

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 20 November 2020

Scotland's Rural College (SRUC): Delivery of Rural Business Management Degree in Ayr

Cover Sheet

Robbie Mulholland, Clerk, Joint Liaison Committee of the University of Glasgow and Scotland's Rural College (SRUC)

Brief Description of the Paper

SRUC is in the process of moving most of its programmes within its South and West faculty from its Ayr campus to its Barony campus in Dumfries. The attached paper outlines a proposal from SRUC to continue delivering the top-up version of the BA (Honours) Rural Business Management programme from its Ayr campus, whilst offering other versions of the programme from the SRUC Barony campus, Dumfries. The paper outlines current practice and delivery arrangements going forward.

Action Requested

Academic Standards Committee is asked to **consider and approve** SRUC's request to continue delivering the BA (Honours) Rural Business Management top-up programme from its Ayr campus, whilst offering other versions of the programme from its Barony Campus in Dumfries.

Recommended Person/s responsible for taking the action(s) forward

The Head of the Agriculture and Business Management department at SRUC will take this matter forward.

Timescale for Implementation

The top-up version of the BA (Honours) Rural Business Management programme has, from September 2020, been offered from both the Ayr and Dumfries campuses and the full degree will be offered from September 2021.

Equality Implications

SRUC promotes equality and diversity in all aspects of its activities. It will consider the need for an Equality Impact Assessment to be undertaken with respect to the proposal.

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 20 November 2020

Scotland's Rural College (SRUC): Delivery of Rural Business Management Degree in Ayr

Prof. Dave Roberts, Head of Agriculture and Business Management Department

Management top-up degree from SRUC premises in Ayr after the move of other courses to the SRUC Barony Campus in Dumfries.

Current Practice

SRUC is in the process of moving most courses within the S&W Faculty from Ayr to the Barony Campus, Dumfries. The Rural Business Management Degree has, from September 2020, been offered as a top-up degree from both the Ayr and Dumfries Campus and the full degree will be offered from September 2021.

Rationale for continuing the Rural Business Management Degree at Ayr

The top-up degree services a local need with most students coming from local feeder colleges with an appropriate HND qualification. The offering of the top-up degree at both campuses has been successful this academic year with increased numbers at Ayr (40) and 17 students at Dumfries campus. This demonstrates that there is a continuing demand in Ayrshire. The course will in the future use some blended learning for gaining best value from guest lecturers and online conferences.

However, the average age of the Ayr cohort is 28. A high proportion of these students are parents, live in family homes and most have local employment. The vast majority of the Ayr RBM students either live in Ayrshire or on towns with railway stations with a direct route to Ayr. For these reasons, the majority of these students could not study at another SRUC campus. The course has been life changing for many graduates as it is a proven route to good graduate employment within their commuting radius. The course offers a tourism specialism which is considered very valuable by local employers. Feeder colleges have expressed a strong desire for the top up option to continue.

Proposal

The proposal is to continue offering the course from the Riverside campus Ayr, in 2021/22 with full lecturing facilities and staff support to students both on campus and on-line.

There is a possibility that SRUC will vacate the Riverside campus in July 2022 and if this occurs then the proposal is to decide, by December 2021, on one of the following alternative options:

- Maintain a presence at Riverside Campus with lecture room, study area and staff support room.
- Develop the SRUC facilities at Auchincruive (on outskirts of Ayr) to provide lecture room, study area and staff support room.

Both possibilities will ensure that facilities are available for student welfare and for any students with disabilities.

Access to library facilities and student support will be provided to the students in Ayr remotely as part of the blended learning experience. E-books have taken over as the

reading material of choice. Counselling services have been delivered using online platforms but there will be in person, year tutor support. The students on the Rural Business Management course do not tend to join in other student campus activities e.g. sports and social. This is because they are not resident, tend to be older than main student cohort and have family / work commitments. The students do have an active Farm Management discussion group, and this will be promoted to link in with days on campus and / or virtual on-line meetings.

The course can be fully delivered using existing personnel. Please see table 1 below, indicating staff allocation for the programme.

Table 1: Staff allocation for Rural Business Management Programme at Ayr and Barony

	AYR										BAR																			
	MM	MA	TM	TA	WM	WA	TM	TA	FM	FA	MM	MA	TM	TA	WM	WA	TM	TA	FM	FA	MM	MA	TM	TA	WM	WA	TM	TA	FM	FA
IT Applications Software 1																														
Developing Skills for Personal Effectiveness			CW																											
Financial Records for Small Business			LF																										WM	
Human Resource Management: An Introduction	WM																													
Economic Issues: An Introduction																														CW
Marketing: An Introduction					WM																									
Creating a Culture of Customer Care																										LF				
Business Management: An Introduction																										WM				
Rural Land Use in Scotland																										AL				
Rural Business: Graded Unit 1																WM														
Environmental Awareness																												TB		
Web Design: An Introduction															CW															
Countryside Recreation and Access																												IL		
History and Archaeology: An Introduction																IL														
Scottish Licencing Law			WM																											
RSADA																														
Rural Tourism in the UK				DR																										
Rural Tourism in the UK					CD																									
Management Strategies								CW																						
Management , Innovation & Entrepreneurship									WM																					
Economic Policy and Analysis															CW															
Product Development and Branding																														
Active Tourism															CD															
Advanced Case Studies																														
RSADA					DR																									
Rural Tourism in the UK						CD																								
Management Strategies									LF																					
Management , Innovation & Entrepreneurship										LF																				
Economic Policy and Analysis																CW														
Product Development and Branding																														
Active Tourism																														
Advanced Case Studies																														
Business Marketing																														
Professional Practice and Law																														
Contemporary Issues in Rural Tourism																														
Topical Issues																														
AFM&TAX																														
HP																														
Business Marketing																														
Professional Practice and Law																														
Contemporary Issues in Rural Tourism																														
Topical Issues																														
AFM&TAX																														
HP																														

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 20 November 2020

**Report of the Meeting of the Joint Liaison Committee of the
University of Glasgow and The Glasgow School of Art held on 11
February 2020**

Cover Sheet

Robbie Mulholland, Academic Collaborations Office

Brief Description of the Paper

The attached paper is the report of the meeting of the Joint Liaison Committee of the University of Glasgow and The Glasgow School of Art (GSA) held on 11 February 2020.

Action requested

Academic Standards Committee (ASC) is asked to:

- **Approve** the Remit, Composition and Membership of the Joint Liaison Committee for session 2020-21 (**Appendix 1**); and
- **Note** the list of staff recognised by GSA as Associate University Lecturers (AULs) (**Appendix 2**), and the remainder of the report.

Recommended person(s) responsible for taking action(s) forward

As outlined in the report.

Resource Implications

No resource implications for the University have been identified.

Timescale for Implementation

As outlined in the report.

Equality Implications

The paper does not propose a new or modified policy or practice for which an Equality Impact Assessment is required.

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 20 November 2020

Report from the Meeting of the Joint Liaison Committee of the University of Glasgow and The Glasgow School of Art held on Tuesday 11 February 2020

Robbie Mulholland, Academic Collaborations Office

1. Joint Liaison Committee (JLC) Remit, Composition and Membership (Session 2020-21)

It was noted that the position of Joint Liaison Committee (JLC) Vice-Convener had become vacant. The Glasgow School of Art (GSA) members would consult outwith the meeting and advise the Clerk in due course of their nominee for the vacancy.

Subject to the above, the committee **agreed to recommend** the remit, composition and membership of the Joint Liaison Committee of the University of Glasgow (UoG) and The Glasgow School of Art (2020-21) to Academic Standards Committee (ASC) for approval as detailed in **Appendix 1**.

2. Suite of Agreements

The JLC was advised that a final review of the suite of Agreements was underway and it was hoped to move towards signature of the documentation shortly. The suite of Agreements was the collection of documents which set out the terms and conditions of the various Agreements between UoG and GSA.

A Letter of Agreement had been signed to extend the expiry date of the current Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) from 30 September 2019 to 30 September 2020.

3. Reporting of the Business of the Joint Board for Product Design Engineering (PDE) and Board of Management for the BEng/MEng Civil Engineering with Architecture

Discussion had taken place at the last meeting regarding the desirability that the JLC should receive the minutes of the Joint Board for Product Design Engineering and the Board of Management for the BEng/MEng in Civil Engineering with Architecture programmes. Recalling that the BEng/MEng in Civil Engineering with Architecture programme was governed by a Service Teaching Agreement, the JLC **agreed** that it would not be appropriate for the JLC to receive the minutes of that programme's Board of Management in future.

Regarding receipt of minutes from the Joint Board for Product Design Engineering (PDE), the JLC was of the view that the reporting of that committee's business should be consistent with practice elsewhere in the University in respect of shared/joint programmes. The Clerk, in liaison with the Convener, would take this matter forward and report back to the next meeting of the JLC.

4. Annual Report from The Glasgow School of Art (2018-19)

The GSA Head of Learning and Teaching introduced the GSA Annual Report (2018-19):

i Overview of the Year

The GSA Head of Learning and Teaching advised that events at GSA in session 2018-19 had been overshadowed by the fire which had occurred in the Mackintosh Building in June 2018. She paid tribute to the commitment of staff across the institution who had had

to contend with very considerable challenges following the fire, and particularly those staff who had responsibility for scheduling and delivering teaching.

She was pleased to report that, despite the exceptional circumstances, several positive developments had taken place at GSA during the session. This included roll-out of the First Year Experience (FYE) initiative, the successful relocation of the School of Fine Art to the Stow Building and the continued development of GSA's innovative design courses.

ii Estate Plans

The committee was advised that a Strategic Director of Estates had been appointed who would lead on the development and implementation of GSA's new estates strategy. The restoration of the Mackintosh Building, albeit a core aspect of the strategy, was part of a wider programme of planned improvements for the GSA estate. This included development work in the Barnes and Stow Buildings and additional, less extensive, upgrading work elsewhere on the Garnethill campus.

Although all units which had been displaced as a result of the fire had been returned to their original location by November 2018, some accommodation issues which pre-dated the fire remained outstanding.

iii GSA Strategic Plan

It was reported that the implementation of GSA's Strategic Plan (2018-21) had been paused following the fire. In the subsequent period, an interim operational plan had been put in place in order to ensure business continuity and recovery. A new institutional plan was in development for implementation in session 2020-21.

iv Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR) 2020

The GSA Head of Learning and Teaching reported that GSA's submission for the Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR) exercise was nearing completion. She observed that the preparation of the Reflective Analysis and Advance Information Set had been a valuable exercise for GSA in that it had provided the institution with an opportunity to reflect critically on its strengths and weaknesses. The ELIR event would take place in April 2020, having been postponed from 2019 due to the fire.

[Clerk's post-meeting note: The ELIR was subsequently put back to October 2020]

v First Year Experience Project

Members heard that a renewed First Year Experience aimed at enhancing the interdisciplinary and collaborative aspects of the GSA first year curriculum had been introduced in September 2019. This initiative had been conceived of, in part, as a response to student feedback regarding cross-programme collaboration, but it also built on discussion at the last ELIR concerning inter-disciplinary teaching and the desire for this to be organised in a more systematic manner.

The original intention had been that all first year undergraduate students would be relocated into the Mackintosh Building, however, the June 2018 fire meant that, in the short term, first year students would instead be physically accommodated within their disciplinary Schools. It had become apparent, however, that the capacity of Schools to provide a strong interdisciplinary experience in respect of the first module of FYE (Co-Lab 1) was variable and GSA continued to examine how provision in this area could be strengthened.

vi The Student Experience

The main external source of information regarding levels of student satisfaction in HE was the National Student Survey (NSS). It was reported that GSA's levels of satisfaction as evidenced by NSS results continued to be low, albeit there had been a small

improvement in GSA's Overall Satisfaction score with an increase from 66.79% in 2018, to 68.6% in 2019. The committee was advised that the outcomes from GSA's own internal surveys generally mirrored the results of the NSS.

The GSA Head of Learning and Teaching considered that the metrics used in the NSS and similar external HE surveys were not entirely appropriate to the studio-based learning experience at GSA. Nonetheless, she expressed disappointment that the range of initiatives which GSA had put in place to address student dissatisfaction had not produced more positive results. She advised members that GSA would continue to target enhancement activity on those areas of the survey where student dissatisfaction appeared to be most evident.

vii Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021

Members were advised that GSA's preparation for REF 2021 had been stepped up following the publication of REF final guidance early in 2019. The document set out the general framework for assessment and guidance for submissions made to REF 2021 and included, amongst other things, details on operating procedures, eligibility criteria and the supporting data sets that were required.

GSA had produced a Code of Practice for REF 2021 and this set out the criteria that would be applied to staff and research outputs put forward for potential submission. Following consideration, research output from 49 staff (FTEs) had been selected for submission.

Members noted the diverse nature of research undertaken at a creative institution such as GSA and observed that research output was not always available in a traditional format, such as journal articles. Results were sometimes presented as curated or practical work demonstrating research in practice. This being the case, the nature of the submissions made across the disciplines at GSA was likely to be varied.

viii Postgraduate Research (PGR) Periodic Review

GSA undertook its first PGR Periodic Review in session 2018-19. Previously, GSA's research provision had been reviewed alongside undergraduate and postgraduate provision as part of its taught Periodic Review process.

The PGR Review Panel had considered the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) and all submitted documentation to be of an excellent standard. The Panel made 12 recommendations for Research and Enterprise, which included:

- Provide clarity on the process for de-registration and consider the potential of revising regulations to allow for exit with MPhil, MRes or MSc.
- Enhance and develop the current in-house delivery of 'Careers Beyond Academia'.
- Establish if 'PhD Coordinator' is the correct terminology in reflecting the PhD ambitions in the GSA Strategy; and
- Establish a specific budget for PhD Community Building Events.

The final update on recommendations arising from the review had been submitted to the January 2020 meeting of Academic Standards Committee (ASC).

Noting the absence of a UoG representative on the PGR Periodic Review panel, the committee **agreed** that the views of relevant staff at both institutions be sought on the desirability that, in future, there be staff representation from UoG on panels of this nature.

ix Programme Monitoring and Annual Reporting (PMAR)

The JLC noted that, following extensive review, GSA had decided to amend its Programme Monitoring and Annual Reporting (PMAR) documentation. The changes were aimed at streamlining the PMAR process with a view to improving the opportunity for critical reflection and enhancement regarding programme provision.

A review of the effectiveness of the revised documentation would be undertaken in session 2019-20 with the outcome reported to the University's Academic Standards Committee (ASC) via GSA's committee structure.

x Academic Appeals, Academic-Related Complaints and Academic-Related Conduct Cases

- *Academic Appeals*

GSA had received 22 academic appeals against Examination Board decisions in session 2018-19. This was the same number as submitted in session 2017-18.

