



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

Microsoft Teams

Tuesday 18 August 2020, 10.00am

AGENDA

- | | | |
|----------|--|---------------|
| 1 | Minute
To <u>approve</u> the Minute of the previous meeting held on 21 July 2020. | A1 |
| 2 | Matters Arising & Action Log
To <u>raise</u> any matters arising and note outstanding actions. | A2 |
| 3 | Principal's Communications
To <u>receive</u> an update from the Principal. | Verbal |

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- | | | |
|----------|---|------------------------|
| 4 | Adaptation and Renewal Report
To <u>consider</u> the update from Barry Neilson, Director, Adaptation and Renewal Team | B |
| 5 | Adaptation and Renewal – Staff Related <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff Survey
To <u>receive</u> a presentation from Gavin McLachlan, Vice-Principal, CIO & Librarian | Verbal |
| | • People Report
To <u>comment</u> on the update from James Saville, Director of Human Resources. | C1 |
| | • Voluntary Severance Programme
To <u>approve</u> the paper from James Saville, Director of Human Resources. | C2 |
| | • Support For Early Career Researchers During and After Covid19
To <u>note</u> the paper from Jonathan Seckl, Senior Vice Principal | C3 |
| 6 | Director of Finance's Report
To <u>comment</u> on the update from Rachael Robertson, Deputy Director of Finance. | D |
| 7 | Student Survey Results July 2020
To <u>consider</u> the paper from Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary Student Experience. | E |
| 8 | Policy and Procedure Updates
To <u>review</u> and <u>comment</u> on the revised Policy and Procedures from Rachael Robertson, Deputy Director of Finance. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Counter Fraud Group Report• Report on Whistleblowing Policy and Procedures | F1
F2 |

ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL

- | | | |
|----|---|--------|
| 9 | Revised Complaint Handling Procedure
To <u>approve</u> . | G |
| 10 | Revisions to Fee Collection - Recovery Process
To <u>approve</u> . | H |
| 11 | REF 2021 update and route to submission
<u>To note</u> . | I |
| 12 | Guidance on Recommended Student Technology
To <u>note</u> . | J |
| 13 | People and Money System and Finance/HR Transformation Update
To <u>note</u> . | K |
| 14 | University Executive Communications
To <u>note</u> the key messages to be communicated. | Verbal |
| 15 | Any Other Business
To <u>consider</u> any other matters by UE members. | Verbal |
| 16 | Date of Next Meeting
Tuesday 8 September 2020 at 10.00am. | |



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

21 July 2020

[Draft] Minute

Present: Peter Mathieson (Convener)
David Argyle, Leigh Chalmers, Chris Cox, Sarah Cunningham-Burley,
Gavin Douglas, David Gray, Lee Hamill, Colm Harmon, Gary Jebb,
Richard Kenway, Catherine Martin, Gavin McLachlan, Ellen MacRae, Dorothy
Miell, Theresa Merrick, Andrew Morris, Dave Robertson,
James Saville, Jonathan Seckl, Aziz Sheikh, Tracey Slaven, James Smith,
Sarah Smith and Sandy Tudhope.

Apologies: Wendy Loretto and Moira Whyte

In attendance: Mike Shipston (for item 6), Antony Maciocia (for item 12), Fiona Boyd and
Kirstie Graham.

1 Minute

Paper A1, Paper A2

The Minute of the meeting held on 16 June 2020 and the electronic meeting
concluding 3 July 2020 were approved.

2 Matters Arising & Review of Action Log

Paper A3

There were no matters arising and the action log was noted.

3 Principal's Communications

Verbal

The Principal reported on:

- The preparation for a return to campus following Scottish Government guidelines, with a further update anticipated on social distancing, whilst recognising staff concerns and the possibility of another outbreak;
- Cautious optimism on student numbers, both undergraduate and postgraduate for all intakes across home, EU, rUK and international as things stand, but continuing uncertainty makes this difficult to call;
- The outcome of the Research Sustainability Task Force and the package of measures from the Westminster government to support research in UK Universities;
- The forthcoming Scottish Government commissioned review by the Scottish Funding Council on the sustainability and coherence of tertiary education;
- The already ongoing work on anti-racism that had been accelerated by Black Lives Matter and the importance of ensuring all of the University community were engaged in addressing this.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4 Director of Finance's Report

Paper B

The Director of Finance reported the latest University management accounts position to the end of May, noting the trend for a difference between the actual and forecast position showed the continued challenge of accurate forecasting. He noted that, although the University was showing a surplus, this was dependent on City Deal and restricted donations and the University did not generate the 3-5% operating surplus though its own activities necessary to invest sustainably in achieving the priorities in Strategy 2030. This indicated that the cost saving measures agreed through the Adaptation and Renewal team and approved by the Executive remained essential.

There was an update on Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) benchmarking information for 2016-17 to 2018-19 comparing our full economic cost recovery rates for teaching and research with our peer group and the wider UK sector, which showed that publically funded research and teaching was becoming less efficient at Edinburgh, with costs increasing at a greater rate than income.

There was discussion of the recent announcement by the Scottish Government on funding EU undergraduate students, the impact of pensions movement on the published surplus and the need for clear communication to staff of the importance of continuing with the agreed cost saving actions.

5 Covid-19 – Tuition Fee Setting 2021/22

Paper C

The Executive homologated the tuition fee changes approved by the Student Recruitment and Fee Strategy Group for the MBChB and the Veterinary Medicine Programmes for 2021/22.

The Executive considered the issues in setting fees for 2021/22 entrants, noting that compliance with consumer legislation requires publication of undergraduate tuition fees before UCAS opens for applications at the start of September, with the postgraduate cycle broadly aligned to the same timetable. There was discussion of ensuring fees were competitive, while maximising income and an ongoing commitment to widening participation for international and postgraduate intake as well as undergraduate. Based on this, the Convenor of the Student Recruitment Fee Strategy Group, in consultation with the Principal will confirm the percentage change in non-regulated fees prior to opening of the UCAS system for applications at the beginning of September.

6 Postgraduate Programmes at the Zhejiang-Edinburgh Institute

Paper D

The Dean of Biomedical Sciences spoke to the proposal to deliver University of Edinburgh only MSc and PhD on-campus degrees at the Zhejiang-Edinburgh Joint Institute (ZJE) Institute, Zhejiang International Campus, Haining, China. It was noted that this provided a new strategic model to potentially explore Transnational Education (TNE) and could serve as a pilot for the concept of single award (UoE) degrees with trusted and established international partners. By embedding within an existing Joint Institute model based at Zhejiang University International campus this

was not a potential Campus abroad. UoE MSc and PhD programmes delivered at ZJE would follow existing UoE procedures, policies and student supervision practices and students would be UoE students, paying fees directly to the University, while based predominantly at ZJE during their programmes. It supported more direct exchange of PG students between Edinburgh and ZJE and provided a pathway for China based students to start their MSc/PhD at ZJE, if unable to travel due to COVID-19 restrictions. It was noted that this proposal was contingent on China Ministry of Education approval

The Executive was supportive of the proposal and the fee structure, while noting that this would require Court approval, potentially through Exception Committee over the summer, with authority delegated to the Principal for signing off the implementation of the arrangements in consultation with the Director of Legal Services

7 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

• Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee Report

Paper E1

The Executive considered the report from the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and supported the emerging priorities of: a robust approach to mainstreaming; a central online presence; a strategic approach to the Equality Calendar involving staff and student groups in planning and delivering events; and reviewing commitments to equality charters. The work of the race equality and anti-racism subgroup was noted and the priorities of: ensuring that the Counselling service provides Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) students and staff with access to BAME counsellors should they wish to see one; ensuring our report and support mechanisms are fit for purpose to enable reporting of racism and racial harassment with appropriate support and feedback to those reporting; decolonising the curriculum; addressing the achievement and attainment gap and beginning to tackle the underrepresentation of BAME staff, particularly in Professional Services. There was discussion of resource and recognition, with budget holders asked to support embedding these priorities through the planning round and through work allocation.

• Renaming David Hume Tower

Paper E2

The Executive noted that there had been a petition calling for the re-naming of the David Hume Tower on George Square, signed by around 1700 people. This was in the context of the Black Lives Matter protests, which had highlighted ongoing consideration of commemoration on University campuses and in other public spaces. It was noted that the City of Edinburgh is dealing with similar issues, with the Melville Monument that commemorates Henry Dundas being contextualised with a plaque and dedicated to victims of the slave trade. The Council is setting up an independent review group to deliberate on the potential renaming/removal of public statues, monuments, street and building names and this group will include several Edinburgh academics.