- *Academic-Related Student Complaints*

GSA considered 24 student complaints and 35 overall in session 2018-19 - this figure being down on the overall number of complaints (39) received in the previous session. A number of complaints related to the GSA estate, with several linked to issues arising in the aftermath of the June 2018 Mackintosh Building fire.

GSA was now categorising student complaints according to National Student Survey (NSS) headings in order that performance feedback could be made to its Planning and Management Group through quarterly complaints reports.

- *Academic-Related Conduct Cases*

GSA considered 2 cases of academic misconduct in session 2018-19 - this compared with 4 in the previous session. Both cases were found to be linked to plagiarism with the students in question required to re-submit work with their grades capped.

The committee was advised that GSA was in the process of establishing a central record for misconduct cases, this information having previously been held in the Schools.

xi Responses to External Examiner Reports

External examiner reports on GSA programmes and GSA responses to them would be available in due course. These would be made available to members of the JLC and considered at the next meeting.

xii GSA Singapore Annual Report (Session 2018-19)

The Head of the School of Design introduced the GSA Singapore Annual Report for session 2018-19:

- The GSA and Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) collaboration had marked its sixth graduating cohort with a graduation ceremony in Singapore in June 2019, this coinciding with the annual degree show. 105 students graduated at the ceremony which was led by the GSA Deputy Director (Academic) and UoG's Senior Vice-Principal.
- Graduate destination activities had included industry events and employability training. It was noted that although graduate destination outcomes at GSA Singapore were good by the standards of UK HE, they fell somewhat short of typical Singaporean graduate employment levels.

- An appointment had been made to the position of Programme Director GSA Singapore in early 2019 and the post-holder was now well established on campus.
- External Examiners had travelled from the UK to Singapore to conduct examining duties and attend the Final Exam Board. Glasgow-based staff members continued to travel to Singapore, as required, to complement local teaching staff.
- Owing to the Coronavirus outbreak in East and South-east Asia, GSA Singapore students and staff were required to have their temperature monitored twice daily to test for possible infection. Planned travel to the region had been placed on hold and GSA was exploring options for possible distance-learning delivery in future. Preparations for the summer graduation were going ahead on the assumption that travel to the region would have returned to normal by early summer 2020.

xiii New Members of Academic Staff Approved as Associate University Lecturers (AULs)

The committee **received** and **noted** a list (attached as **Appendix 2**) of new members of GSA academic staff approved as Associate University Lecturers (AULs).

Members recalled that Academic Standards Committee (ASC) at its meeting in November 2019 had approved a proposal delegating responsibility for the approval of GSA staff as AULs to GSA. GSA would be required to provide ASC with a summary of the staff it appointed as AULs via the JLC report - or more regularly if required by ASC.

5. Student Business

It was agreed that the GSA Students Association (GSASA) President, who was unable to attend the meeting, be invited to provide the Clerk with a summary of matters of current interest for onward circulation to members.

6. Joint Board for Product Design Engineering

The minutes of the meeting of the Joint Board for Product Design Engineering held on 2 May 2019 were **received** and **noted** by the committee.

7. Board of Management for the BEng/MEng Civil Engineering with Architecture

The minutes of the meeting of the Board of Management for the BEng/MEng Civil Engineering with Architecture held on 8 January 2020 were **received** and **noted** by the committee.

8. Convener's Business

The Convener drew members' attention to the following matters of current interest:

- The UK had entered a post-Brexit transition period following its departure from the European Union (EU), however the University's relationship with other EU educational institutions would remain unchanged during this period. It was hoped that any disruption that might occur when the transition period came to an end (on 31 December 2020) would be kept to a minimum.
- Industrial action was expected to commence on campus in the second week of February, and it was anticipated this might cause some disruption to the schedule of Periodic Subject Review events due to take place around that time.
- Elections were due to place shortly for the University's Student Representative Council (SRC) and also for the position of University Rector. The Convener noted also that the University Chancellor was due to retire shortly; and
- The University was in the process of compiling a new Strategic Plan for the next five years and also a new Learning and Teaching Strategy.

9. Visas and Immigration

The GSA Academic Registrar reported that GSA's UKVI Tier 4 Sponsor Licence had been renewed up until November 2020.

University of Glasgow and The Glasgow School of Art
Remit, Composition and Membership of the Joint Liaison Committee
2020-21 Remit

The Joint Liaison Committee (JLC) is a sub-committee of the University's Academic Standards Committee and Senate. The JLC will meet annually to consider a report provided by the Glasgow School of Art (GSA) on the performance of all programmes leading to awards of the University delivered wholly or jointly by GSA. It will:

- monitor and approve academic standards, quality assurance procedures and enhancement of quality processes;
- monitor and approve the quality of the learning opportunities for students;
- monitor the quality of the management and enhancement of the student experience;
- promote dialogue on areas in which quality might be enhanced;
- encourage and support critical reflection on practice;
- identify good practice for dissemination as appropriate; and
- report to Senate through Academic Standards Committee.

Composition and Membership

University of Glasgow

Clerk of Senate and Vice Principal (Convener)	Professor Jill Morrison
Head of College of Arts nominee	Professor Nick Pearce
SRC President (or nominee)	To be confirmed
Head of School of Culture and Creative Arts (or nominee)	Professor Kate Oakley
Head of School of Engineering (or nominee)	Professor David Cumming
UoG representative on GSA Academic Council	Professor Elizabeth Moignard
UoG Representative on GSA Programme Monitoring and Annual Reporting	Professor Clare Willsdon
Head of Academic Collaborations Office (or nominee)	Mrs Jackie McCluskey

The Glasgow School of Art

Deputy Director (Academic) (Vice-Convener)	To be confirmed
Academic Registrar	Mrs Janet Allison
President of the Students' Association (or nominee)	Mr Alessandro Marini
Head of School of Fine Art	Professor Alistair Payne
Head of School of Design	Ms Barbara Ridley
Head of Mackintosh School of Architecture	Professor Sally Stewart
Head of School of Simulation and Visualisation	Professor Paul Chapman
Head of Learning and Teaching	Professor Vicky Gunn
Head of the Innovation School	Dr Gordon Hush

In attendance

Mr Robbie Mulholland, Clerk, **(UoG)**, Mr Graeme Shedden, Minute Writer, **(UoG)**
 Ms Jill Brown **(GSA)**

APPENDIX 2

New members of academic staff granted Associate University Lecturer status by GSA. (AULs)¹

Name	Post	Department	FTE	Date of Appointment	Qualifications	Brief CV
Hannah Ellul	Lecturer in Fine Art	School of Fine Art	0.4	25/10/2018	MFA Fine Art PhD in Visual Cultures	Lecturer, Visual Cultures (Teaching & Scholarship) at University of London.
Jonathan Fisher	Studio Tutor	Mackintosh School of Architecture	0.2	08/10/2019	MSc in Urban Design PgDip in Architecture	Previously employed as a Studio Tutor at Edinburgh College of Art. Before this was employed as a Teaching Fellow at the same institution.
James Tait	Studio Tutor	Mackintosh School of Architecture	0.2	08/10/2019	M.Arch in Architecture	Employed as a Project Architect at Elder and Cannon Architects, prior to this was a Lead Architect (Interiors) at Reich and Hall Architects.
Andrew Campbell	Studio Tutor	Mackintosh School of Architecture	0.2	08/10/2019	M.Arch in Architecture	Teaching Fellow at Newcastle University. Previously worked as a Design Tutor at Strathclyde University.
Kathryn Loudon	Lecturer in Communication Design	School of Design	0.2	17/01/2019	BA (Hons) Communication Design	Previously worked on a self-employed basis as the Director of Design by Zag a commercial graphic design company based in Glasgow.

Joshua Thorpe	Pre-sessional Lecturer - English	Professional and Continuing Education	1.0	12/06/2019	BA Hons) Fine Art Interdisciplinary MA Visual Studies	Employed as Academic Development Tutor at Glasgow Caledonian Univ. Previously, Lecturer /Academic Support Tutor at University of Toronto.
Christine Farion	Lecturer in Interaction Design	Innovation School	1.0	08/07/2019	PhD Media and Arts Technology, MSc Creative Technology	Associate Lecturer at the University of York, leading the Robotics, programming and Electronics module. Previously employed as an Assistive technology Researcher at the Wilberforce Trust.
Ayla Dymterko	Pre-sessional Lecturer - English	Professional and Continuing Education	1.0	10/07/2019	BA (Hons) Fine Art, TEFOL Certificate	Previously worked as a Classroom Assistant at Glasgow City College and a TEFOL instructor at the Regina Immigrant Women Centre in Canada.
Megan Palmer-Abbs	Research Fellow (Innovation Design)	Innovation School	0.5	17/07/2019	BSc Sustainable Development and History of Innovation	Director & Senior Consultant, EBBA Consultants, Business Innovation & Sustainable Construction. Previously Lecturer, Univ. of Aberdeen
Amy Breckon	Lecturer in Textiles	School of Design	0.6	02/09/2019	BA (Hons) in Textiles	Freelance Designer working for Project AF and Code Studio. Previously worked as a Designer at Voyage Maison.

¹ From November 2019, GSA assumed responsibility for granting GSA academic staff Associate University Lecturer status, as agreed at the Academic Standards Committee meeting of 22 November 2019.

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee - Friday 20 November 2020

**Periodic Subject Review: Full Review Reports Approved under
Summer Powers**

Mrs Ruth Cole, Clerk to the Committee

Periodic Subject Review

Full Review Reports: Sociology and Theology & Religious Studies

As noted at the October 2020 meeting, the reports of the above Reviews were approved under Summer Powers subject to some minor comments which have now been addressed. The finalised reports are attached for information.

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Summer Powers 2020

**Periodic Subject Review: Review of Sociology held on 17 February
2020**

Cover Sheet

Mrs Lesley Fielding, Clerk to the Review Panel

Brief Description of the Paper

Report of the Periodic Subject Review of Sociology held on 17 February 2020.

Action Requested

Academic Standards Committee is invited to receive the report and **approve** the 14 recommendations contained therein for onward transmission to those identified for action.

Recommended Person/s responsible for taking the action(s) forward

As identified in the report.

Resource Implications (where appropriate)

Not applicable.

Timescale for Implementation (where appropriate)

An update to the recommendations will be provided to the March 2020 meeting of ASC.

Equality Implications (where appropriate)

As identified in the report.

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Summer Powers 2020

**Periodic Subject Review: Review of Sociology held on 17 February
2020**

Lesley Fielding, Clerk to the Review Panel

Review Panel:

Professor Jill Morrison	Vice Principal and Clerk of Senate, Panel Convener
Professor John Solomos	University of Warwick, External Subject Specialist
Associate Professor Nicola Carr	University of Nottingham, External Subject Specialist
Professor Carl Goodyear	Senate Assessor on Court
Ms Morgan Daniel	Student member
Professor Andy Cumbers	Adam Smith Business School, Cognate member
Dr Nathalie Sheridan	Learning Enhancement and Academic Develop Service
Mrs Lesley Fielding	Senate Office and Clerk to the Panel

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Subject of Sociology (“the Subject”) is one of five subjects that make up the School of Social and Political Sciences (“the School”). The School of Social & Political Sciences is one of five Schools in the College of Social Sciences.
- 1.2 The Subject last underwent full internal review in May 2014. The outcome of the review was positive in terms of student engagement, staff commitment and quality of provision. The Panel noted that the Subject was one of the leading providers of sociology education in Scotland and the UK.
- 1.3 Preparation of the Sociology Self Evaluation Report (SER) was undertaken by a number of teaching and administrative staff under the editorial leadership of Dr Matt Dawson, Head of Subject, with assistance from Dr Dickon Copsey, Employability Officer for the College of Social Sciences and Mrs Shirley Sayer, Careers Manager. The SER was circulated to the Subject staff and students for comments.
- 1.4 The Review Panel considered that the SER was self-aware and should be commended on the level of self-critical appraisal of the challenges faced by the Subject.
- 1.5 The Review Panel met with Dr Matt Dawson (Head of Subject), Professor Anne Kerr (Head of School), Professor John Finlay (Acting Dean of Learning & Teaching), 13 members of staff, 18 early career staff, 3 Graduate Teaching Assistants, 2 postgraduate and 5 undergraduate students presenting all levels of provision.

2. Context and Strategy

2.1 The Subject's range of postgraduate taught provision had increased substantially from 8 Masters programme at the time of the last review to 13 programmes for session 2019.

2.2 Staff

The Subject's academic staff, are as follows:

Professor	11
Reader	1
Senior Lecturer	8
Lecturer	15
Tutors ¹	5

2.2 Students

Student numbers for the subject are summarised as follows:

Individuals enrolled on one or more courses at each level		Form of Study	
		class enrolment	visiting/erasmus/ exchange
Level 1A	482		
Level 1B	430		
Level 2A	182		
Level 2B	182		
Level 4 (Junior & Senior Hons)	181		

2.3 Range of Provision under Review

The following degrees are offered by the Subject Area

Undergraduate:

- MA (Soc Sci) Single Honours in Sociology
- MA (Soc Sci) Joint Honours in Sociology (with Social Science subjects)
- MA Joint Honours in Sociology (with Arts subjects)
- MA (Soc Sci) Sociology with Quantitative Methods
- MA (Soc Sci) Social Science (Three year 'Ordinary' Degree)

Postgraduate²:

- MSc Sociology
- MRes Sociology and Research Methods
- MSc Equality and Human Rights
- MRes Equality and Human Rights
- MSc Media, Communications and International Journalism
- MSc Global Migrations and Social Justice
- MRes Global Migrations and Social Justice
- MRes Criminology
- MSc Criminology and Criminal Justice
- MSc Transnational Crime, Justice and Security
- MSc Global Health (with an MRes in September 2020)
- PGCert Art Trafficking and Art Crime

- MSc Digital Societies (to open in September 2021)

2.4 Strategic Approach to Enhancing Learning and Teaching

- 2.4.1 The SER noted the Subject's recent landmark achievement of 50 years as a department/subject area, highlighting the key areas of the Subject's research and teaching success: Disability; Media; Cultural Sociology, Racism; Social Theory; Gender and Sexuality and Youth. The SER reflected the Subject's very strong, clear and consistent vision, which underpinned teaching of the subject with a strong belief that "sociology is something we do" and encouraged students to broaden their knowledge and develop tools for critical thinking and research led teaching. It was notable that the Subject successfully combined the three main disciplines from which the Sociology provision was drawn: Sociology, Criminology and Anthropology. The Panel noted that these subjects all interacted well together and were enjoyed by the students. Further to the changes at Level 2, the Subject had received excellent feedback, and, at Open Days, potential students enquire specifically about the anthropological offering. The Level 1 and two students who met with the panel substantiated this view. The Review Panel **commends** the Subject for its commitment to providing a research-led, wide range of provision together with a high level of support to students.
- 2.4.2 The Review Panel explored the Subject's involvement with strategic vision and future plans, having noted from the SER that "resulting modes of delivery and conditions of teaching, has largely been decided outwith the Subject." (SER, p6) The Panel, from discussions with the Head of Subject, was concerned that decisions related to strategic developments, including key processes such as new appointments, course development and approval, were implemented with no input or consultation with the Subject. Exclusion of the Subject's considerable staff expertise from such consultations was unfortunate and presented the Subject with substantial challenges. One effect has been the misalignment between the expertise of new staff and the Subject's portfolio, resulting in a disconnect in the Subject's planning and assignment of roles.
- 2.4.3 Similarly, with regard to postgraduate provision, the SER described, "the second major change has been the expansion in our teaching programme. This has been most notable at PGT level..." (SER, p5). The number of postgraduate programmes has increased from eight in 2013-14 to thirteen in the current session. The Review Panel was concerned that the strategy surrounding student growth at postgraduate level had been determined at School and College level; again, as stated above, exclusion of the Subject has resulted in a sense of disempowerment among staff. The issue of postgraduate provision will be discussed in detail later in the report including associated issues of staffing and student satisfaction. While the Panel noted that there had been some recent positive developments in this regard, it considered that the previous omission of the Subject from key strategic planning and decision-making had disempowered the Subject. The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject has representation on the relevant School and College Committees (including appointment panels) and is consulted on all key strategic planning and processes concerning the Subject. (5.1.3).

3 Enhancing the Student Experience

3.1 Admissions, Retention and Success

Admissions

- 3.1.1 As evidenced in the previous PSR of Sociology in 2013-14 and the current SER, the Subject has sustained a considerable increase in student numbers. The Head of Subject advised the Review Panel that, while the situation had been extremely challenging, new staff appointments and a review of Honours provision had stabilised the situation in relation to undergraduate numbers. The Panel noted that capping of numbers had not been permitted, apart from Level 1, which was capped due to the lack of appropriate teaching spaces. The Head of Subject and staff agreed that, while undergraduate numbers had been consistently high for some years, the Subject had implemented changes and strategies to deal with the rise in student numbers and there was no need for capping, at current undergraduate levels, at this stage. However, the Panel noted that undergraduate students found large class sizes problematic and the Honours students observed that class sizes of 30 reduced presentations to question and answer sessions rather than encouraging meaningful discussion. The Review Panel would suggest that the Subject continue to monitor closely undergraduate student feedback on this issue.
- 3.1.2 As mentioned above, the Subject had seen a substantial increase in postgraduate provision (2.4.3) and a subsequent rise in postgraduate student numbers since the previous PSR. Additionally, the SER referred to postgraduate student reps having expressed “very strongly”, the impact that the increase in student numbers and class size had on the nature of what a Masters education involved. The Panel noted that classes ranged from 4 to 30 students which presented substantial difficulties, particularly as the students all undertook the same core course. From the SER and discussions with the Head of Subject and staff, the Review Panel noted that two programmes gave rise to concern: the MSc Media Communications and International Journalism and MSc Global Health. Three members of staff ran MSc Media Communications and student numbers had increased from 21 students in session 2018 to 41 students in session 2019. Likewise, the MSc Global Health was supported by a Professor and one early career member of staff and currently had 30 students, having risen from 24, with the potential to rise to 60. To accommodate the increased postgraduate numbers the Subject had increased the number of tutorial groups; however, this was further complicated by the School’s insistence that the core courses should be available to students outwith the Subject. The Review Panel considered that, in view of the continuing rise in student numbers, possibly the growth trajectory needed to be re-assessed, as it was clear that the student experience was suffering, most notably in the lost sense of community. Staff considered that large class sizes on the masters courses devalued the whole nature of the PGT student experience which should be far more interactive and intensive than at present. Ideally, Masters classes should have a maximum of 30 to ensure a good experience for all postgraduate students. The growing problems with mental health and recorded ‘good cause’ applications were considered evidence of a declining student experience for some and this is outlined further at 3.3.3. The overall impact resulted in a situation that was both unmanageable and stretched staff to capacity. Additionally, while there were a number of high performing courses, not all the courses were economically viable. The Panel viewed the current system as unsustainable and that urgent action was required to address the challenges outlined. The Review Panel **recommends** that the College and School, as a matter of priority, in consultation with the Subject, review

the current postgraduate provision and recruitment, taking into consideration the sustainability and impact on staff and the Student Experience. (see item 3.3.3)

Progression

3.1.3 From the SER the Review Panel observed that the Subject's retention figures were generally good and above average trends. The Panel noted from the documentation for from sessions 2015, 2016 and 2019 that the Subject had a higher level of Credit Refused in their statistics. The Head of Subject did not have access to this data but thought that this was probably due to the high number of students, possibly due to the intake from MEd students which accounted for just over 10% of the Subject's student cohort. The Review Panel recommends that the School examine the statistics with a view to identifying whether a pattern emerged for those students who received Credit Refused and to research potential strategies to reduce the instances of Credit Refused.

3.2 Equality and Diversity

3.2.1 From the SER, it was evident there was a clear awareness of the forms of diversity and a commitment by staff to address equality and diversity issues both in relation to staffing and in relation to student recruitment and teaching.

3.3 Supporting Students in their Learning

3.3.1 The Review Panel met with a small number of students from both undergraduate and postgraduate levels and all students expressed their satisfaction with the quality of their learning opportunities and the level of support provided by both academic and administrative staff. All students agreed they would recommend the Subject and the Honours courses and found the level of staff care motivating.

3.3.2 The SER referred to the challenges that the increase in numbers of students presented in developing and maintaining a sense of community within the Subject, particularly at postgraduate level. At the meetings with the Review Panel, both undergraduate and postgraduate students echoed this sentiment. Students generally welcomed the Sociology Café but had reservations about its current form in achieving its aim of developing a better sense of community. The lack of a dedicated space was a drawback and some students thought the café was more an opportunity to interact with staff than with other students. The Panel asked the students for suggestions about how to address the sense of community and they considered that the Sociology Student Society might be more effective in creating a sense of community; however, the students acknowledged that this would require greater involvement from themselves. The SER stated that the Careers Service had undertaken work with the Society to assist with building their membership and activity.

3.3.3 ¹With regard to postgraduate students, as noted at 1.1.2, postgraduate class reps had expressed their concerns regarding the changing nature of the masters' experience due to the rising numbers of students. This was confirmed at the meeting with postgraduate students who outlined the challenges that large class sizes presented and the subsequent loss of community. While the students acknowledged the efforts by staff to create a sense of community through specific events such as film nights, the size of the student postgraduate community made it difficult to connect with people on the same

¹ This Recommendation was drafted in the spring of 2020 reflecting an issue identified in the course of the review. However, it is acknowledged that subsequent developments relating to the pandemic will have a significant impact on the response.

course. The Panel acknowledged the challenges that large student numbers presented in developing a sense of community, welcomed the introduction of the Sociology Café and supported the Subject's plans to expand this beyond the Honours cohort. However, in view of the challenges presented by student mental health issues (3.3.4), the Panel considered that further work was required to offset the sense of isolation and "separateness" experienced by some students, particularly at postgraduate level. See 3.1.2 for the recommendation relating to postgraduate student numbers. The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject, with the support of the School and College, explore approaches to building a greater sense of community among the student cohort including further development of the Sociology Café and the Sociology Student Society.

- 3.3.4 The Review Panel noted from the SER that a substantial issue facing the Subject was the increase in good cause claims and students with mental health issues. The SER stated that between the PSR held in 2012-13 and 2018-19 there had been an increase of approximately 300 percent in good cause claims, with a 400 percent increase of cases where students applied for long extensions of three weeks or more or had not completed an assignment due to extenuating circumstances. In exploring the issue of good cause, the Panel noted that the issue was less about the number of cases and more about the rise in individuals submitting multiple applications, which had seen increases ranging from 4-25%. The Subject considered that a contributory factor to the problem was the misunderstanding by students on what good cause meant with some students thinking it meant their work would be marked differently.
- 3.3.5 The Panel noted that, while students could apply for good cause on MyCampus, they were unable to apply online for an extension for assignments. The Head of Subject believed that students were deterred by the requirement to submit personal information online. He commented that the previous system required students to complete a physical copy of the form, which encouraged the provision of fuller evidence in support of their application. In view of this observation, the Review Panel **recommends** that the observations regarding the good cause form and online process be forwarded to the Senate Office for consideration.
- 3.3.6 The Review Panel was concerned to note, from the SER, the increase in good cause claims and student mental health problems, which subsequently affected the wellbeing of staff who felt unqualified to deal with complex mental health issues. The SER stated that in 2012-13 this had involved 3.6 percent of cases, which had risen to 25.6 percent in 2018-19. Staff confirmed that the rise in students with more serious mental health problems was challenging, particularly it was perceived that often students were unable to access support from the student counselling service. In general, staff found supporting and managing students with mental health problems challenging and felt that more signposting to available resources would be helpful. There had been improvements in the circulation of information on resources for staff. However, the Head of Subject advised that, while staff training would be helpful, staff were wary regarding this issue and that the University needed to recognise the burden on staff as first contact. The Panel shared the Subject's concerns, and highlighted the availability of training sessions provided by the SRC. These included Mental Health First Aid training and 'Mind Your Mate' sessions which were open to both staff and students. The Review Panel considered that it was important that mental health resources were widely publicised and **recommends** that the Mental Health Working Group should consider how to disseminate information on training and support available to staff such as Mental Health First Aid training and 'Mind Your Mate'.

- 3.3.7 In the SER, the Subject outlined the initiatives they had introduced in endeavouring to support students including a 'Who to Speak to' document available through Moodle and aimed at directing students to appropriate forms of support. Additionally, the Subject operated a good cause committee comprised of three staff members. The team operated by splitting the caseload; however, the team were familiar with all cases which assisted continuity, which was of particular importance in relation to complex cases. The Review Panel **commends** the Subject for its proactive stance on this issue. At the staff meeting, the Panel noted that another University operated a centralised system for good cause claims, which ensured consistency of practice while alleviating the administrative pressure on academic staff and ensured consistency of practice across the institution. The Review Panel **recommends** that this practice be drawn to the attention of the Senate Office.
- 3.3.8 ²The SER stated, "Students seem increasingly to have less direct contact with their adviser of study and to rely more on the assistance of the team of primarily administrative staff who serve in the advising offices of Social Science and Arts." (SER, p24). While there were no signs that students were concerned about this lack of contact, at the meeting with students, the Review Panel explored how the advising system currently operated within the Subject. The main source of contact appeared to be via email and the general experience among the students was that of minimal contact, although staff advised that only students with issues tended to contact them. Staff and students both expressed the view that the system needed to be more supportive. Contributing factors for the shortcomings of the system were the lack of formal training for staff in the advising role together with the need for the role to have a more pastoral approach as students preferred to contact familiar people. The Head of Subject and staff considered that an improved advising system could relieve pressure on the number of good cause cases. As there was no official advising system operating at postgraduate level, the situation was more precarious. To offset this, staff operated an open-door policy, which the students welcomed; however, they agreed that a more systematic process was required. The Review Panel acknowledged that there were challenges with the current advising system particularly in conjunction with the pressures that staff experienced in relation to good cause and student mental health issues. However, the Panel emphasised the importance for students to be aware of the support available through their advisers and although students had not expressed explicit concerns, it was necessary for the advising system to function effectively. The Review Panel **recommends** that the College undertake a review of the operation of the current advising system, particularly in relation to the support required for postgraduate students.
- 3.3.9 ³The Review Panel noted, from the SSLC minutes and meetings with students, that the Subject did not undertake regular lecture recording. The undergraduate students considered lecture recording would be helpful in reinforcing their learning. It was evident from the Panel's discussions there was strong staff opposition to the practice with staff contending that lecture recording correlated with a fall in lecture attendance. In addition,

² This Recommendation was drafted in the spring of 2020 reflecting an issue identified in the course of the review. However, it is acknowledged that subsequent developments relating to the pandemic will have a significant impact on the response.

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staff stated that the aim of lectures was to point students in the direction of independent critical learning and recording would encourage students to regurgitate the lectures in assignments and exams. While the Panel acknowledged that, in some instances, lecture recording was not possible due to lack of adequate recording facilities, the experience of using lecture recording in other parts of the University is that it did not impact on attendance in the long term. Moreover, it was evident that any lecture was open to regurgitation by students and the solution lay in careful question setting. In order for students to have sufficient learning support, as outlined in the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy and Lecture Recording Policy, the Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject ensure that lecture recording is undertaken, wherever possible, by all staff or alternative provision provided - including uploading slides to Moodle.

Postgraduate

- 3.3.10 The Review Panel met with two postgraduate students who were satisfied overall with their programmes and would recommend the Subject to others. When asked why they had chosen Glasgow the students' reasons included the wide range of courses offered and the top ranking status of the Subject.
- 3.3.11 The students expressed concerns regarding the large class sizes and lack of community identified in other sections of the report. The students advised that they had had trouble in obtaining personalised feedback due to the class size, although there had been some improvement in this process as the semester progressed.
- 3.3.12 The issue of core modules as electives was raised with one student advising that she did not have all the relevant information at the time of selection. Another comment made was that they did not understand why the semester one Core course was compulsory in view of the diversity of the group's interests. The Subject should ensure that students are provided with guidance on how to access information on available elective modules at the appropriate time.

Graduate Attributes

- 3.3.13 The Review Panel noted from the SER that the Subject aimed to embed graduate attributes through their modes of assessment, experiential trips and highlighted the collaborative dissertations undertaken by undergraduate and postgraduate students. The Review Panel was impressed with this provision, appreciating that it provided students with the opportunity to develop their skills and links with prospective employers. Both undergraduate and postgraduate students considered that they received adequate information on graduate attributes. The Review Panel **commends** the Subject's practice of collaborative dissertation.

3.4 Student Engagement

Feedback Mechanisms

- 3.4.1 The SER outlined the recent changes to the format and timings of the Staff Student Liaison Committee (SSLC). The SSLC meetings had been restructured with separate meetings at undergraduate and postgraduate levels aimed at providing more time for clearer discussions. Overall, the students who met with the Panel considered that the class rep system worked well.