In discussion it was noted that the University had a complex relationship with David Hume, having refused to employ him in his lifetime and his legacy belonged as much to the City and the nation as part of the Scottish Enlightenment, so the views of the broader community locally and internationally were important in forming any

decision. It was agreed that it was important to take action, while recognising the priority was to progress the work to address current race equality and anti-racism measures. This would be discussed further with the University Court and the City of Edinburgh review group and other stakeholders to inform the final decision.

- **Adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Definition** **Paper E3**

The Executive agreed to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Definition, make this public and use the definition when an allegation of anti-Semitism is being taken forward under the Code of Student Conduct or staff disciplinary policies.

8 Student Case Review Procedure **Paper F**

The Executive approved the principles behind the proposed Student Case Review Procedure, noting there would be further discussion with Legal Services before the final version was ready for approval.

9 Adaptation and Renewal Team Report **Paper G**

The Executive approved an extension of the process to approve decisions between meetings for three months to 30 September 2020.

There was discussion of possible changes to the timetabling day and week to accommodate social distancing on return to campus. It was noted that if the Scottish Government continued to require 2 metres social distancing, this would enable face to face delivery of only around 20% of the curriculum. There had been a University-wide consultation and the consensus was not to extend the teaching day to start at 8.00am or to Saturday. By extending the teaching day to 8.00pm and teaching on Wednesday afternoon, face to face teaching could be increased under the current social distancing requirement and if the social distancing requirement were reduced, nearer 60% would be achievable without needing to extend the teaching day beyond the addition of Wednesday afternoons. The Executive was supportive of the proposed approach and noticed there was some urgency in the Scottish Government clarifying the social distancing requirements as timetabling required to commence in the next ten days.

10 People Report **Paper H**

The Executive noted the update on people related matters.

ITEMS FOR FORMAL APPROVAL/NOTING

11 Amendments to Student Contract **Paper I**

The University Executive approved the proposed amendments to the Student Contract in light of changes to legislation and the challenges posed by COVID-19.

12 Update on the University of Edinburgh Doctoral College **Paper J**

The Executive noted the development of the Doctoral College since approving the 'soft-launch' in January 2020.

13 Student Recruitment and Fees Strategy Group **Paper K**

The Executive noted the update from Student Recruitment Fee Strategy Group.

14 Research Policy Group **Paper L**

The Executive noted the Research Policy Group report for 2019/20 and approved its revised Terms of Reference.

15 People and Money System and Finance/HR Transformation Update **Paper M**

The Executive noted the update on the People and Money System, Finance Transformation and Human Resources Transformation Programmes

16 Health and Safety Quarterly Report: Quarter 3 **Paper N**

The Executive noted the summary of health and safety related incidents that took place during the period 1 March to 31 May 2020, as well as relevant health and safety issues and developments.

17 Internal Audit – Open Management Actions **Paper O**

The Executive noted the ongoing management actions arising from Internal Audit reviews.

18 Update on Roslin Technologies Ltd **Paper P**

The Executive noted an update on developments at Roslin Technologies Limited.

19 University Executive Communications **Verbal**

The Executive agreed there would be communication on Adaptation and Renewal, Equality Diversity and Inclusion and the Doctoral College.

20 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 18 August 2020 at 10 am.



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

18 August 2020

Adaptation and Renewal Team Report

Description of paper/Summary

1. This paper provides the University Executive with an update on the work of the Adaptation and Renewal Team. There are a number of papers presented to the University Executive this month related to the work of Adaptation and Renewal and these are set out below.

Paragraphs 2-18 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Communication and Engagement

19. Communication and Engagement leads have been embedded across Adaptation and Renewal and co-ordination group including colleagues from Colleges and Professional Services group is well established.

Resource Implications

20. Delivery of Renewal and Adaptation activities will require the active reprioritisation of our existing plans and budgets.

Risk Management

21. For the purposes of the Adaptation and Renewal co-ordination activity a focussed risk register will be maintained.

Equality & Diversity

22. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion will be considered by members of all groups and there is formal representation via a named individual on each work-stream and at the Adaptation and Renewal Team by Sarah Cunningham- Burley.

23. The University needs to ensure each work-stream engaged in COVID-19 mitigation/renewal is equipped to carry out Equality Impact Assessments.

Further Information

24. Author
Barry Neilson
Director
18 August 2020

Freedom of Information

25. Closed. Our approach to adaptation and renewal planning is commercially sensitive.



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

18 August 2020

People Report

Description of paper/Summary

1. This paper provides an update on people related matters being taken forward by Human Resources and other University departments. This paper is the standing update on people related matters. Most activity is covered in the ART update. Please note item 5 on the launch of the updated management development offer.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. The Executive is requested to note the content of this paper.

Background and context

3. This paper is an update on the paper presented to University Executive on 21 July 2020.

Paragraphs 4-7 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Resource implications

8. Resources will be met from within existing budgets unless outlined in the paper.

Risk Management

9. The University has a low risk appetite for both compliance risks and people risks.

Equality & Diversity

10. Equality issues will be considered on a case by case basis for each individual project/piece of work.

Next steps & Communications

11. Future reports will be presented to each meeting of University Executive.

Consultation

12. The paper builds on discussion at previous meetings of University Executive and has been reviewed by the Director of HR.

Further information

13. Authors

Linda Criggie
Deputy Director HR – Employee
Relations, Reward, Employment Policy,
Equality & Diversity
Denise Nesbitt
Deputy Director HR – Resourcing and
Learning & Organisation Development

Presenter

James Saville
Director of Human Resources
6 August 2020

Freedom of Information

14. This paper is **closed**.



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

18 August 2020

Voluntary Severance Programme

Description of paper

1. This Paper describes the proposed operation of the voluntary severance programme to be run in the first half of financial year 2020/21.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. University Executive is asked to approve the terms of the programme, specifically the eligibility and approval criteria, proposed timelines and duration of each stage, governance and the financial package.

Paragraphs 3-39 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Equality & Diversity

40. The proposed VS financial package is based on the formula for statutory redundancy pay. While this formula takes into account age and service, and so provides greater financial benefit to older workers, the Government has ruled that enhanced versions of the statutory scheme are non-discriminatory as they reflect legitimate employment aims and can be objectively justified.

41. Full equality impact assessments will be carried out at each stage of the process, i.e. at application and approval stage.

Next steps & Communications

42. If approved, the trade unions will be informed of the details of the scheme and the in draft materials to support the launch and running of the scheme will be finalised, with communication to leaders and all staff by 1 September 2020.

Consultation

43. The contents of this paper have been discussed with the Adaptation and Renewal Team.

Further information

44. Author

Linda Criggie, Deputy Director of HR
(Employee Relations & Reward)

Presenter

James Saville, Director of Human
Resources

Freedom of Information

45. This paper is closed.



18 August 2020

Support for Early Career Researchers During and After Covid-19

Description of paper

1. A summary of ongoing and new measures designed to address the challenges faced by early-career researchers (ECRs) created by Covid-19, particularly relating to sustaining research activity and building research careers. The paper has been drafted by the Adaption and Renewal Research and Innovation Team (Early Career Researcher's Group), and was approved by the Adaptation and Renewal Team on 27 July 2020.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. University Executive is asked to note and endorse the approach outlined in the proposal.

Background and context

3. The Covid-19 pandemic poses a range of challenges for ECRs, including impediments to sustaining research activity during lockdown, and an uncertain academic job market.

4. ECRs are defined to include both open-ended and tenure-track staff, and those on fixed-term contracts, typically within 7 years of being awarded their PhD. The main focus of the measures are those on fixed-term contracts, who face additional pressures in terms of career development, job insecurity and future employment.

Discussion

5. The pandemic poses a range of challenges for ECRs, notably: (a) impediments to sustaining research activity because of lack of access to data and facilities, appropriate workspace, opportunities for collaboration, significantly increased burden of childcare, and mental health challenges; and (b) challenges to career development and employment created by a potentially contracted academic job market.

6. These challenges are arising against the backdrop of a major rethink of how the HEI sector supports research staff and ECRs. The revised Research Development Concordat, the Russell Group Research Culture and Environment Project, and the Wellcome Trust initiative on research culture, are all converging around the crucial role of a supportive and inclusive research environment which actively supports career development; promoting and rewarding a wider range of skills and activities within research careers, including transition across sectors; and providing more secure employment for research staff in host institutions.

7. The document identifies a range of responses to these challenges, including adapting existing schemes and services and creating new initiatives in many areas of research support. It also calls for wider discussions about precarity, both within UoE and in the wider HEI sector.