- 3.4.2 ⁴Some students expressed unease that the Subject responses to student concerns could be misaligned and the students were uncertain whether this was due to a misunderstanding of the issues raised. While acknowledging that the Subject attempted to address issues, students said they would prefer that the Subject clearly outlined their intended course of action. In the event that no solution was possible, the students would wish to know this. The Review Panel welcomed the redesign of the SSLC and congratulated the Subject on its proactive stance in this regard, however, there seemed to be a disconnect between issues raised and closing the loop. The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject review the current processes, relating to responding to student feedback, to ensure there is clarity around these issues and to ensure that all responses are unambiguous. The Subject should engage the class reps to provide feedback to students, possibly via social media.

The Review Panel was concerned to note that staff did not routinely upload their lecture slides in advance of the lecture. The Head of Subject expressed surprise that this was not routine practice. The Panel gleaned from discussions that staff were resistant to this practice, asserting there was no substantive evidence that disproved student drop off occurred. The Panel disagreed with this pedagogy and referenced the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy, which clearly outlined the requirements for the provision of teaching materials. The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject undertake a review of the practice of uploading lecture slides to ensure that students are not disadvantaged and ensure staff are informed on the requirements of the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy.

Course Evaluation

- 3.4.3 ⁴The Review Panel noted, from the SER, the Subject's concerns regarding the move from paper copies of the course evaluation form to an online version. The SER detailed a response level of between 54.2-81% for questionnaires issued in hard copy while the highest online response was 46.9%. The Panel appreciated the Subject's concerns; however, there are alternative processes to those outlined in the SER. The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject liaises with the Senate Office and consults the good practice guide on the Senate Office Website to develop a strategy for increasing student response rates for EvaSys course evaluation surveys.

4 Learning and Teaching

Curriculum Design

4.1.1 MRes Methods Training

The SER stated that, at postgraduate level, there were challenges regarding the adequacy/fit of MRes Methods Training. The Review Panel noted that student feedback consistently raised concerns about this provision and the relevance of the programme. Contributing factors included class sizes as discussed at 3.1.2; however, the SER queried the suitability of the courses for Sociology students exacerbated by the need for the programme to appeal to a broad student base. There appeared to be a lack of consistency regarding core provision at postgraduate level with courses requiring students to undertake anything from one to three core modules. The Head of Subject

⁴ This Recommendation was drafted in the spring of 2020 reflecting an issue identified in the course of the review. However, it is acknowledged that subsequent developments relating to the pandemic will have a significant impact on the response

advised that this was organised at College and School level and tended to be an isolated occurrence, however, he advised the situation had improved and the Subject expected to be consulted regarding future decisions relating to this provision.

- 4.1.2 The Review Panel noted from student feedback that sociological theory was not taught until Honours level. At the meeting with the Panel, the students expressed concern that this would be detrimental to their study of sociology and indicated they would prefer this to be taught at an earlier stage. The Head of Subject advised that the Subject had consciously decided not to overwhelm students with theory at Levels 1 and 2, but elements had been introduced at Level 2. However, the Panel noted from their discussions with students that, though not explicitly labelled as theory, the students were being tutored in theory as evidenced through their knowledge of Marxist theory and decolonization. The students expressed their enjoyment of these topics; however, they suggested that it might be more practical to start the Level 1 course with the Sociology of Everyday Life, instead of introducing it at a later stage. The Panel was most gratified to see that theoretical teaching was evident at Level 1 and would suggest that the Subject explicitly signpost this more. The students also commented that they considered that they required research methods courses from this stage also.
- 4.1.3 The Review Panel noted, from the SER, that the School was represented on the School Learning and Teaching Groups at both UG and PGT levels, which was an appropriate forum for sharing good practice across the School. However, it was noted also from the SER that the Sociology Learning and Teaching Group, which was a suitable place for the exchange, and identification of good practice, specific to the subject area, had not met for some time although the Subject planned to reintroduce the meeting of the Group. The Panel agreed there were clear areas of good practice; however, there was not a strong sense of how they were being rolled out across the Subject. The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject invigorate efforts to revive the Sociology Learning and Teaching Group and to ensure regular meetings to enhance the identification and sharing of good practice across the Subject. The Subject may wish to consult with LEADS for guidance on this issue.
- 4.1.4 At the Review Panel's meeting with key staff, the academic staff expressed their thanks to the administrative staff for their excellent support and asked that this be recorded.
- 4.1.5 The SER outlined the Subject's plan to review the Sociology postgraduate dissertation provision, which aimed to assist students with identifying a dissertation topic at an earlier stage. The Review Panel noted that the impact of increased postgraduate numbers presented challenges in appropriate project/dissertation supervision. Due to the numbers of staff with specific interests, dissertation supervision overburdened those staff with more general experience. The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject look at the numbers of PGT students any individual should supervise and explore whether it is possible to devise a method of more equitable distribution of projects for supervision.
- 4.1.6 ⁵The Review Panel explored Study Abroad Year (SAY) with the Level 3 and 4 students who advised that they were discouraged from SAY as they would miss the dissertation training sessions and therefore have to write the proposal with less guidance.

⁵ This Recommendation was drafted in the spring of 2020 reflecting an issue identified in the course of the review. However, it is acknowledged that subsequent developments relating to the pandemic will have a significant impact on the response.

Additionally, the enrolment process for dissertation subject precluded SAY students, as they could not access Moodle while abroad. This raised issues of equity and it was evident that the current dissertation system disadvantaged and discouraged students from undertaking SAY. Therefore, the Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject take steps to ensure that potential students wishing to undertake SAY are not discouraged or disadvantaged in the choice or support for their dissertation.

- 4.1.7 ⁵The Review Panel noted that work based learning was particularly strong in some postgraduate provision, specifically on the MSc Media, Communications and International Journalism, where students have work placements, and in the provision of collaborative dissertation opportunities on the MSc Global Migrations and the range of Criminology PGT programmes. However, from discussion with the Head of Subject, the Panel noted that while there was no explicit work-based learning at undergraduate level, students could undertake collaborative dissertations with employer organisations. Due to the diversity of careers arising from a Sociology degree, it was not possible to provide information on specific career paths, however, it was noted that the Careers Service provided helpful support to students. The Review Panel considered that it was desirable for the work-based learning opportunities to be made more explicit to undergraduate students and therefore **recommends** that the Subject take a more proactive approach to developing possible employment links with the dissertation for undergraduate students.

Approach to Intended Learning Outcomes

- 4.1.8 From the documentation, the Review Panel was confident that the ILOs were outlined explicitly in all programme specifications and was satisfied that these were appropriate. However, the Level 1 and 2 students were aware of the ILOs but considered that there was no consistency and would have welcomed these to be made available. The Panel suggest that the Subject signpost more clearly the existence of ILOs to the students.

Technology Enhanced Learning and Teaching

- 4.1.9 From discussion with the undergraduate students, it was evident that the practice for submission of assignments varied; students submitted online or handed in one or two physical copies of their work. The students were critical of the latter, viewing it as wasteful, unnecessarily stressful and costly and suggested that online submission would be more environmentally friendly. This was also a particular problem for home and disabled students. The Review Panel explored this with the Head of Subject who advised that a pilot of online assessment and feedback was being conducted. However, he advised there were challenges associated with online submission and highlighted that, currently, staff met with Honours students to return their work and any subsequent switch to online submission would lose this vital interaction. However, there were also issues with physical hand-ins with relatively low rates of collection by students. The Panel appreciated the challenges that both processes presented, however, considered that the current system was flawed and could disadvantage some students. The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject, in conjunction with the current online pilot, in liaison with LEADS, review the current assignment submission process and consider viable alternatives, including the option of submission of assignments in Word document format which would enable feedback to be provided via tracked changes.
- 4.1.10 The postgraduate students had experience of online and physical hand-ins. Generally, both students preferred online submission but acknowledged the merits of physical hand-ins.

- 4.1.11 The Review Panel explored with the Head of School the impact of Brexit on students applying to Study Abroad. He advised the Panel that most of their students chose to study outwith Europe, so had not been affected by the situation to date. With regard to Erasmus, they were less certain and would have to wait until these agreements were finalised before any impact would be evident.
- 4.1.12 The Review Panel explored whether the staff were receptive to advances in digital technology. The Panel noted that some areas were stronger than others in this area, however the tutorial programmes did involve interactive learning. The Head of Subject acknowledged that it would be beneficial for staff to engage more with digital technology but highlighted that the pressure of staff workloads and resources presented obstacles.

4.2 **Assessment and Feedback**

- 4.2.1 The SER outlined that the Subject had increased the range of assessments offered to students and the Review Panel noted there was a combination of formative and summative assessments. However, the Panel was concerned about the viability of frequently setting a 4000-word essay and the subsequent impact on staff in marking these assignments. The Panel suggested that it might be timely to consider reviewing this form of assessment; however staff commented that, while they acknowledged the benefits of discarding this particular assessment, this gave rise to other concerns. Staff mentioned issues relating to deadlines, the impact on good cause applications and the workload implications of administrative staff of alternative methods of assessment.
- 4.2.2 The Review Panel noted the Subject's response to student expectations regarding feedback had the potential to impact on the NSS. In response, the Subject had introduced innovative methods, including Moodle based explanations of the assessment process and highlighted the use of the stop/start/continue method of informal feedback. From discussions with students, they were unaware of the stop/start/continue form of feedback. The Review Panel considered this was a potentially innovative method of providing ongoing feedback during a course and suggests that this method of informal feedback is conveyed more clearly to the students. From discussion with the postgraduate students, the Panel noted that the students were unfamiliar with feedback guidance and had commented on the absence of a course calendar. However, the students advised that, generally, they were kept informed of any delays in the return of feedback. The exception to this was if the student was not in the core course when there can be a disconnect in receiving updates.

4.3 **Resources for Learning and Teaching (staffing and physical)**

Staffing

- 4.3.1 The Review Panel noted, from the SER, that the Subject's concerns regarding the level of administrative support at postgraduate level, was exacerbated by a high turnover of staff, resulting in the loss of knowledge and experience. The Head of Subject advised that a temporary postgraduate administrator had been appointed and hoped the position would be made permanent. In view of the expansion in postgraduate programmes and student numbers, it was evident that a single postgraduate administrator was not enough, particularly in relation to succession planning and sickness absence. While the issues of resources for staffing lies outwith the remit of the Review Panel, the Panel had serious concerns regarding the impact of the postgraduate expansion and would encourage the School and College to consider this issue in the wider scrutiny of postgraduate recruitment.

Learning and Teaching Space

4.3.2 The Review Panel acknowledged the challenges presented by the lack of appropriate teaching spaces, particularly in relation to the growth in student numbers over recent years. This was the case, particularly, with regard to those student and staff with particular issues of accessibility. Based predominantly in the Adam Smith Building, common complaints ranged from the allocation of multiple rooms for courses, the allocation of unsuitable rooms and loss of teaching time travelling between lectures. All students with whom the Panel met echoed these concerns. The Panel acknowledged there was no immediate solution to these issues, however, the Review Panel, **recommends** that this issue regarding unsuitable teaching accommodation should be highlighted to the Director of Estates and Commercial Services.

4.4 Engaging and Supporting Staff

4.4.1 The Review Panel had concerns regarding the workload model, which were shared by the Head of Subject; however, he advised that the workload model was being reviewed at School level.

Early career support

4.4.2 The Review Panel met with early career staff and tutors. Both groups agreed that they were well supported and managed by the Subject and expressed appreciation for the excellent Subject administrative support provided. The Review Panel **commends** the Subject for its support for Early Career staff and Tutors.

4.4.3 However, those in attendance were critical of several processes at both College and School level. All staff at the meeting expressed concern regarding the increase in postgraduate student numbers with some early career staff commenting on the impact this had on their workload. This issue is addressed at 3.1.2.

4.4.4 From the SER, the Review Panel noted that early career staff on the ECDP had automatic enrolment on the PGCap programme. While tutors were not eligible for the ECDP programme, the School had agreed that tutors could enrol on the PGCap. However, from discussion with the tutors, the Panel noted that their workload left insufficient time to undertake the PGCap. The early career staff described a disconnect between the aims of the PGCap and professional development and considered that this required review. The early career staff expressed confusion regarding promotion criteria, believing that they were required to achieve all the criteria in order to qualify for promotion. The Panel clarified this was not the case and that the criteria was for staff to achieve a preponderance. The Panel was concerned at this misunderstanding and agreed that this information should be clarified with all eligible staff as soon as possible.

4.4.5 The Review Panel noted the frustration of many of the tutors in relation to contracts, workload and a lack of a clear career pathway. In addition to being on short term contracts, the Panel noted that several lecturers were on the Learning, Teaching and Scholarship Track, having switched from Research & Teaching contracts to secure lectureships. However, there was little or no information on how to revert to the R&T contract, if desired.

4.4.6 The Review Panel noted that there was dissatisfaction with the workload model, which, among other things, omitted to include hidden work such as time spent responding to students via email. Tutors had been advised that their workload would be adjusted to

allow time to apply for scholarships, which did not happen in practice, due to the size of their workload. The SER stated, "...marking, this was especially stark for Tutors who, with their heavier teaching load than GTAs, are on occasion given up to 100 essays with the expectation of marking them in two weeks." (SER, p10). This was confirmed by staff who provided examples of being unable to take leave over the Christmas period due to their marking workload.

- 4.4.7 The SER had highlighted the difficulty that tutors and graduate teaching assistants (GTA) encountered regarding payment. These included a lack of clarity concerning what each payslip covered and occasions where no payment was made at all due to administrative failure.
- 4.4.8 The Review Panel was most concerned at the impact that the continued increase in student numbers had on early career staff, tutors and GTAs (see 3.1.2). Additionally, the Panel had serious concerns regarding the lack of support and career development afforded to tutors. The Panel acknowledged that the payment and contract issues were outwith the scope of the Subject; however, it was essential that they were addressed at the earliest opportunity. The Review Panel **recommends** that the School review the contracts and workloads of early career staff and tutors to ensure parity and to identify possible career pathways. In addition, the School should review the current system for paying tutors and GTAs to ensure that non-payment does not occur. This should include the review of best practice in other colleges.

Graduate Teaching Assistants

- 4.4.9 The Review Panel noted that the GTAs considered that they were well supported through teaching and marking support. The Review Panel noted the comments from the Staff Survey regarding the dissatisfaction of GTAs regarding their employment conditions. This is discussed at 4.4.8.

5 Academic Standards

- 5.1.1 The Review Panel considered that the Subject had a variety of robust and effective procedures in place, which ensure that the Subject is engaged in a continual process of self-reflection and self-evaluation regarding academic and pedagogical practice.

Currency and Validity of Programmes

- 5.1.2 The Panel, guided by the views of the External Subject Specialist, confirmed that, at the time of the Review, the programmes offered by the Subject were current and valid in the light of developing knowledge and practice within the subject area.
- 5.1.3 The SER had outlined the challenges that the Subject experienced with the Course Approval process, more specifically the challenges in obtaining approval for courses. Further discussion disclosed that, while the process was cumbersome, there were negative associations due to the critical tone of feedback on course documentation, which provided little or no guidance regarding the required changes. The Head of Subject advised that staff had been discouraged, at School and College level, from developing new courses, particularly at honours level. This gave staff a sense of disempowerment and frustration, particularly among new colleagues. The Panel noted that the loss of staff affected the delivery of courses due to the lack of expertise. Staffing also affected the development of new courses. In view of the experience and professionalism of the staff, the Head of Subject considered that the Subject should have

more autonomy and ownership of their teaching programmes. He advised the panel, however, that there had been some improvements due to the inclusion of a Subject level representative on the course approval committee. The Review Panel concurred that it was imperative that the knowledge and expertise of staff was acknowledged throughout course development and approval. The Review Panel, while welcoming the recent developments, **recommends** that the College and School continue to ensure that the Subject is consulted and involved at all stages of the course approval process.

6 Summary of perceived strengths and areas for improvement

6.1 Key strengths

The Review Panel identified the following areas as key strengths:

- Established and leading provider of Sociology education in UK
- Real and passionate commitment to subject core themes of equality and diversity
- Excellent engagement and communication with student concerns and issues
- Wide range of provision
- Subject displays intellectual coherence
- Committed to continual improvement
- Excellent standard of student work
- Clear link between research and teaching interests

6.2 Areas for improvement

The Review Panel highlighted the following areas as opportunities for improvement:

- Need for clearer involvement in strategic planning
- Require a strategy to address increasing student numbers particularly at postgraduate level.
- Generating a sense of community among students
- Advising System
- Lecture Recording and provision of lecture slides

Specific recommendations addressing these areas for work are listed below, as are a number of further recommendations on particular matters.

7 Conclusion

The Review Panel was impressed with the dedication and enthusiasm of the staff and students and with the firm focus of the Subject to provide a high level of teaching and support for students. The Subject demonstrated a number of strengths, as well as an awareness of the areas requiring improvement. The most substantive of these are reflected in the commendations and recommendations below.

7.1 Commendations

The Review Panel commends Sociology on the following, which are listed **in order of appearance** in this report:

Commendation 1

The Review Panel **commends** the Subject for its commitment to providing a research-led, wide range of provision together with a high level of support to students. (Paragraph 2.5.1]

Commendation 2

The Review Panel **commends** the Subject's practice of collaborative dissertation. [Paragraph 3.3.13]

Commendation 3

The Review Panel commends the Subject's bespoke centralised system for recording and processing good cause claims. [Paragraph 3.3.7]

7.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations have been made to support Sociology in its reflection and to enhance provision in relation to teaching, learning and assessment. The recommendations have been cross-referenced to the paragraphs in the text of the report to which they refer and are **grouped together** by the areas for improvement/enhancement and are **ranked in order of priority within each section**.

Strategic Vision

Recommendation 1

- 1.1 The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject has representation on the relevant School and College Committees and is consulted on all key strategic planning and appointment processes concerning the Subject. [Paragraph 2.4.3]

**For the attention of: The Head of School
Head of College
For information: Head of Subject**

- 1.2 The Review Panel, while welcoming the recent developments, **recommends** that the College and School continue to ensure that the Subject is consulted and involved at all stages of the course approval process. [Paragraph 5.1.3]

**For the attention of: The Head of School
Head of College
For information: Head of Subject**

Recommendation 2

The Review Panel **recommends** that the College and School, as a matter of priority, in consultation with the Subject, review the current postgraduate provision and recruitment, taking into consideration the sustainability and impact on staff and the Student Experience. [Paragraph 3.1.2]

**For the attention of: The Head of School
The Head of College
The Head of Subject**

Recommendation 3

The Review Panel **recommends** that the School review the contracts and workloads of early career staff and tutors to ensure parity and to identify possible career pathways. In addition, the School should review the current system for paying tutors and GTAs to ensure that occurrences of non-payment do not occur. This should include the review of best practice in other colleges. [Paragraph 4.4.8]

**For the attention of: The Head of School
For information: The Head of Subject**

Recommendation 4

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject look at the numbers of PGT students any individual should supervise and explore whether it is possible to devise a method of more equitable distribution of projects for supervision. [Paragraph 4.1.5]

For the attention of: The Head of Subject

Recommendation 5

5.1 In order for students to have sufficient learning support, as outlined in the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy and Lecture Recording Policy, the Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject ensure that lecture recording is undertaken, wherever possible, by all staff or alternatives provided, including uploading slides to Moodle. [Paragraph 3.3.9]

For the attention of: The Head of Subject

5.2 The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject undertake a review of the practice of uploading lecture slides to ensure that students are not disadvantaged and ensure staff are informed on the requirements of the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy. [Paragraph 3.4.3]

For the attention of: The Head of Subject

Recommendation 6

6.1 The Review Panel **recommends** that the College undertake a review of the current advising system, particularly in relation to the support required for postgraduate students. [Paragraph 3.3.8]

For the attention of: The Head of College
For information: The Head of School
The Head of Subject

6.2 ⁶The Review Panel recommends that the School examine the statistics with a view to identifying whether a pattern emerged for those students who received Credit Refused and to research potential strategies to reduce the instances of Credit Refused. [Paragraph 3.1.3]

For the attention of: The Head of Subject

Recommendation 7

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject, with the support of the School and College, explore approaches to build a sense of community among the student cohort including further development of the Sociology Café and the Sociology Student Society. [Paragraph 3.3.3]

For the attention of: The Head of Subject
For information: The Head of School
The Head of College

Recommendation 8

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject review the current processes, relating to responding to student feedback, to ensure there is clarity around these issues and to ensure that all responses are unambiguous. The Subject should engage the class reps to provide feedback to students, possibly via social media. [Paragraph 3.4.2]

For the attention of: The Head of Subject

⁶ The second item under Recommendation 6 was an additional recommendation requested by Academic Standards Committee which has been agreed by the PSR Panel Convener

Recommendation 9

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject invigorate efforts to revive the Sociology Learning and Teaching Group and to ensure regular meetings to enhance the identification and sharing of good practice across the Subject. The Subject may wish to consult with LEADS for guidance on this issue. [Paragraph 4.1.3]

For the attention of: The Head of Subject

Recommendation 10

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject take steps to ensure that potential students wishing to undertake SAY are not discouraged or disadvantaged in the choice or support for their dissertation. [Paragraph 4.1.6]

For the attention of: The Head of Subject

Recommendation 11

The Review Panel considered that it was desirable for the work-based learning opportunities to be made more explicit to undergraduate students and therefore **recommends** that the Subject take a more proactive approach to developing work links with the dissertation for undergraduate students. [Paragraph 4.1.7]

For the attention of: The Head of Subject

Recommendation 12

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject, in conjunction with the current online pilot and in liaison with LEADS, review the current submission process and consider viable alternatives, including the option of submission of assignments in Word document format which would enable feedback to be provided via tracked changes. [Paragraph 4.1.9]

For the attention of: The Head of Subject

Recommendation 13

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject liaises with the Senate Office and consults the good practice guide on the Senate Office Website to develop a strategy for increasing student response rates for EvaSys course evaluation surveys. [Paragraph 3.4.4]

For the attention of: The Head of School

Matters for attention – outside of Subject or School

Recommendation 14

The Review Panel considered that it was important that mental health resources were widely publicised and **recommends** that the Mental Health Working Group should consider how to disseminate information on training and support available to staff such as Mental Health First Aid training and 'Mind Your Mate'. [Paragraph 3.3.6]

For the attention of the Convener of the Mental Health Working Group
For information: The Head of Subject

Recommendation 15

15.1 The Review Panel **recommends** that the observations regarding the good cause form and online process be forwarded to the Senate Office for consideration. [Paragraph 3.3.5]

For the attention of: The Assistant Director of the Senate Office
For information: The Head of Subject

15.2 At the staff meeting, the Panel was advised that another University operated a centralised system for good cause claims, which ensured consistency of practice across the institution while alleviating the administrative pressure on academic staff. The Review Panel **recommends** that this issue be drawn to the attention of the Senate Office. [Paragraph 3.3.7]

For the attention of: The Assistant Director of the Senate Office
For information: The Head of Subject

Recommendation 16

The Review Panel **recommends** that this issue regarding unsuitable teaching accommodation be highlighted to the Director of Estates and Commercial Services. [Paragraph 4.3.2]

For the attention of: The Director of Estates and Commercial Services
For information: The Head of Subject

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Summer Powers 2020

**Periodic Subject Review: Review of Theology & Religious Studies
held on 17 February 2020**

Cover Sheet

Mr Chris Buckland, Clerk to the Review Panel

Brief Description of the Paper

Report of the Periodic Subject Review of Theology & Religious Studies held on 17 February 2020.

Action Requested

Academic Standards Committee is invited to receive the report and **approve** the 7 recommendations contained therein for onward transmission to those identified for action.

Recommended Person/s responsible for taking the action(s) forward

As identified in the report.

Resource Implications (where appropriate)

Not applicable.

Timescale for Implementation (where appropriate)

An update to the recommendations will be provided to the March 2020 meeting of ASC.

Equality Implications (where appropriate)

As identified in the report.

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Summer Powers 2020

**Periodic Subject Review: Review of Theology & Religious Studies
held on 17 February 2020**

Mr Chris Buckland, Clerk to the Review Panel

Review Panel:

Professor Neal Juster	Senior Vice Principal and Deputy Vice Chancellor, Panel Convener
Professor Morwenna Ludlow	University of Exeter, External Subject Specialist
Dr Simon Kennedy	Senate Assessor on Court
Mr Liam Brady	SRC Vice President (Education), Student representative
Professor Glen Pettigrove	School of Humanities, Cognate member
Dr Matthew Williamson	Learning Enhancement & Academic Development Service
Mr Chris Buckland	Registry, Clerk to the Panel
Dr Carol Collins	Learning Enhancement & Academic Development Service (Observer)

1. Introduction

- 1.1.1 The Subject of Theology & Religious Studies is one of four subjects within the School of Critical Studies, which is one of four Schools within the College of Arts.
- 1.1.2 The previous Periodic Subject Review of Theology & Religious Studies was in March 2014. The Panel was impressed with the actions taken in response to the recommendations made at the last Review, in particular the interdisciplinary links which have developed with the School of Education in relation to developing Catholic Teacher training, and the attempts to encourage internationalisation of the student experience by developing links with partner institutions.
- 1.1.3 Preparation of the Theology & Religious Studies Self Evaluation Report (SER) was led by Professor Scott Spurlock, Head of Subject, with support from Professor Charlotte Methuen and Dr Sean Adams. A number of staff were consulted, including Subject area staff, Graduate Teaching Assistants, and staff within the School of Critical Studies. A consultation exercise was undertaken with Undergraduate, Postgraduate Taught and Postgraduate Research Students.
- 1.1.4 In advance of the Review meeting, a focus group was conducted by the Student Panel member with student representatives from the Subject on 3 February, and a staff survey was conducted within Theology & Religious Studies during January 2020.
- 1.1.5 The Review Panel met with Professor S Spurlock, Prof W Anderson (Dean of Learning & Teaching) and Professor A Jenkins (Head of School), with a subsequent meeting taking place between Panel Convenor and the Head of the College of Arts. The Panel

also met with 6 members of Academic Staff, 1 member of Administrative Staff, 2 Early Career staff, 3 Tutors, 5 Graduate Teaching Assistants and 4 UG students.

2. Context and Strategy

2.1 Staff

The SER indicated that the Subject has 25 academic staff, including 5 Graduate Teaching Assistants, totalling 14.67 FTE. The Panel noted that the Subject has a relatively high number of part-time Early Career staff, as well as 3 Tutors whose posts are funded by endowments.

The Subject has one full-time Undergraduate administrator, and further administrative support is provided to the Subject by the School.

The staff:student ratio is 1:11.9, based on core teaching staff (i.e. not including GTAs) which is lower than University of Glasgow and Russell Group averages.

2.2 Students

Undergraduate student numbers for session 2019/20 are summarised as follows:

Individuals enrolled on one or more courses at each level	Class enrolment (headcount)
Level 1	344
Level 2	139
Level 3	3
Level 3 & 4 (Hons)	253
Total	739

Students on a TRS single or joint programme:

Headcount	Term
Year of Prog	2019
1	35
2	31
3 Hons	34
4 Hons	31

Postgraduate student numbers for session 2019/20 are summarised as follows:

Form of Study - Postgraduate	
Part-time	9
Full-time	0
Total	9

2.3 Range of Provision under Review

Undergraduate:

- MA Honours in Theology & Religious Studies (single honours)
- MA Honours degree in Theology & Religious Studies (joint honours)

- BD Honours and General Degree
- BD (Min) Honours and General Degree

The Subject also contributes to the three-year general MA degree overseen by the College of Arts.

Postgraduate:

- MTh in Ministry, Theology and Practice

3. Review Outcomes

- 3.1.1 It was evident to the Panel from both the SER and the meetings with staff and students that the Subject's academic team showed a clear commitment to teaching, learning and providing a strong level of pastoral support to students, and that both staff and students valued the sense of social community fostered within the Subject. The Panel **commend** the Subject's reflective and open approach taken to the PSR process.
- 3.1.2 The Panel congratulate the Subject on a well-structured and broad curriculum, which gives students in other subjects the opportunity to gain an introduction to Theology & Religious Studies and the option to continue on to joint Honours.

The following paragraphs detail the key points discussed during the review visit along with commendations recognising good practices and areas where the Review Panel identified scope for improvement. Commendations and recommendations are made to support the subject in its reflection and to enhance provision in relation to teaching, learning and assessment. Appendix 1 provides a summary list of the commendations and recommendations.