Resource implications

8. The paper lists 23 measures, of which 6 are already complete and 15 currently in progress. Responsibility for designing and implementing measures is distributed across College and School Research Offices, HR Leads, Health and Safety, Edinburgh Research Office, Institute for Academic Development, academic line managers and mentors across the University. They should not require additional resourcing beyond what is already in place.

9. Additional resource from SFC and UKRI may be available to support the goals set out in this paper, particularly in relation to new Chancellor's Fellowship posts, and allocation of funding to support projects and priority themes in which ECRs are active.

Risk Management

10. The two identifiable risks of adopting this approach are: (1) creating a perception that ECR needs are being prioritised over other staff, through diverting resources/attention. This is unlikely to create a serious risk, given widespread acceptance of the need to support ECRs; indeed, the risks of failing to do so are greater (see below). (2) Raising unrealistic expectations about the University's capacity to create open-ended contracts for (all/most) ECRs. To avoid this risk, the language in the paper is cautious in what it proposes, but nonetheless clearly articulates support for academic job security where this is financially viable.

11. There are notable risks to the University in failing to adopt a joined up approach to supporting ECRs, including: (1) reputational risk, through failing to position itself as a sector leader; (2) risk to UoE research excellence, through failing to enable research and support career development of ECRs, or to retain talent; (3) risk to staff morale, especially for those on fixed-term contracts and the strong and vocal body of permanent staff advocating against precarity.

Equality & Diversity

12. The paper recognises the particular challenges faced by ECRs with caring responsibilities, who are disproportionately female; as well as those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds and from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, who face additional structural barriers to recruitment, support and career development. The paper has integrated consideration of these protected characteristics into its proposals. Examples include in the guidance for line managers in allocating research support resources (Annex 2), and the proposed CV/annual review statement for those whose research has been impeded because of caring responsibilities.

13. The paper has been the object of ongoing discussion and consultation with the University Lead for EDI.

Next steps & Communications

14. This paper will be discussed and consulted on with ECR colleagues through a series of local feedback session in Colleges in August/ September 2020, and consulted on and disseminated via College Research Committees.

15. We will also consult with relevant trade unions in August/ September 2020 to gather their feedback.

Consultation

16. This paper has been approved by the Chair of Adaption and Renewal Team (Research and Innovation), Professor Jonathan Seckl.

Further information

17. <u>Author</u>	<u>Presenter</u>
Christina Boswell	Professor Jonathan Seckl,
Dean of Research, CAHSS (Chair of	Senior Vice Principal
ART R& I Early Career Researchers	
Group)	

Freedom of Information

18. This paper is open.

Supporting Early Career Researchers during/after Covid

Draft, ART R&I Early Career Researchers Group

Introduction

This document sets out a series of measures to address the challenges faced by early-career researchers (ECRs) created by Covid-19. The University has a strong track record of investing in ECRs through recruitment, training and support. This focus is more important than ever, given the particular challenges ECRs face in sustaining research activity and building research careers as a result of the pandemic. Through the approach set out in this paper, we aim to position UoE as a sector leader in addressing the challenges facing ECRs.

The pandemic poses a range of challenges for ECRs, including impediments to sustaining research activity during lockdown, and an uncertain academic job market. There is growing evidence that nursery and school closures are having particularly pronounced effects on female researchers.¹ According to the University Working from Home Survey, almost three quarters of academic staff with caring responsibilities have found that Covid has negatively impacted their ability to conduct research. Challenges with balancing childcare with work appear to be especially acute for those at grades 8 and 9: for example, 41% of grade 8 staff have found their ability to balance work and childcare negatively affected. Those from less advantaged socio-economic backgrounds may face heightened challenges in a context of home working and job insecurity. And we should be attentive to the additional challenges for ECRs from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities (BAME), who may experience structural racism in various aspects of recruitment, support and career development.²

These challenges are arising against the backdrop of a major rethink of how the HEI sector supports research staff and ECRs. The revised Research Development Concordat, the Russell Group Research Culture and Environment Project, and the Wellcome Trust initiative on research culture, are all converging around a number of key principles: the crucial role of a supportive and inclusive research environment which actively supports career development; promoting and rewarding a wider range of skills and activities within research careers, including transition across sectors; and providing more secure employment for research staff in host institutions.

This document identifies a range of responses to these challenges (summarized in the table below), including adapting existing schemes and services and creating new initiatives in many areas of research support. It also calls for wider discussions about precarity, both within UoE and in the wider HEI sector. Effective delivery of this approach requires mobilising a variety of professional support services, straddling the institute for Academic Development (IAD), Edinburgh Research Office (ERO), Human Resources (HR), Information Services, and School/Deanery and Centre-based services. Crucially, it necessitates commitment and investment from senior colleagues across the University who line manage, supervise and mentor ECRs.

¹ Analysis from [Digital Science](#) reported in the THE found the proportion of female first authors in 60,000 journals fell over 2% in April 2020 and 7% in May, to 26.8%; similar results were reported in [Nature News](#). Both studies point out that given the lead-in time to submission, the proportion is likely to fall further for subsequent months.

² See, for example, the 2019 [UCEA report](#) on ethnicity and gender disparities in academic salaries.

Scope

We define ECRs broadly, to include both (a) fixed term research staff (research assistants, postdoctoral fellows), and (b) staff on tenure-track and open-ended contracts (lecturers, Chancellor's Fellows). ECRs are typically defined as within 7 years of being awarded their PhD, though this may be longer for those who have taken career breaks or parental leave, or have had limited opportunity to conduct research. They tend to be employed at grade 7, 8 or early 9.

While ECRs in both categories face overlapping challenges in terms of research activity in the immediate term, those on fixed term contracts face additional pressures in terms of career development, job insecurity and future employment, and it is this group that is the main focus of this document.

Summary of Measures

Challenge	Approach	Specific Measure	Owner/Status (RAG)
Data Collection	Adapt methods	DDI resources	DDI programme/ART Data Group – in progress
		SERCH (Supporting Research During Covid Hub)	CAHSS – complete
	Prioritise access to data	Access to labs/buildings	ART R&I Group, Heads of School/Deanery – in progress
		Re-start face-to-face data collection	Ethics/Health & Safety guidance – completed 17 th July
	Pause research	Temporary redeployment	Line managers – in progress
Caring Responsibilities	Mitigation & compensation	Record disruption	Line managers – in progress
		Prioritise for research support	Schools/Deaneries, line managers – in progress
		Standardised statement in CV/promotion materials	ART ECR Group Chair, University EDI Lead – to be developed
Poor home working environment	Enhance home working conditions	Guidance on home working, access to equipment	ART Home Working Guidance - complete
	Access to campus offices	Bookable spaces on campus	ART Estates Group – in progress
Networking & Collaboration	Guidance on digital events/collaborations	SERCH	ERO KEI Team – complete
	Institutional partnerships	Virtual visiting fellowships & mentoring schemes	ARG ECR Group Chair, Ed Global, SRS – in progress
Well-being	Resilience support	Pop-up IAD resources	IAD - complete
	Mental health and well-being support	Online services	Health & Safety, HR – complete
	Mentoring	Ensure Concordat mentoring requirements are met	Line managers – in progress
New staff	Induction	Online induction and meetings	Line managers, Pls – in progress
	Mentoring	Ensure appropriate mentoring	Line managers, Pls – in progress
Career development	Postdoctoral funding	Enhanced support for key postdoctoral/ECR schemes	ERO, College Deans of Research – to be developed
	Career support	Academic Talent Strategy	ERO – in progress
		Industry engagement support	Edinburgh Innovations – in progress
		Career development support	IAD resources - complete
ECR employment	Promote job security	Continued implementation of anti-casualisation agreement	Colleges and HR in liaison with the unions – in progress
		Promote open-ended contracts where possible	Colleges and Schools /Deaneries – in progress

1. Immediate Challenges for ECRs

Accessing facilities, equipment and data

Many ECRs will be unable to proceed with research as planned, because of impediments to data collection and analysis. Whilst UKRI and Wellcome have offered limited funds to cover grant extensions, most other funders, including the EU and many charities, have indicated they will not grant cost extensions (see [ERO guidance](#)). Thus many fixed term staff face the prospect of coming to the end of their contract without adequate time to complete their project.

The priority for ECRs in this situation will be to adapt research, where possible, to complete projects using digital/on-line tools and methods.

- Colleges and Schools/Institutes are developing resources to support digital and 'remote' methods and methods training. These include: (1) Digital Research Services one-stop, developed by the DDI programme; and (2) the [SERCH resource \(Supporting Research During Covid Hub\)](#), launched in June as a collaboration between CAHSS, IAD and ERO.
- Line managers, PIs and mentors should actively support and guide ECR colleagues in making use of these resources in a way that best suits the researcher's project and career trajectory. We would strongly encourage colleagues to view such adaptation as a positive opportunity to broaden researcher skills, particularly in relation to DDI and digital methods.

Where such adjustment to research design is not possible and research is reliant on access to facilities/equipment on campus, the needs of these early career colleagues should be prioritized in decisions on access to labs/facilities (see ART R&I paper on Restarting Research).

- In order to implement this, Schools/Centres should ascertain how critical such access is to completion of the project and the career development of the ECR; this prioritization should be factored into general decisions on access (see Annex 2).

Where neither of these options is feasible, Schools and other units could consider whether a member of staff on a fixed term contract unable to continue research might be interested in an alternative role for a short period of time (see Annex 1).

Caring responsibilities and poor home working environments

Many ECRs have caring responsibilities which are impeding their ability to carry out research. Findings from the recent Working from Home Survey (WFHS) show that across all staff in the University, 24.5% of staff have found it difficult to balance work with childcare. Those with caring responsibilities are more likely to have been negatively affected by working from home, compared to those without such responsibilities. Thus academic staff with caring commitments have reported a negative impact on working hours (71.9% of those with caring responsibilities experiencing a negative impact, compared to 50.6% without such responsibilities); work-life balance (70.7% compared to 58.3%), ability to conduct research (73.7% compared to 67.7%); as well as experiencing higher levels of tiredness and stress compared to other staff.

In terms of career stage, the WFHS found that academic staff at grades 8 and 9 have found it most difficult to balance work with childcare (respectively, 41.1% and 48.3% finding working from home had a negative impact on balancing work and childcare, compared with just 10.2% at grade 7 and 28% at Grade 10).

- Those with caring responsibilities should be prioritized for access to research support (see Annex 2).
- The University plans to use a portion of the Scottish Funding Council block grant funding to

develop a research support programme targeting colleagues whose research has been particularly affected by Covid, with an emphasis on EDI. The programme, developed by ERO and the Colleges, will include supplementary support for preparing bids, networking, developing non-academic engagement skills, and research career development.

- Those whose research has been adversely affected due to health or caring responsibilities should have the opportunity to clearly indicate this and have it recognized in annual review and promotion materials (see section 2 below).

Fixed-term research staff may lack adequate home-working environments, including access to appropriate office equipment, furniture, or wi-fi. The WFH Survey found that 73.4% of staff on fixed term contracts found that working from home had a negative effect on their office equipment. This may be especially challenging for those from less advantaged socio-economic backgrounds. For staff facing these constraints, it will be important that they have access to offices/hot-desks on campus, as lockdown begins to ease.

- Staff with inadequate home working environments should be prioritized for access to offices or hot-desks on campus (see also Restarting Research paper).
- Staff should be alerted to University advice and guidance on safe home working (see Staff Home and Remote Working paper)

Networking and collaboration

ECRs are especially dependent on travel for conferences, networking, visits and talks in order to establish contacts and skills to build their careers. It is likely that such activity will be constrained for some time. Moreover, the University is keen to encourage a sustainable approach to air travel as a longer-term goal, in line with the recently adopted policy on air travel. This is a good time to explore ways of enabling such exchange through digital channels.

- The University is rolling out guidance on various tools for digital exchange, including events, dissemination and public engagement (SERCH).
- Together with Social Responsibility and Sustainability and Edinburgh Global, the College Research Deans are exploring embedding a virtual visiting fellow and mentorship exchange scheme as part of our international partnerships.

Well-being and mental health

Because of lockdown, many ECRs may experience problems with isolation, low motivation, anxiety and other mental health issues. This may be exacerbated for those on fixed-term contracts who are anxious about their future employment prospects, and especially those whose wider families/networks are experiencing economic hardship. The WFHS found that 53.6% of academic staff on fixed term contracts and 69.6% of those on guaranteed hours contracts found their motivation negatively affected by working from home, compared to 43.3% on open-ended.

- Line managers and mentors should ensure ECRs are aware of existing resources on mental health and wellbeing, including through the Health & Safety and HR Learning & Development websites. Staff should be directed to online [Staff Counselling](#) services where relevant.
- The Institute for Academic Development (IAD) has developed a 'pop-up IAD' for researchers that addresses issues around productivity and resilience, and is working in partnership with other Russell Group institutions to develop a career conversation guide for research staff and their mentors or advisers.
- Schools/Centres should closely implement the Concordat requirement of allocating to all research staff a mentor distinct from their line manager/PI.

New ECRs joining the University

In addition to the challenges faced by existing staff, the current restrictions will affect staff moving to Edinburgh to start new positions. In addition to the challenges above, such incoming staff will face additional issues, which may include:

- National/ International travel restrictions preventing them from moving to Edinburgh
 - Finding accommodation in Edinburgh for themselves/ their families
 - Finding childcare for pre-school and school-age children
 - Access to University, building and laboratory inductions
 - Restrictions on meeting new colleagues
 - Restricted access to offices/ labs/ libraries
- PIs and line managers should put in place processes to assist the relocation of all new staff, including ECRs, and their integration into the centre/subject area/group. This should include online induction, online meeting/introduction sessions and, where possible, pre-arrival buddying.
- Plans for the start of the new post should include contingencies for dealing with delayed access to the lab or office (where relevant) and, when access to the lab is possible, for dealing with social distancing.

Given the range of challenges faced by ECRs, we are committed to ensuring they receive support for their research. Annex 2 sets out guidance for line managers in allocating research support to ECRs, in particular linked to concerns about Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

2. Career Development and Employment

Covid-19 is already having a pronounced effect on HEI and industry recruitment, and we can anticipate a slowdown and/or volatility in the job market for ECRs over the coming years as Universities, companies and other employers adapt to the financial and other impacts of the pandemic.

This is likely to exacerbate the existing career challenges faced by ECRs. Many ECRs find themselves having to take on a succession of short-term and often opportunistic employment posts, whilst trying to build relevant skills and experience with the aim of securing a permanent academic post. There are a range of measures the University can take to supporting ECRs in achieving their career goals.

Postdoctoral Funding

Research staff (ECRs and/or those leading such research grant applications) should be able to access robust support for postdoctoral grant applications. This will be provided through the following.

- ERO, Colleges and Schools will identify priority schemes which are key in supporting research careers, and adopt rigorous processes for selecting and supporting applicants. This should build on existing good practice in Colleges, such as CMVM's Edinburgh scientific academic track training. Relevant schemes may include individual fellowships such as UKRI Future Leadership Fellowships and other research council schemes, Leverhulme and Wellcome ECR fellowships; or they may involve ECRs taking the lead in distinct elements of a major research programme or project. Such schemes may be relevant for existing staff, and/or for external applicants (noting

that Schools/Centres may want to prioritise named internal candidates with demonstrated skills and experience where funding rules allow). Colleges will work with their Schools/Centres to identify which types of schemes and candidates to prioritise, especially where the scheme involves an institutional contribution and/or employment commitment beyond the period of funding.

- ERO is rolling out an Academic Talent Strategy for Research Funding, which includes support for Aspiring Investigators and New Investigators. Support will include events and webinars, planning tools and resources to support application development. As noted above, ERO and the College Deans of Research plan to develop a supplementary support programme funded by the SFC block grant, targeting colleagues whose research has been particularly affected by Covid, with an emphasis on EDI.
- Complementing this service, Schools/Centres should offer tailored support and guidance for individual ECRs to identify and develop competitive proposals, including through mentoring or a grant buddy/critical friend.
- To guide these approaches, ERO and the College Deans will develop guidance on prioritizing and supporting ECR schemes, and cascade this guidance through Schools and College Research Committees.

Employability

Given uncertainty over the future employment market, particular attention should be given to the development of skills and experiences to equip ECRs for both academic *and* non-academic careers. It should be noted that the distinction between academic and other sector skills requirements is blurring, with research careers typically also involving innovation and impact activities, and industrial careers often involving aspects of research, innovation and teaching/training. We should therefore ensure that a breadth of employability/career development support is available to ECRs at School/College/University level.