4. Strategic Direction

- 4.1.1 The SER indicated that although all four of Scotland's ancient Universities presently have a statutory obligation to provide training for the ordained ministry of the Church of Scotland, the Church is expected to undertake a tender process for Initial Ministerial Education training partners, which may have an impact upon the continued structure of the Subject's Bachelor of Divinity programme. At the meeting with the Head of the Subject it was highlighted that whilst the exact details of the tender were unclear, the intention is not to stop ministerial training at Glasgow, rather that changes were currently being proposed to the structure of ministerial training programmes to increase its flexibility, including the withdrawal of the Bachelor of Divinity (Ministry) degree, and the introduction of an option for the general Bachelor of Divinity to be completed in 2 years by graduates with suitable prior learning credits. The Panel **recommends** that the Subject continue to consider the academic and financial aspects concomitant with the anticipated Church of Scotland tender, and that they consult with the School and College where appropriate during the process.
- 4.1.2 The SER highlighted that, whilst the Subject do not plan to exclude the teaching of other religious traditions, the strategic vision was to prioritise the monotheistic traditions and their interrelations. At the meeting with the Head of Subject it was noted that the Subject's continued dual pathway offering of both Theology/Christian Studies and Religious Studies, and the continued Divinity profile at an Ancient University, are part of what makes Glasgow's offering distinctive in Scotland. The Panel **commends** the Subject for developing a clear strategy for future priorities which has sought the engagement of relevant stakeholders.
- 4.1.3 The Panel noted the recently introduced Master of Theology (MTh) in Ministry, Theology & Practice, launched in 2019/20 in partnership with Dr Williams' Trust in London, and the MTh in Church History and Theology which is due to be launched in 2020/21 in partnership with Stellenbosch University in South Africa, which demonstrate an

acknowledgment of a gap in Postgraduate provision and evidence an innovative way of addressing this by utilising external networks to develop collaborations, for which the Panel **commends** the subject.

5. Enhancing the Student Experience

Admissions - Undergraduate

5.1.1 The SER highlighted that Undergraduate admission levels over the past four years have been largely stable but hadn't benefited from the levels of growth experienced by other subjects, which was noted in the meeting with the Head of Subject as being reflective of the sector more widely. The meeting with the Head of Subject also highlighted the methods that the Subject aim to employ to reverse this, including better utilisation of Alumni to highlight the different career pathways available to Theology and Religious Studies graduates, as well as a strategic outreach plan which is being developed to enable the Subject to utilise connections within local schools to promote the Subject as an option to pupils whilst they are undertaking Highers. The Panel acknowledge these plans and **recommend** that the Subject consider whether there is a wider market which can be utilised to support and develop Undergraduate recruitment.

Admissions - Postgraduate

5.1.2 Admissions to Postgraduate Taught Provision programme have been small since the last review, at which time it was recommended that the Subject progress the re-development of PGT provision. The MTh in Literature, Theology & Culture was introduced in 2014/15 and closed effective from 2019/20 due to a disconnect between its content and the expertise and research interests of Subject staff. The impact of amendments to Postgraduate provision [outlined in 4.1.3] has been to reduce the total number of Postgraduate Admissions in comparison to 2017 and 2018. The SER notes that Postgraduate recruitment has been drawn primarily from Scotland and RUK, and that the Subject's lack of international students is markedly out of step with comparable institutions. The Panel acknowledge the steps which have been taken to address this and that the Subject's intention is for new MTh programmes which will come onstream over the next 2 academic years to address this.

Short courses

5.1.3 The Panel heard from the Head of Subject on efforts to engage with students from a widening participation background, with the Subject's primary means of recruitment in this area being their offering via Short Courses which, at present, consists of one course. The SER noted that further courses are being developed in cooperation with the Presbytery of Glasgow, and that the financial support which this relationship has generated has enabled the creation of a Grade 6 post in Pastoral Studies within the Subject. The Panel acknowledged the positive CPD opportunities that this will potentially develop, where students may be able to take the first year of MA or BD via Short Courses, and encourage the Subject to ensure that there is clarity as to the delineation of responsibilities between them and External Relations with regards to the delivery and administration of these courses.

5.2 Retention and Success

Progression and Retention

5.2.1 The SER and documentation highlighted that Theology & Religious Studies has good progression of students from 1st year into 2nd year and that this continues from year 2 to 3, and that progression rates are comparable with the School of Critical Studies and College of Arts. The retention of students is monitored at a College rather than a subject

level, but the SER highlighted that retention is healthy and that the Subject continues to recruit new students in years 1 and 2.

- 5.2.2 Around 27% of students have been awarded a first-class honours classification over the past four academic years, with about 59% being awarded a 2:1 classification. The Panel felt that this profile was in keeping with wider University trends and noted that classifications are routinely confirmed by external examiners.

Advising

- 5.2.3 The student focus group and staff survey provided feedback on the experiences of the Advisor of Studies system, and the availability of support more widely for students within the Subject. The Panel heard about the approach taken at UG level, where advising in the College of Arts is managed centrally by the Arts Advising team, although due to the specific regulations of the Bachelor of Divinity/Bachelor of Divinity (Ministry) a level of special provision is provided to Theology and Religious Studies. The UG students with whom the Panel met highlighted the strong level of commitment shown by Subject staff to supporting students, as well as their openness and availability to discuss issues. The Panel noted the challenges experienced by Subject staff in signposting students to relevant support services and highlighted the Student Support & Wellbeing project of the World-Changing Glasgow Transformation, whose work intends to increase staff and student awareness of appropriate support that is available.

International Students

- 5.2.4 The SER and supporting documents highlighted that the Subject has a consistent, but small, presence of international UG students, with the total number ranging from 1 to 4 in the period since the last review.

Internationalisation

- 5.2.5 In the meeting with the Head of Subject, the Panel heard further details on a proposal for an agreement with Yale Divinity School, which if approved would facilitate an undergraduate exchange for 1 FTE annually.

5.3 Equality and Diversity

- 5.3.1 The SER noted that Subject Area Meetings have considered best practice for the advanced provision of materials on course Moodle sites, but the staff survey and the Panel meeting with academic staff sought to highlight the correlation between attendance, engagement, and performance, and the concerns that the availability of course materials in advance of the teaching event might act as a disincentive to attendance. The Panel also heard from UG students on this topic, who highlighted their disappointment that teaching materials were not always made available in advance of lectures. The Panel **recommends** that the Subject take measures to ensure that they adhere to the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy, which requires teaching materials that support learning to be made available one working day in advance of the teaching event to which they relate.
- 5.3.2 The Panel heard from the UG students with whom they met on their experiences of lecture recording, and whether this was utilised within the Subject, with the students reporting that it wasn't offered consistently at levels 1 and 2 and that some students undertook to record lectures themselves. At Honours level, the students agreed that the nature of teaching, where lectures are set up more like seminars and see a greater level of interaction between staff and student, has implications for the practicality and benefit of recording.
- 5.3.3 The Panel was impressed by the Subject's policy in relation to students who have been assessed by the Disability Service as requiring proofreading services, with an automatic five-day extension for coursework deadlines being granted to ensure that students are

not inadvertently penalised whilst they await proofreading feedback. The Panel **commends** the subject's efforts in this area.

5.4 Supporting Students in their Learning

Induction

5.4.1 The meetings with academic staff and students expanded upon the information that was provided in the SER on the Subject's efforts to support induction, which included an event in Freshers Week to introduce the dual pathways and range of courses available, as well as a tour of facilities, a calendar of key dates and annual "honours taster" session. The Panel noted that this was an example of good practice in the field of student induction for which the Panel **commend** the Subject.

Transition

5.4.2 The Panel heard from staff and students on the measures taken by the Subject to support their transition from years 1 and 2 to honours, which includes presentations from course convenors on what their courses entail. The students with whom the Panel met were not aware of the pre-honours handbook but did highlight the inclusive nature of the Subject more widely when considering their induction to the University and transition during their studies.

5.5 Student Engagement

Graduate attributes

5.5.1 The SER and meetings with staff highlighted a wide range of provision for students to develop their graduate attributes and employability, both as part of the curriculum and outside of the classroom. The Subject's redesign of formative and summative assessments to allow for better alignment with the demonstrable attainment of Graduate Attributes has seen the utilisation of methods such as reflective journaling and the design of wiki-pages and information boards, and the UG students with whom the Panel met agreed that a wide range of assessment methods were employed, and that the continuous engagement and weekly reflections were helpful to their learning. The Panel **commends** the Subjects for their efforts in this area.

5.5.2 The student focus group highlighted that students out with the Bachelor of Divinity pathway were not clear on the ways in which the skills being developed from their studies could be employed outside of the classroom, and the Panel heard that UG students felt more could be done to highlight potential career options available for those on the MA pathway. The Panel note (5.1.1) the methods that the Subject aim to employ to increase UG recruitment, including better utilisation of Alumni to highlight the different career pathways available to Theology & Religious Studies graduates, and encourage the Subject to further embed the connections between graduate attributes and employability beyond the recruitment stage so that students are cognisant of them as they progress during their studies.

Social community

5.5.3 The SER and meetings with staff and students highlighted the Subject's results in the National Student Survey, which have seen them achieve a 100% overall satisfaction rating in all but one year in the period since the last review, and the Panel **commends** the continued performance in this area. The Panel identified that the NSS scores haven't reached these levels across the board and encouraged the Subject to address the three areas acknowledged in the SER as requiring further attention, namely *Learning Opportunities*, *Learning Resources* and *Learning Community*. In both the meetings with UG students and academic staff, the Panel heard the definition of *Learning Community* within the NSS is unclear and that the comparatively low scores are surprising, with students and staff highlighting both the social events employed by the Subject to

strengthen the sense of community, which include a weekly coffee morning and annual Christmas lunch, as well as the resources for Learning in Teaching in 4 The Square, as important elements of what was reported to be a strong sense of community.

5.6 Effectiveness of feedback mechanisms

- 5.6.1 The SER noted the measures taken by the Subject to obtain feedback from students, including student representation at monthly Subject Area meetings consulting representatives on all matters that are not reserved business, and the Staff-Student Liaison Committee (SSLC) meetings which take place at the end of the semester. The Panel commented that there may be more benefit in the meetings taking place mid-way through the semester to allow for potential changes to be made that would benefit the current student cohort. The UG students with whom the Panel met highlighted that SSLC meetings do now take place mid-semester, which was acknowledged by the Panel as **good practice**. It was highlighted by the UG students that student representatives may benefit from additional support to ensure that they're aware of what is expected of them during the SSLC meetings, and the Panel encourage the Subject to assess whether any amendments are required to their induction.
- 5.6.2 The SER and meetings with students and staff highlighted the approach taken by the subject to obtain student feedback via the EvaSys form, with summary and response documents produced and made available via Moodle within three weeks for each course when there are more than three responses received. The UG students felt that that the summary response documents were of benefit, as they closed the feedback loop and provided a response and rationale for why something can't be changed if it was raised as an issue. However, the response rates to EvaSys surveys were raised by both staff and students as problematic, with the UG students highlighting their timing as a possible reason for lack of student engagement as they are circulated at a time when exam preparation is prioritised. The Panel note the Subject's proposals to allocate in-class time for the purpose of both allowing representatives to meet with the whole class in advance of the SSLC, and to complete the EvaSys survey, and the Panel encourage them to explore this further to ensure that feedback is received and is representative of a broad spectrum of student opinion.

6. Enhancement in Learning and Teaching

6.1 Learning and Teaching

Study abroad

- 6.1.1 The relatively low numbers of students undertaking study abroad opportunities (1 student in session 2019/20) was highlighted in the SER, with the Subject outlining possible explanations including other work or caring commitments required from students and the diversity of choice within the Subject's established Erasmus partners. The Panel heard how collaboration with one of these partners, the University of Mainz, has developed beyond a traditional study abroad/exchange relationship, with a course on The Reformation being jointly delivered between the institutions incorporating shared sessions over videoconference, joint presentations and a three-day residential school in Germany. The Panel recognised the benefit of this collaboration and encourage the Subject to assess how to offer such opportunities at a reasonable and sustainable level across the curriculum.

Placement Learning

- 6.1.2 The Panel heard in the meetings with the Head of Subject and staff on developments which were being driven by the College of Arts to allow greater opportunities for students to undertake placement-based dissertations, which had previously been limited to the Bachelor of Divinity pathway. The SER noted that an MoU is being developed with the

Iona Community to provide a resilient framework for providing student opportunities, which would pair students with members working in advocacy, political lobbying, social and community work, development work or ministry. The students with whom the Panel met were enthusiastic about the potential for placement-based dissertations, and the Panel encourage the Subject to assess when the Iona Community relationship will be made available for the benefit of future cohorts.

Curriculum Design

6.1.3 The SER reported on recent changes which have been made to the curriculum at Levels 1 and 2 to ensure a resilience in provision and allow the Subject to continue its dual pathway offering for the study of both Theology/Christian Studies and Religious Studies, which was influenced by the Subject's strategic decision to prioritise the monotheistic traditions. The Panel noted the large number of courses available at Honours level, which was reported in the SER as being reflective of the Subject's diverse range of research expertise, and also discussed the challenges associated with this in the meeting with the Head of Subject. The Panel **recommends** that the Subject work with the School and College to ensure that staff workloads are resilient to the planned future growth in Postgraduate Taught provision, whilst at the same time assessing whether the number of UG honours courses offered needs further reduction, balancing diversity of choice, student numbers, and the constraints on staff time.

Approach to Intended Learning Outcomes

6.1.4 The SER reported that Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) for UG programmes were informed by QAA Subject Benchmark Statements, and that ILOs are constructed across courses to work together to provide educational pathways that help to develop Graduate Attributes. The Panel commented on the coherence and comprehensiveness of the programme ILOs, but questioned how individual course ILOs and assessment criteria map onto these - in the meeting with the UG students, it was reported that feedback was received at an individual course level rather than on the programme as a whole. The UG students with whom the Panel met confirmed that they were aware of the purpose of ILOs and that these were regularly referred to by academic staff, for example at the beginning of lectures for some courses and during revision lectures, with some courses' handbooks also being provided in lectures.

6.1.5 It was reported that the ILOs for the Bachelor of Divinity are substantially the same as those for the MA, but that there are a small number of distinctive ILOs which reflect the vocational nature of the programme and its emphasis on the Christian religion.

Technology Enhanced Learning and Teaching

6.1.6 The Panel heard from staff that the continued use of paper-marking was partly the result of second marking and moderation requirements, but more significantly the result of staff who suffered from back pain or poor eyesight and for whom the electronic marking and return of work was problematic. It was noted in the meeting with the Head of School that work had been undertaken at a School level to provide support and training on the use of online marking, and that this continues to be available – the Panel **recommend** that the Subject ensure staff are aware of and utilise such opportunities so that students experience a consistent approach in the return of coursework.