- Edinburgh Innovations (EI) offers a range of resources on industry engagement, business development, and enterprise support for staff on its [staff website](#).
- In addition, EI Business Development experts, embedded in Schools and Colleges as first points of contact, can support ECRs seeking further support and advice on industry engagement. They can help explore options, provide practical help at every stage and introduce EI's range of professional expertise as necessary.
- ECR staff should be directed to [IAD resources on career development](#), which include career workshops, consultations and other resources.
- Line managers and mentors may want to advise and support ECRs in gaining broader experience of teaching, if this is relevant to their career goals.
- IAD will be working with College HR to ensure that updated guidance on ECR career development is integrated into Annual Review documentation, as part of Phase 3 of the new HR system (2021).

UoE Employment Practices

The University can also contribute to addressing these challenges through University recruitment and employment practices. Wherever possible, the University should seek to create open-ended and tenure-track contracts for more senior ECRs; while rolling out more comprehensive support for research staff.

- In 2019 the University committed to taking forward a set of agreed actions aimed at providing

greater employment security for those on casual contracts, and for the fair management of staff employed on fixed term contracts. The University is committed to producing clear guidance for staff on fixed term contracts. This guidance, which is currently being developed, will draw on the good practice set out in the recently published UK Concordat to support the career development of researchers. HR are leading this work and will consult with the ART ECR group and others to ensure the needs of ECRs are fully understood.

- IAD and the HR contracts group has launched a discussion on 'career researcher' tracks for long-term staff who do not transition into a PI or academic path. Colleges and Schools/Centres are encouraged to identify areas where there is ongoing demand for research staff skills within funded research teams, and thus a business case for converting posts to open-ended contracts.
- More generally, Colleges and Schools/Centres are encouraged to prioritise open-ended over fixed-term contracts, in areas where they have ongoing teaching needs and/or areas for strategic investment in research.
- Schools with short-term teaching needs should also consider career development fellowships involving a mix of teaching and research, alongside comprehensive support for skills/career development and employability.
- The College Deans will launch a dialogue with Schools/Centres to explore how this approach can be taken forward in their particular contexts.

UoE should fully recognize the impact of lockdown in its approach to the recruitment, selection and appointment of research staff.

- Recruiters should be encouraged to explore the impact of Covid-19 on the research outputs of the candidates.
- The University should also make it easy for candidates to clearly identify and highlight restrictions on their capacity to research (as they do with phases of maternity or parental leave). The ART ECR Chair will work with the University EDI Lead to develop and publicise a template for this, to ensure that candidates and University staff are not penalized for Covid impacts.

A summary of these measures and approaches will be discussed and consulted on with the trade unions in July, and with ECR colleagues through a series of local feedback sessions in Colleges in August/September 2020.

ART R&I ECR Group members

Christina Boswell, Dean of Research, CAHSS (Chair)
Steven Barnes, Head of HR, CSE
Catherine Burns, Deputy Director, ERO
Charles ffrench Constant, Dean of Research, CMVM
Paddy Hadoke, Biomedical Sciences
Antony Maciocia, Dean of PG, CSE
Andy Mount, Dean of Research, CSE
Jonathan Seckl, Senior Vice-Principal
Sara Shinton, Deputy Director, IAD
Ellen Stewart, Chancellor's Fellow, Usher Institute
Stephen Wallace, UKRI FLF, Biological Sciences

Annex 1: Supporting staff redeployment

Where an early career researcher is unable to continue with their research because of impediments to data collection/analysis, line managers may want to explore whether the staff member is interested in a short-term redeployment. The following offers brief guidance from HR to line managers on how to go about this. Please contact your local HR office/advisor for more details.

1. Schools and other units should discuss with these members of staff whether they would be willing to be temporarily redeployed either fully or partially to provide support needed elsewhere. A good example of this would include helping to prepare teaching materials for on-line delivery. These could be developmental opportunities, for example to gain experience of preparing teaching materials or lecturing. Grant funding should allow for such breaks, but PIs would be responsible for checking the precise terms and conditions.
2. If the redeployment is for a short period of time, then all terms and conditions would remain unchanged, but the school would need to determine and agree how the salary costs are re-charged prior to the redeployment commencing. It is also assumed that the redeployment occurs within existing contracted working hours. PIs would need to sign off such redeployment as well as a plan for project restarts and application for a no-cost extension to the grant if required.
3. If the re-deployment is for a longer period of time then it should be considered more formally as an internal secondment (in line with the University Policy on Secondments) and advertised as such. This would require a graded job description for the seconded post, a selection process and a secondment agreement for the successful candidate. This will also ensure that the secondee is paid at the right grade for the post. In these cases it is incumbent on the host unit to ensure that they are able to fund the secondment and in all cases the School/Deanery/Centre should ensure that adequate training is provided.

Annex 2: Research Support for ECRs

Heads of School/Deanery and line managers should be guided by the following process in identifying needs and allocating support for ECRs.

1. Identify who is affected

Schools and MVM Centres have already started to gather data on how staff are affected by lockdown, through a range of methods – annual review and one-to-one meetings, questionnaires to staff via email, or surveys. Whatever method is chosen, managers should seek to understand, at a minimum:

- The type of impediments ECRs face to carrying out research – be these related to data collection, caring responsibilities, home working environment, networking or well-being. Staff should not be required to share personal information about their domestic arrangements, but could be asked to indicate which (combination) of these factors is most relevant.
- How far these are affecting research. Staff could be asked to indicate (a) the extent to which their research is/has been restricted; and/or (b) the number of hours they are able to dedicate to research per week. This will change quite rapidly as physical distancing measures are eased, so line managers will need to be flexible in how they collect and action this information.

The request for information should be presented in a constructive and supportive way, to avoid any suggestion that it will be used to penalize staff. The purpose of gathering such information is, on the contrary, to identify how staff may be supported in their research going forwards. This data should remain confidential and used by the staff member and their line manager to develop individual solutions. Line managers should be able to highlight the main themes and impact levels arising from their conversation without compromising confidentiality.

2. Identify the type of support for ECR support that is appropriate

Research support in this context may cover:

1. Training, mentoring and career guidance
 2. Internal seed funding (available in some Schools or through schemes such as SFC GCRF internal seed funding)
 3. Enhanced support for grant and fellowship applications (e.g. through mentoring or additional peer review)
 4. Access to labs, offices or facilities where this is restricted
 5. Research time in workload allocation (relevant for CAHSS)
 6. Research leave (where applicable)
- Managers are strongly encouraged to ensure these types of research support are provided to ECRs, including, where relevant, to those on fixed term research contracts.
 - Availability of these kinds of support should be clearly communicated to research staff, including ensuring there is a named colleague in the relevant School/Deanery/central research office who can support them to pursue suitable early career fellowship and grant

opportunities.

3. Ensure the criteria and processes for allocating resources are transparent and fair

You should set out clearly the principles guiding allocation. For example, in allocating additional research time in workload allocation, or enhanced support for grant applications, you might want to foreground:

- research support for ECRs at critical junctures in their research career;
- where possible, prioritizing support for those whose circumstances have resulted in more restricted research time (e.g. because of caring responsibilities);
- clearly, these considerations will need to be balanced with strategic goals for your School/Centre, such as prioritizing particular areas of research and innovation.

Any sensitive decisions (for example on seed funding, research leave or workload allocation) should follow a clear and transparent process, involving someone with ECR and/or EDI responsibility and HR where appropriate.

Special attention should be given to any unconscious bias in decision-making, especially in relation to women, BAME researchers, and those from less advantaged socio-economic backgrounds.

To complement this individual-level data, we will draw on data on ECRs and impediments to research from the Home Working survey.



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

18 August 2020

Director of Finance's Report

Description of paper

1. This paper reports the University management accounts (excluding Subsidiaries) position up to the end of June (period eleven) and provides an update on the initial consultation relating to the 2020 USS valuation. Also included is an update on our applications for a short term Revolving Credit Facility (RCF) and to the Government's Covid Corporate Finance Facility (CCFF).

Action requested/Recommendation

2. The University Executive is asked to review and comment on the latest update.

Background and context

3. The paper provides a regular update on finance related issues for the University Executive.

Paragraphs 4-16 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Resource Implications

17. There are no specific requests for resource in the paper.

Risk Management

18. The University manages its financial risk by not breaching the Group risk appetite as described in its financial metrics. The current Finance Strategy provides a target operating surplus range of 3% - 5% to remain sustainable. Based on the information that we currently have it is probable that the University will not deliver on this target range in 2020-21 and, in fact, will most likely be in deficit until recovery mitigations and plans take effect.

Equality & Diversity

19. Specific issues of equality and diversity are not relevant to this paper as the content focusses primarily on financial strategy and/or financial project considerations.

Next steps & communication

20. We would welcome feedback as outlined in the discussion above.

Consultation

21. The paper has been reviewed by Lee Hamill, Director of Finance.

Further information

22. Author

Rachael Robertson
Deputy Director of Finance

Presenter

Rachael Robertson
Deputy Director of Finance

Stuart Graham

Head of FIRST (Financial Information,
Reporting & Strategy Team)

3 August 2020

Freedom of Information

23. This paper should not be included in open business as its disclosure could substantially prejudice the commercial interests of the University.



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

18 August 2020

Student Survey Results July 2020

Description of paper/Summary

1. This paper reports the findings from the National Student Survey (NSS) and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) in 2020¹. The paper provides an overview of the University of Edinburgh's performance in each survey giving long term trends for key metrics; highlighting any significant changes at a School level and for the NSS, benchmarking the University of Edinburgh's results against the sector and Russell Group². Executive are asked to note the paper.
2. There has been minimal discussion of the NSS and PTES results over the summer due to the intense focus institution-wide on preparing for hybrid delivery in September. However the results remain troubling and continue to raise serious questions for Executive about the quality of the student experience at Edinburgh compared to our peers. Further analysis will be completed over the next month and a more detailed paper submitted to Senate Education Committee including whether different levels of satisfaction exist between student groups, as well as findings from analysis of the free text comments supplied in the NSS and PTES. Once the further analysis is complete, an update and action plans will be brought back to Executive later in semester 1 20/21.

Action requested/Recommendation

3. University Executive are asked to note the findings presented in this paper, and to note that further analysis and plans will be brought back to Executive once semester 1 20/21 has started.

Background and context

4. The NSS is an annual survey of final year undergraduate students. The questionnaire is designed by the Office for Students (OfS), data collected online and over the telephone by Ipsos MORI and results processed by Texunatech. The University of Edinburgh ran the NSS between 10 February and 30 April this year. We received 3,012 responses (a 63% response rate).
5. 19/20 was an extraordinary year for our students, with two periods of industrial action followed by the covid19 lockdown. The OfS analysed the results of the NSS for the sector to test the [impact of the Covid-19](#) pandemic on the reliability of the data. OfS concluded that there was no significant impact and so this year's data could be used in time-series analyses.
6. PTES is an annual survey of all taught postgraduate students. The questionnaire is designed by Advance HE but the survey administered by the

¹ The full results for both surveys are available [here](#).

² Benchmark data for PTES hasn't been released by Advance HE – benchmarking data will be published as soon as it is.

University of Edinburgh. All responses are collected online. The survey ran from 25 May to 15 June – this is a shorter than usual window. PTES received 3,320 responses (a 31% response rate).

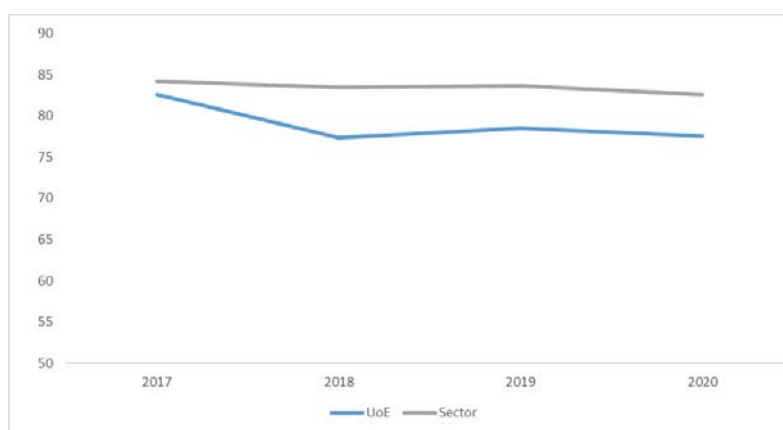
7. Data tables are available in the Appendix.

Discussion

NSS Results

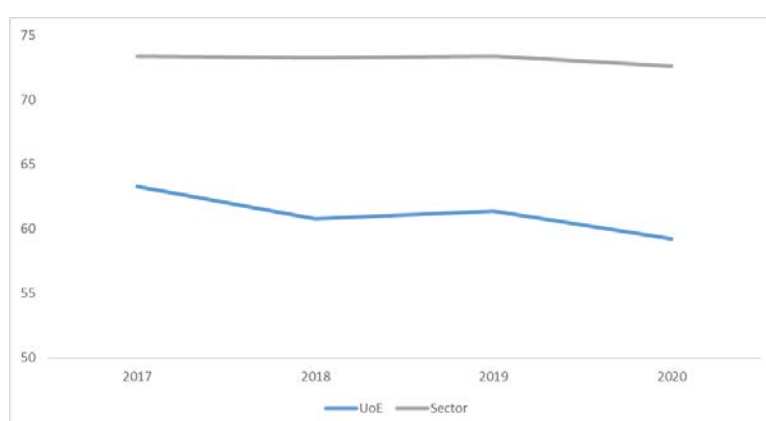
8. (down five percentage points since the new NSS questionnaire was introduced in 2017).

Figure 1 Four year trend in overall satisfaction - UoE vs Sector



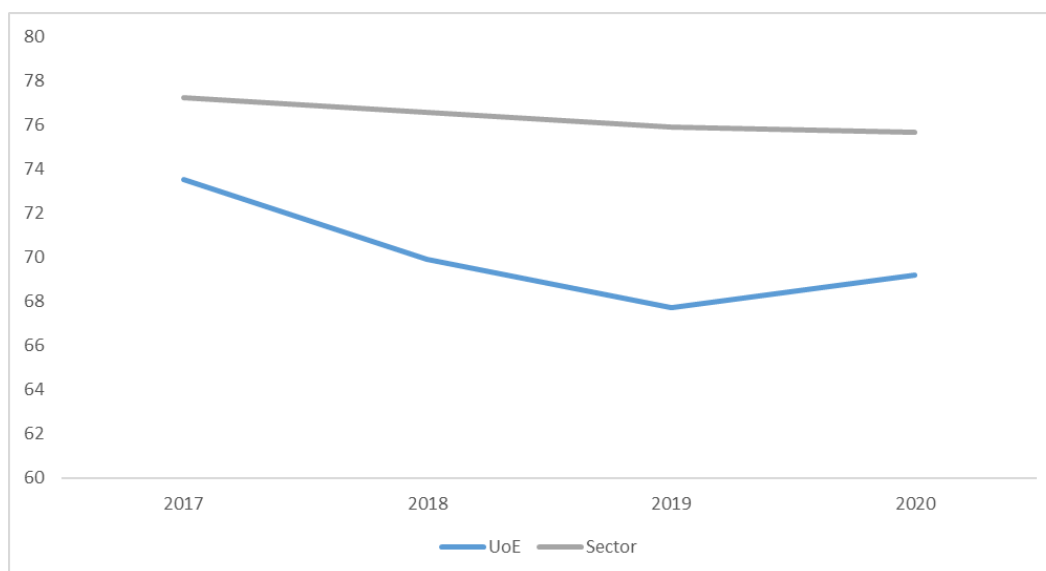
9. Satisfaction with Assessment and Feedback continues to stand out as an issue for the University. Sector-wide, scores for assessment and feedback are generally lower than those for other areas, however sector wide, the longer-term trend is generally one of stability. At Edinburgh however, scores in this area have decreased by four percentage points in the last four years.

Figure 2 Four year trend in satisfaction with Assessment and Feedback - UoE vs Sector



10. Satisfaction with being part of a Learning Community is another area of long term decline for the University (although there was a small increase in satisfaction since last year). Whilst there has been a small decrease in satisfaction across the sector as a whole, satisfaction has decreased at a greater rate at Edinburgh.

Figure 3 Four year trend in satisfaction with Learning Community - UoE vs Sector



School results³

11. As ever, there is considerable heterogeneity in results across different schools. Three schools – R(D)VS, HEA and Maths scored 90% or over for overall satisfaction (95%, 91% and 90% respectively). Biomedical Sciences saw the greatest increase in satisfaction (from 72% to 84%). Informatics saw the greatest decrease in overall satisfaction from 77% to 69%. Two other Schools have overall satisfaction levels below 70% (ECA and Business). None of these changes are statistically significant nevertheless they have an impact on external reputational metrics like UK League Tables.

12. Satisfaction with Teaching ranges from 98% at R(D)VS to 69% in Informatics. The range between the top performing Schools and lowest scoring Schools has increased. None of the changes in satisfaction are statistically significant however some are still large changes. BMS and Maths have both increased satisfaction levels by over 5 percentage points (to 83% and 88% respectively). Satisfaction rates in Law and Informatics have decreased by over 5 percentage points (to 82% and 69% respectively).