6.2 Assessment and Feedback

Engagement with the Code of Assessment and Assessment policy

6.2.1 It was noted in the SER that the Subject include extracts from the Code of Assessment in programme module pages, with the marking scale and grade descriptors highlighted to students via a variety of methods. The attention given to providing clear guidelines on

referencing and introducing students to marking conventions at a very early stage in each course were acknowledged by the Panel as positive and **good practice**.

Feedback on Assessment

6.2.2 The SER and supporting documentation highlighted that the Subject's NSS scores on the timeliness of feedback received is higher than University of Glasgow and Russell Group averages. The Panel heard from UG students on their experience of feedback received during their studies, with the students noting that whilst there was an opportunity to schedule an appointment with academic staff during their office hours to further discuss feedback, the written content can be generic and that they would be prepared to wait longer for feedback if it contained more detailed information which could be applied to future coursework, provided it was still available in sufficient time before the next summative piece. The Panel enquired as to how the students defined feedback, and whether they felt they could utilise the information that they received in the context of seminars and tutorials in the same way that they did feedback received following the submission of summative or formative coursework. The students highlighted that their interpretation of feedback is something which is written down. The Panel encourage the Subject to help reinforce the benefit of informal feedback and assess whether this this can be integrated with existing reflective practices.

6.3 Resources for Learning and Teaching (staffing and physical)

Learning and Teaching Space

6.3.1 The SER and meetings with academic staff highlight access issues with the Subject's primary accommodation in 4 The Square which can only be accessed via a staircase, meaning students with mobility issues are not able to make use of the range of facilities contained within. The facilities include a dedicated IT suite, the Robert Carroll library on Level 4, and Seminar Rooms which are provisioned with additional technology to facilitate collaborative international teaching. In the meeting with the Head of Subject, the Panel heard that academic staff attempt to mitigate these access issues by arranging individual meetings with students in other University buildings such as 1 The Square and that, although the numbers within the subject are small, the situation is not ideal.

6.3.2 The Panel heard of the issues experienced by staff and students in the distribution of teaching events across the campus. There was a recognition and acknowledgement amongst all parties that the size of the University estate and demand on space means that it would not always be possible to group consecutive teaching events together in the same venue, to do so might ensure a more efficient use of resource and staff/student time.

Staffing

6.3.3 The supporting documentation highlighted that there was no workload model in place for the School of Critical Studies, although the Panel did note the comments made during the meeting with academic staff that the increase in the number of students presenting with mental health or related conditions in recent academic years has led to an increase in staff workload.

6.3.4 In the meeting with the Head of Subject, the Panel heard that the salaries of 3 Tutors employed by the Subject with an FTE of 1.55 were paid via endowments, and that their future employment was therefore uncertain - the Panel encourage the Subject and the School to continue to identify appropriate funding streams for these staff.

6.4 Engaging and Supporting Staff

Early career support

6.4.1 The SER noted that all Early Career Staff are assigned a mentor and participate in the Early Career Development Programme (ECDP), and the Panel met with Early Career Staff to discuss their experience with this programme. There was a general agreement that it had not lived up to their expectations in many respects as, although there are opportunities for support and mentoring, the annual Performance & Development Review (PDR) requirements were onerous and had a detrimental impact on staff ability to undertake research. The Panel also received feedback from staff who had participated in the PGCert in Academic Practice (PGCAP), from which one member withdrew due to workload pressures - the Panel encourage the Subject to ensure that staff receive appropriate levels of support whilst undertaking the PGCert.

Graduate Teaching Assistants

6.4.2 It was noted in the SER and supporting documentation the Subject currently employ 5 Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs), but that the provision of GTA work on Level 1 and 2 courses remains uncertain as that going forward seminars may be delivered by regularly contracted staff. The GTAs with whom the Panel met acknowledged the training that was provided, both by the University and subject-specific inductions for each course, but highlighted that additional practical training would be welcome before they take up their roles and highlighted that they currently receive no formal feedback from colleagues and were unaware of any teaching observation or shadowing offered through the Subject or School. The Panel also heard that for the majority of GTA staff, their contracts only cover teaching and not marking assignments, although they would be keen to have the option to undertake marking. The Panel **recommends** that the Subject consider the impact on staff workloads of removing the requirement for GTA seminar teaching at Levels 1 and 2, and that efforts be made to provide any existing or future GTAs with a level of peer assessment and feedback on their teaching performance.

7. Academic Standards

7.1.1 The Review Panel considered that the Subject had a variety of robust and effective procedures in place which ensure that the Subject is engaged in a continual process of self-reflection and self-evaluation with regard to academic and pedagogical practice.

7.1.2 The SER noted that all work at Honours level which contributed more than 20% to a course's overall assessment is double marked, placing a heavy workload on staff, and that Theology and Religious Studies are the only subject within the School of Critical Studies that continue to undertake this practice. In the meetings with the Head of Subject and Academic Staff the Panel questioned the benefits of double-marking at honours level and whether there were any intentions to end this, and it was confirmed in the meeting with the Head of School and Dean of Learning & Teaching that 2019/20 would be the final academic year in which the practice would be undertaken.

7.1.3 In respect of the new PGT provision which is anticipated to be launched in the 2020/21 and 2021/22 academic years, the Panel **recommend** that appropriate quality assurance mechanisms be developed to ensure that these new programmes are included in the Subject's Quality Enhancement review cycle which was implemented following the Subject's previous review in 2014.

Currency and Validity of Programmes

7.1.4 The Panel, guided by the views of the External Subject Specialist, confirmed that, at the time of the Review, the programmes offered by the Subject were current and valid in the light of developing knowledge and practice within the subject area.

8. Collaborative provision

8.1.1 The Panel noted that the collaboration with the Dr Williams' Trust to deliver the part-time MTh in Ministry, Theology and Practice was in its first year of operation, and heard in the meeting with the Head of Subject that 3 members of academic staff from the Subject teach 1 day per month in London as part of this collaboration. The Panel acknowledged that the collaborative MTh is a positive development for the Subject and encourage them to keep the arrangements under review and where possible utilise any best practice they identify for the benefit of the MTh in Church History & Theology which is due to be launched in 2020/21 in partnership with Stellenbosch University.

Appendix 1 Summary of Commendations and Recommendations

The Review Panel commends the Subject of Theology & Religious Studies on the following, which are listed in order of appearance in this report:

Commendation 1

The reflective and open approach taken by the Subject to the self-evaluation report. [Paragraph 3.1.1]

Commendation 2

A clear strategy for future priorities which has sought the engagement of relevant stakeholders. [Paragraph 4.1.2]

Commendation 3

The Subject's utilisation of internal and external networks to develop collaborations which aim to enhance teaching and internationalisation opportunities. [Paragraph 4.1.3]

Commendation 4

The automatic five-day extension for coursework to accommodate students who have been assessed by the Disability Service as requiring proofreading services. [Paragraph 5.3.3]

Commendation 5

The Subject's efforts to support induction, which included an event in Freshers Week to introduce the dual pathways and range of courses available, as well as a tour of facilities and a calendar of key dates/annual "honours taster" session. [Paragraph 5.4.1]

Commendation 6

Good practice in developing graduate attributes through a variety of methods in teaching and assessment, including placement-based practices and reflective journaling. [Paragraph 5.5.1]

Commendation 7

The Subject's continued overall satisfaction scores in the National Student Survey, achieving 100% in all but one year in the period since the last review in 2014. [Paragraph 5.5.3]

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been made to support the Subject in its reflection and to enhance provision in relation to teaching, learning and assessment. The recommendations have been cross-referenced to the paragraphs in the text of the report to which they refer and are grouped together by the areas for improvement/enhancement and are ranked in order of priority within each section

Recommendation 1

Context and Strategy

The panel recommends that the Subject consider the academic and financial aspects concomitant with the anticipated tender from the Church of Scotland for Initial Ministerial Education training partners, and that they consult with the School and College where appropriate during the tender process. [Paragraph 4.1.1]

For the attention of: Head of Subject, Head of School, Head of College

Strategic planning for future growth

Recommendation 2

The panel recommends that the Subject work with the School and College to ensure that staff workloads are resilient to the planned future growth in Postgraduate Taught provision, and assess whether the number of UG honours courses offered is sustainable or needs further reduction. [Paragraph 6.1.3]

For the attention of: Head of Subject, Head of School

Recommendation 3

The Panel notes the strategic outreach plan being developed by the Subject in an attempt to address the lack of growth in undergraduate student numbers. The panel recommends that the Subject consider whether there is a wider market which can be utilised to support Undergraduate recruitment. [Paragraph 5.1.1]

For the attention of: Head of Subject, Head of School

Academic Standards

Recommendation 4

The Panel recommend that appropriate quality assurance mechanisms be developed to ensure that the new Postgraduate Taught programmes are included in the Subject's Quality Enhancement review cycle. [7.1.3]

For the attention of: Head of Subject

Equality and Diversity

Recommendation 5

The panel recommends that the Subject take measures to ensure that they adhere to the University requirement for course material to be populated on Moodle in advance of lectures, in accordance with the Accessible & Inclusive Learning Policy. [Paragraph 5.3.1]

For the attention of: Head of Subject

Technology Enhanced Learning and Teaching

Recommendation 6

The panel recommends that the Subject work with the School of Critical Studies to ensure that online marking is fully utilised, and that Subject staff receive suitable training on relevant systems. [Paragraph 6.1.6]

For the attention of: Head of Subject, Head of School

Graduate Teaching Assistants

Recommendation 7

The Panel **recommends** that the Subject consider the impact on staff workloads of removing the requirement for GTA seminar teaching at Levels 1 and 2, and that efforts be made to provide any existing or future GTAs with a level of peer assessment and feedback on their teaching performance [6.4.2]

For the attention of: Head of Subject

Matters for attention – outside of Subject or School

The Panel noted the challenges experienced by Subject staff in signposting students to relevant support services and highlighted the Student Support & Wellbeing project of the World-Changing Glasgow Transformation, whose work intends to increase staff and student awareness of appropriate support that is available. [Paragraph 5.2.3]

For the attention of: Executive Director of Student & Academic Services

Academic Integrity Charter for UK Higher Education



Introduction

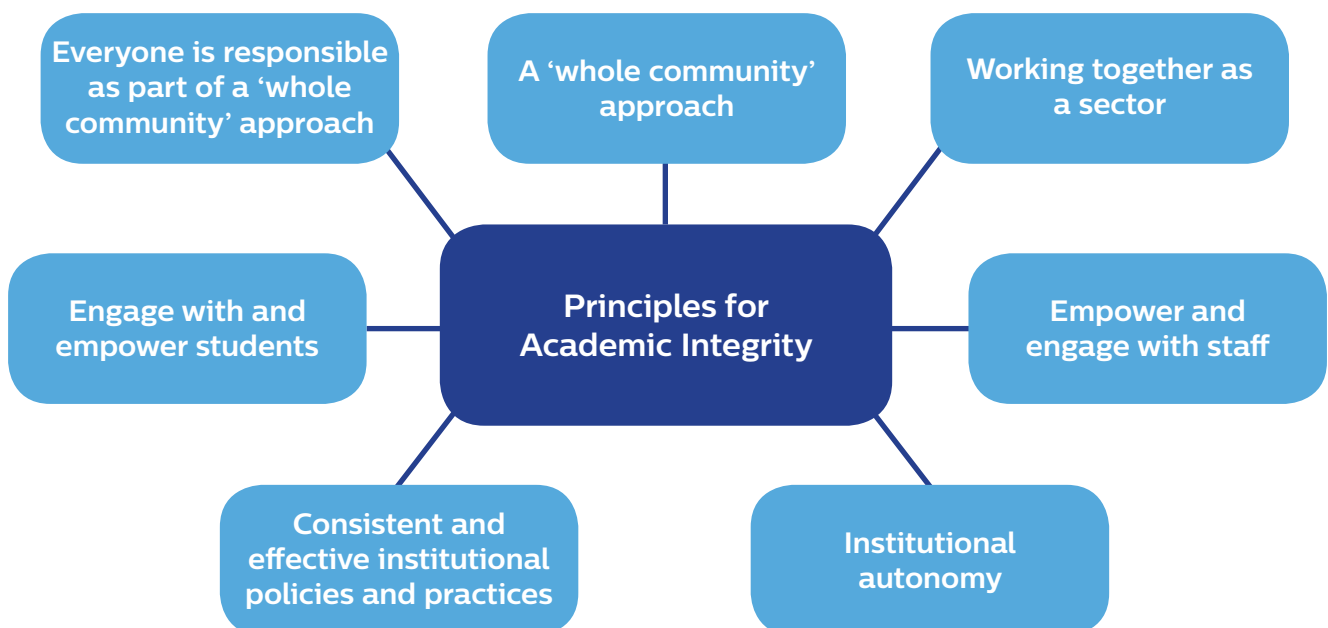
The UK's higher education sector has a world-class reputation, founded on high standards and outstanding quality. Academic integrity is a major contributor to this. However, academic misconduct is a growing problem globally, and presents a threat to the reputation of higher education worldwide. It takes a wide variety of forms including the use of essay and degree mills, plagiarism, collusion between students and forged or altered qualification certificates. This Charter represents the collective commitment of the UK higher education sector to promote academic integrity and take action against academic misconduct.

Students who commit academic misconduct, especially if they deliberately cheat, risk their academic and future careers. The implications, however, go far wider than higher education. It is a societal issue. Graduates could enter the workforce without the necessary skills, knowledge and competency, with potential public health and safety implications.

This Charter is intended to provide a baseline position upon which UK providers, as autonomous institutions, can build their own policies and practices to ensure that every student's qualification is genuine, verifiable and respected. It has been developed by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) with the support of the [Academic Integrity Advisory Group](#).

The Academic Integrity Advisory Group provides expert advice and opinion, on behalf of the sector, on actions, policy development and activity that will protect academic integrity in the UK. It consists of expert academics and organisations, sector agencies, student representatives and individuals working to protect academic integrity. Representatives of UK governments, regulators and funders sit as observers.

Principles for Academic Integrity



Academic misconduct is unacceptable.

These principles are intended to guide the implementation of academic integrity policy development and practice in UK higher education institutions.

Principle 1: Everyone is responsible as part of a ‘whole community’ approach

All members of a higher education provider’s community are responsible for ensuring academic integrity is embedded and upheld.

Principle 2: A ‘whole community’ approach

Academic misconduct takes many forms and happens for many reasons, intentional or unintentional. A higher education provider’s response cannot, therefore, be one-size-fits-all. Detection and penalties are important, but they cannot provide the whole solution.

A holistic, whole community approach by a higher education provider, including its students, is an effective model for promoting trust and confidence in independent learning and minimising academic misconduct.