13. Again, the range in levels of satisfaction with Assessment and Feedback is large and has grown since last year (from 87% for HEA to 27% for Informatics)⁴. Both

³ Full results are in Table Two in the Appendix.

⁴ School level analysis of open comments will form part of the paper to Senate Education Committee and this will be investigated in more detail in this paper.

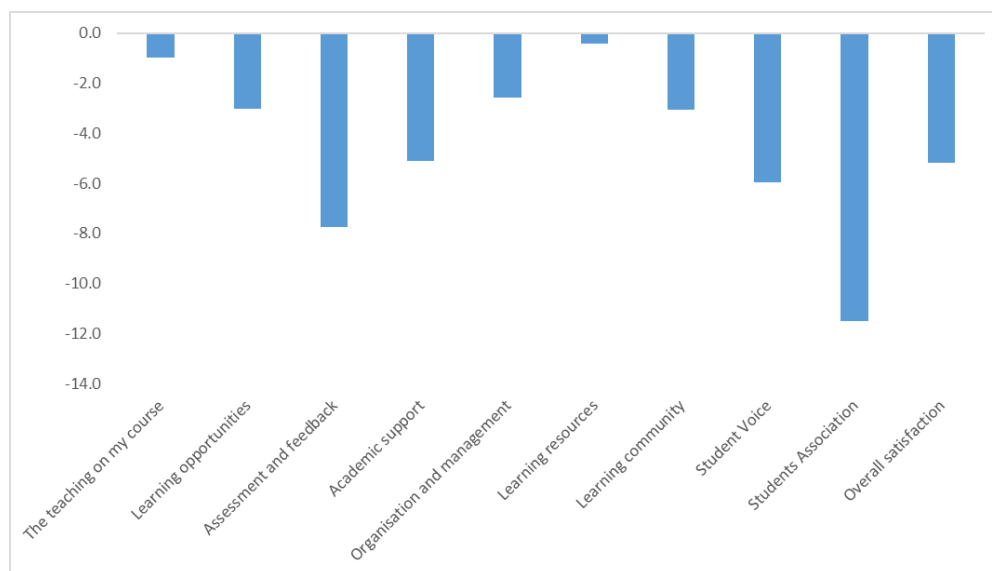
Informatics and HCA saw statistically significant decreases in satisfaction in this area (by 18 percentage points and 14 percentage points respectively).

14. Satisfaction with Academic Support ranges from over 90% (R(D)VS and HEA) to under 65% (Informatics, SPS and Law). Maths have increased satisfaction by nearly 10 percentage points. Satisfaction in SPS has decreased by 12 percentage points.

Benchmarking against the Russell Group

15. The University of Edinburgh is below the Russell Group average in all the primary themes of the NSS.

Figure 4 Distance from the Russell Group Average 2020



16. Edinburgh has moved to the bottom of the Russell Group for satisfaction with Assessment and Feedback and Student Voice. However gains have been made in satisfaction with Teaching, Learning Opportunities and Organisation and Management.

Table 1 Change in ranked position in the Russell Group (out of 22)

	<i>The teaching on my course</i>	<i>Learning opportunities</i>	<i>Assessment and feedback</i>	<i>Academic support</i>	<i>Organisation and management</i>	<i>Learning resources</i>	<i>Learning community</i>	<i>Student Voice</i>	<i>Students' Association</i>	<i>Overall satisfaction</i>
2019	18	20	21	21	20	18	20	21	20	21
2020	16	19	22	21	17	14	20	22	21	21
Change	2	1	-1	0	3	4	0	-1	-1	0