This approach often combines elements of the following: education and support for staff and students; limiting opportunities to commit academic misconduct; deploying institution-wide detection methods; case reporting and data collection to improve practice; and clearly stated institutional values.

Principle 3: Working together as a sector

Academic misconduct is an issue that can affect the integrity of all higher education providers and have a severe impact upon the reputation of the entire UK sector.

Sector collaboration can address this including by sharing best practice, collaboration on benchmarking or working together on issues of mutual concern – such as, sharing intelligence on essay or degree mills that are targeting their students or staff. By combining knowledge, experience and resources, the academic integrity of the overall UK sector can be maintained and strengthened.

Principle 4: Engage with and empower students

Higher education providers can support their students by ensuring that they have a reasonable and continuing opportunity to learn about their policies and processes in an accessible manner and through a variety of formats (for example, through handbooks, course inductions, introductory materials, teaching).

Students are responsible for the integrity of their own learning, and decisions to break codes of academic conduct (for example, by using an essay mill) are ultimately their own. However, providers can work to ensure that students have as much knowledge as possible about, and are supported in the development of, academic integrity and the possible consequences of misconduct – including the impact on future careers.

Teaching and other frontline staff can be role models for academic integrity principles and appropriate academic behaviour; they actively involve and engage students and student representative bodies in these matters in order to support their development. Providers can consider ways in which student academic integrity ‘champions’ could be recognised and supported.



Principle 5: Empower and engage with staff

Frontline teaching and professional staff have a critical role to play in deterring and identifying incidents of student academic misconduct. Higher education providers can consider ways in which academic staff members could be given formal roles and recognition to 'champion' staff academic integrity.

Providers can proactively communicate their academic integrity policies to staff and develop a framework that describes the processes that need to be followed when misconduct cases are identified.

Tools and resources to detect and deter breaches such as best practices in course delivery, course design and assessment, and admissions verification and technology can be made available to teaching and professional services staff. This could include providing training and development for staff.

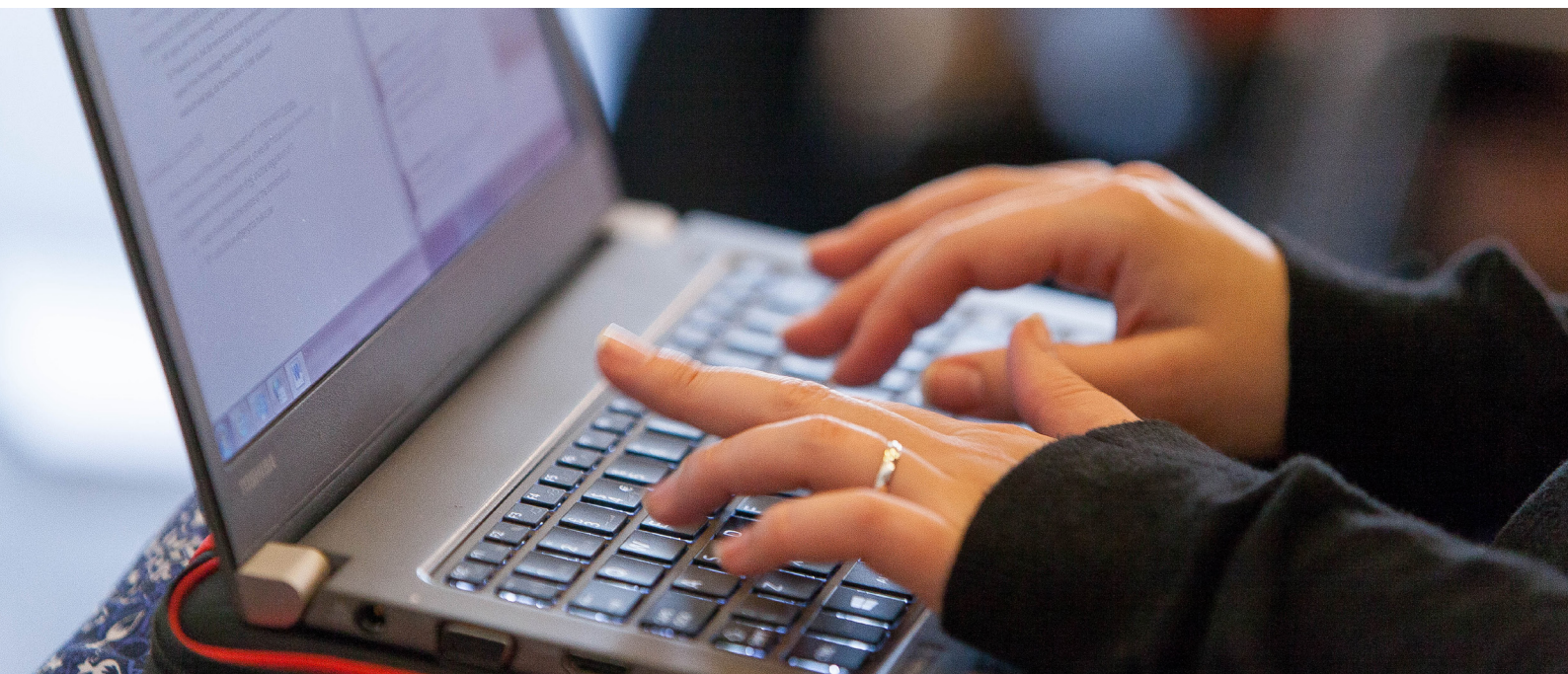
Principle 6: Consistent and effective institutional policies and practices

Higher education providers can clearly define what they consider to be academic integrity, and maintain a suite of academic integrity policies and practices that:

- focus on educative and preventive measures and activities
- have clear terms and definitions that distinguish between different types of academic misconduct through the use of examples that can be understood by students
- establish with transparency the level of penalties or developmental support applicable and proportionate to different types of academic misconduct
- have clear, easy to follow and fair processes for investigating and assessing possible cases
- are subject to periodic review, which can include a review of adherence with the commitments in this Charter.

Principle 7: Institutional autonomy

As autonomous institutions, UK higher education providers are the first line of defence against academic misconduct. They are responsible for promoting and maintaining the quality and integrity of their own provision and securing the academic standards of the awards they offer. In doing so, they protect their reputation. They are in the best position to provide their students with the tools and support needed to promote trust and confidence in independent learning and to avoid academic misconduct.



Pledge



QAA and the UK Academic Integrity Advisory Group invite UK universities and colleges to sign up to the Charter during the academic year 2020-21.

Signing up to the Charter represents an institutional pledge to implement its principles and commitments which include working with staff and students and, in collaboration across the sector, to protect and promote academic integrity, and take action against academic misconduct.

To sign up, visit the [Academic Integrity Charter page](#) on our website. Providers and bodies that sign up to the Charter will be listed on this page.

Through services to our members, QAA pledges to offer training, guidance and support to staff and students in institutions, including through sharing practice from the UK and internationally. By the end of 2021, we will report on emerging sector practice, including how institutions have used this Charter.

External Members of the UK Academic Integrity Advisory Group October 2020

Alex Bols (GuildHE)

Helen Butcher (University of Glasgow)

Charlotte Corrish (Office of the Independent Adjudicator)

Dr Robin Crockett (University of Northampton)

Professor Michael Draper (Swansea University)

Dr Irene Glendinning (Coventry University)

Emmanuel Haruna (QAA Student Strategic Advisory Committee)

Dr Thomas Lancaster (Imperial College London)

Professor Tim McIntyre-Bhatty (Bournemouth University)

Dr Mike Reddy (University of South Wales)

Alan Palmer (MillionPlus)

Gill Rowell (Turnitin)

Jayne Rowley (Jisc - Prospects Hedd)

Helen Smallbone (Edge Hill University)

Charlotte Snelling (Universities UK)

Lord Storey (House of Lords)

Acknowledgements

QAA and the UK Academic Integrity Advisory Group are very grateful to Universities Australia for kindly sharing their publication [Academic Integrity Best Practice Principles](#) (November 2017) which has assisted us and influenced the development of this Charter.

This Charter has been developed with close reference to the [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#) – a cornerstone for quality and standards of UK higher education, protecting the public and student interests. The Quality Code provides Advice and Guidance on a number of themes to support new and existing providers to meet its Expectations, Core and Common practices. Its [Advice and Guidance: Assessment](#) includes a guiding principle on academic integrity. The Charter also draws on the Advice and guidance on degree fraud for higher education providers, developed by Jisc's Hedd verification service to combat qualification fraud.

The QAA publication – [Contracting to Cheat in Higher Education: How to Address Essay Mills and Contract Cheating](#) – provides advice and guidance to help higher education providers develop their institutional response to contract cheating and demonstrate their commitment to the principles in this Charter.

Special acknowledgement

In the publication of this charter we would also like to acknowledge the work of stalwarts of academic integrity who have sadly died. Professor Tracey Bretag and Robert Clarke were unstinting in raising awareness of academic integrity, and leading national and international action to combat academic misconduct.

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 20 November 2020

Audit Report on Course Approval Activity from the College of Science & Engineering

Pat Duncan, Head of Academic and Student Administration

Schools have responsibility for considering and approving all course proposals (new, amend and withdraw). However, Colleges are required to audit this approval activity to ensure that the standard of proposal documentation remains high and that Schools are adhering to the published procedure.

In line with this recommendation, the College has spot-checked a sample of proposals, for which the full documentation for the proposals have been examined.

Proposals approved by Schools/RIs in the College of Science & Engineering during 2019/2020:

<i>Proposal Type</i>	<i>Number of proposals approved</i>	<i>Number of proposals audited</i>
<i>New course</i>	176	4
<i>Amend course</i>	381	4
<i>Withdraw course</i>	145	4

The following **new course** proposals were audited:

<i>Course Title</i>	<i>School</i>	<i>Documentation complete and of required standard*</i>	<i>Consultations completed prior to School approval*</i>
Biomolecular Interactions CHEM5078	Chemistry	yes	yes
Machine Learning and AI for Data Scientists COMPSCI5100	Computing Science	yes	yes
Hydrogeology EARTH4089	GES	yes	yes
Transdisciplinary Team Science PSYCH5101	Psychology	yes	yes

*'No' responses to these should be given further explanation, and information on how the problem has been resolved.

The following **amend course** proposals for substantive changes were audited:

<i>Course Title</i>	<i>School</i>	<i>Documentation complete and of required standard*</i>	<i>Consultations completed prior to School approval*</i>
Atomic Systems PHYS4002	Physics & Astronomy	yes	Not required correction

Statistics 3B: Biostatistics STATS3012	Mathematics & Statistics	yes	yes
Social Psychology 3H PSYCH4036	Psychology	yes	yes
Hydrographic Survey GEOG5014	Geographical & Earth Sciences	Yes	Not required - correction

*'No' responses to these should be given further explanation, and information on how the problem has been resolved.

The following **withdraw course** proposals were audited:

Course Title	School	Documentation complete and of required standard*	Consultations completed prior to School approval*
Soil Mechanics 3 ENG3074	Engineering	yes	yes
Statistics 1A STATS1010	M&S	yes	yes
Web Science (SIT) SIT4053	Computing Science	yes	Not required. SIT agreement change
The Offline Brain PSYCH 4087	Psychology	yes	yes

'No' responses to these should be given further explanation, and information on how the problem has been resolved.

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 20 November 2020

Report on Accreditation by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB) – Session 2019-20

Senate Office

Introduction

This paper contains a summary report of accreditation visits and reviews undertaken by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies (PSRBs) in session 2019-20. Details of the reports are available from the Senate Office.

Reviews conducted by Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies**School of Chemistry***Royal Society of Chemistry*

- BSc (Hons) Chemistry
- BSc (Hons) Chemistry with Medicinal Chemistry
- MSc Chemistry
- MSc Chemistry with Medicinal Chemistry
- MSci Chemistry with European Placement
- MSci Chemistry with Medicinal Chemistry with European Placement
- MSci Chemistry with Medicinal Chemistry with Work Placement
- MSci Chemistry with Work Placement

Outcome: Programmes have been reaccredited.

School of Education*General Teaching Council for Scotland*

- Master of Education with Teaching Qualification

Outcome: Programme has been reaccredited.

School of Engineering*Institution of Engineering & Technology*

- MSc Aerospace Engineering
- BEng (Hons) Aerospace Systems
- MEng Aerospace Systems
- BEng (Hons) Biomedical Engineering
- MEng Biomedical Engineering
- MSc Biomedical Engineering
- MSc Computer Systems Engineering
- BEng (Hons) Electronic & Software Engineering
- MEng Electronic & Software Engineering
- BEng (Hons) Electronics & Electrical Engineering
- MEng Electronics & Electrical Engineering

- MSc Electronics & Electrical Engineering
- BEng (Hons) Electronics & Electrical Engineering (UESTC and Glasgow)
- BEng (Hons) Electronics with Music
- MEng Electronics with Music
- BEng (Hons) Mechatronics
- MEng Mechatronics
- MSc Mechatronics
- MSc Nanoscience & Technology
- BEng (Hons) Product Design Engineering
- MEng Product Design Engineering
- MSc Product Design Engineering
- MSc Sustainable Energy

Outcome: Programmes have been reaccredited.

Institute of Mechanical Engineers

Review affected by Covid-19 (rescheduled to March 2021)

School of Mathematics & Statistics

Royal Statistical Society

- BSc Mathematics & Statistics
- BSc Statistics
- MRes Advanced Statistics
- MSc Biostatistics
- MSc Data Analytics
- MSc Data Analytics (online)
- MSc Data Analytics for Government (online)
- MSc Environmental Statistics
- MSc Statistics
- MSci Mathematics & Statistics
- MSci Statistics
- MSci Statistics with Work Placement

Outcome: Programmes have been reaccredited

School of Medicine, Dentistry & Nursing

Nursing & Midwifery Council

- Bachelor of Nursing

Outcome: Programme renewed on an ongoing basis.

School of Veterinary Medicine

American Veterinary Medical Association

Review of BVMS affected by Covid-19 (rescheduled to 5-12 March 2021).

[Accreditation extended by 12 months, i.e. to September 2021.]

Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons

Review of BVMS affected by Covid-19 (rescheduled to 5-12 March 2021)

[Accreditation extended by 12 months, i.e. to September 2021.]

- PgCert Advanced Practice in Veterinary Nursing

Outcome: Programme has been reaccredited.

European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education

Review of BVMS affected by Covid-19 (rescheduled to 15-19 February 2021).

[Programme accredited, on an ongoing basis, until 2023.]

Action Requested

ASC is invited to note the outcomes of the accreditation visits and reviews.