Figure 5 Satisfaction with Teaching - Russell Group 2020

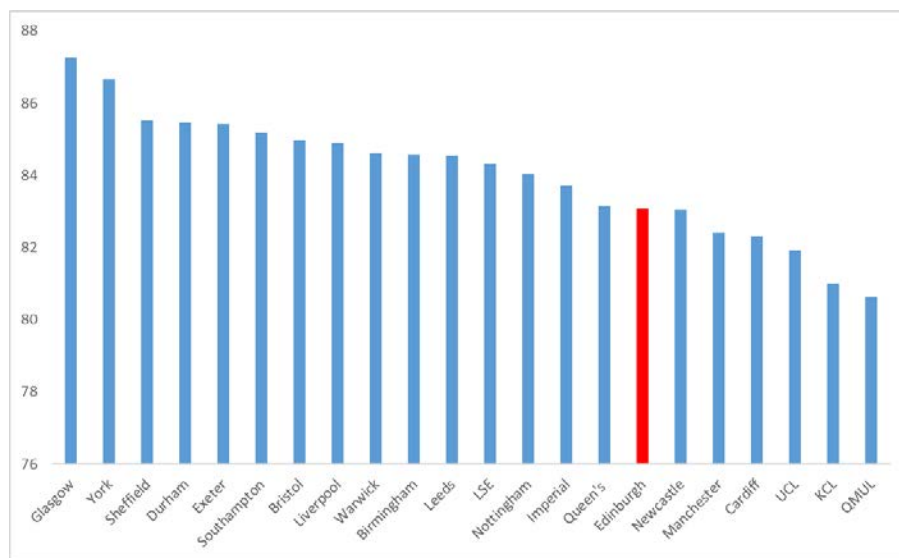


Figure 6 Satisfaction with Academic Support - Russell Group 2020

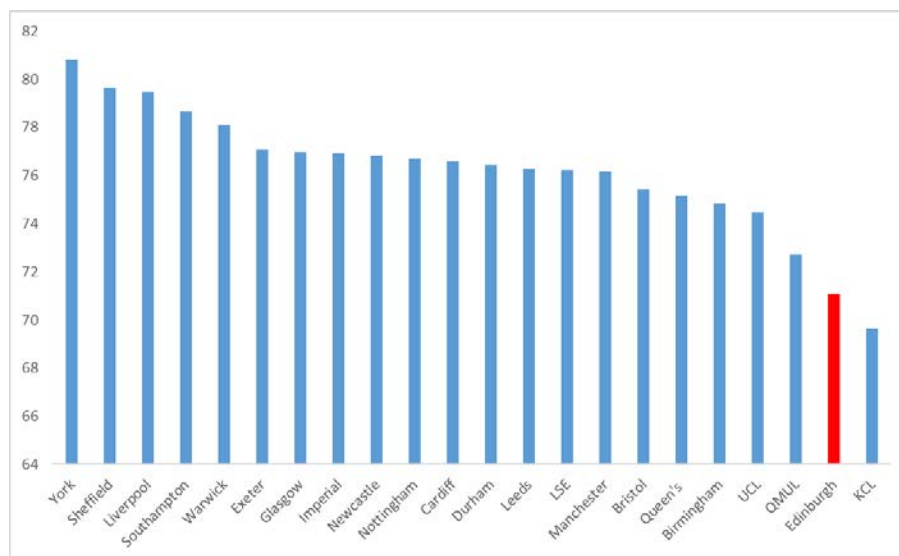


Figure 7 Satisfaction with Assessment and Feedback - Russell Group 2020

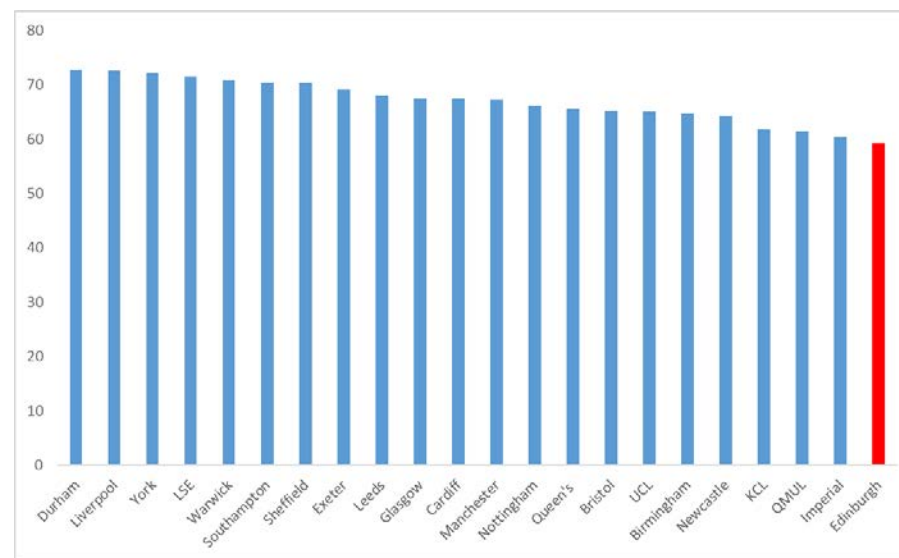
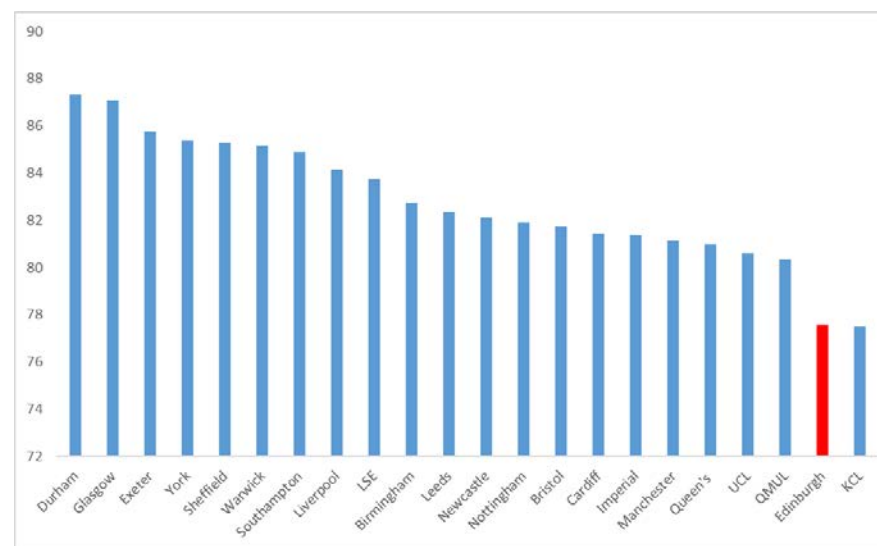


Figure 8 Overall Satisfaction - Russell Group 2020

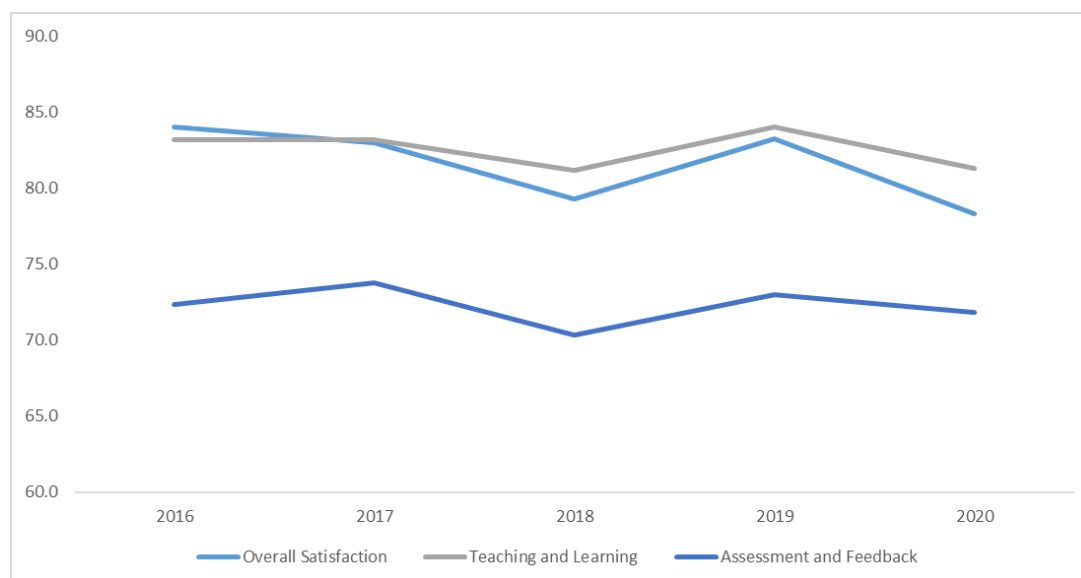


PTES Results

17. Overall satisfaction in PTES has decreased by five percentage points from 83.2% to 78.3%. This is slightly below the overall satisfaction score in 2018 (79.3%).

18. Satisfaction scores have decreased across all other measures (a table with the long term trends in PTES primary themes is in the Appendix).

Figure 9 Long term trends in satisfaction in PTES



19. None of the changes in satisfaction are statistically significant however the overall downward trend is clear.

School results⁵

20. Overall satisfaction scores range greatly between Schools in PTES. Medicine received a 100% satisfaction rating (33 respondents). Economics, Chemistry and students attached to the College of Science and Engineering achieved over 90% overall satisfaction. Conversely PGT students scored HCA 56%, HEA 63% and Physics 64%. Informatics made significant gains in their levels of PGT satisfaction (up to 87% from 73% last year). Education, HEA, SPS and HCA all saw significant decreases in satisfaction since last year⁶.

21. PGT student satisfaction with teaching ranges from nearly 100% in Medicine to 71% in HCA. Medicine, Economics and Maths all received teaching satisfaction scores of over 90% whereas ECA, HEA and HCA all score below 75%. Biology increased satisfaction with teaching by 12%. Divinity and HCA saw 12% and 16% decreases in teaching satisfaction.

⁵ Full results are in Table Five in the Appendix.

⁶ School level analysis of open comments will form part of the paper to Senate Education Committee and this will be investigated in more detail in this paper.

22. Again, Medicine have scored highly for satisfaction with Assessment and Feedback (98%). Physics scored 49% (down 14 percentage points) and Informatics 57% (this is up 10 percentage points since last year).

Student safety

23. Questions on student safety were added to PTES and the NSS this year. Overall 75% of undergraduates and 83% of PGT students felt safe. Students are more likely to agree that they feel safe to be themselves at university (89% in NSS and in PTES) than to feel that the institution takes responsibility for their safety (62% in NSS and 76% in PTES). A table with a breakdown of these results by School is included in the Appendix.

Conclusions

24. Overall there has been minimal change in undergraduate satisfaction and this is in line with the trend in the sector.

25. PGT students are reporting lower levels than they were last year. However satisfaction levels are in line with the previous year suggesting that last year may have been anomalous. PTES respondents, unlike NSS respondents, only have one year's worth of student experience to reflect on, and as noted above, 19/20 was an extraordinary year for all our students.

26. There is evidence of increasing polarisation in levels of satisfaction between Schools. However there is also some lack of consistency in levels of satisfaction between students within the same School, with some Schools having highly satisfied PGT students and less satisfied undergraduates (for example 96% if Economics postgraduates were satisfied overall whereas the overall score in the NSS was 73%).

27. Assessment and Feedback continues to be an issue. The University of Edinburgh is ranked in last place in the Russell Group and fourth to last in the sector for Assessment and Feedback in the NSS.

Risk Management

28. N/A

Equality & Diversity

29. N/A

Next steps & Communications

30. There has been minimal discussion of the NSS and PTES results over the summer due to the intense focus institution-wide on preparing for hybrid delivery in September. However the results are troubling and continue to raise serious questions for Executive about the quality of the student experience at Edinburgh. The results should form the basis of further analysis and plans to be brought back to Executive once semester 1 20/21 is safely up and running.

31. Further analysis will be completed over the next month and a more detailed paper submitted to Senate Education Committee. This paper will examine whether there are different levels of satisfaction between student groups and will include

findings from analysis of the free text comments supplied in the NSS and PTES. The paper will contain an appendix with a summary of the themes coming from the comments for each School.

32. PTES benchmark analysis will be published as soon as HEA release the data and a section on benchmarking for PGT satisfaction included in the SEC paper.

Consultation

33. N/A

Further information

34. <u>Author</u>	<u>Presenter</u>
Paula Webster	Gavin Douglas
Head of Student Analytics, Insights & Modelling	Deputy Secretary, Student Experience

Freedom of Information

35. Open paper

Appendix:

Table 2 NSS - UoE vs Sector for primary themes

		2017	2018	2019	2020	2019 to 2020	2017 to 2020
The teaching on my course	UoE	84.3	82.0	83.0	83.1	0.11	-1.2
	Sector	84.6	84.2	84.1	83.9	-0.26	-0.8
Learning opportunities	UoE	78.4	77.1	77.9	77.7	-0.19	-0.7
	Sector	83.6	83.1	83.2	82.9	-0.28	-0.7
Assessment and feedback	UoE	63.3	60.8	61.4	59.3	-2.11	-4.0
	Sector	73.4	73.3	73.4	72.6	-0.77	-0.8
Academic support	UoE	74.1	71.1	70.9	71.1	0.19	-3.0
	Sector	79.9	79.6	79.9	79.4	-0.43	-0.5
Organisation and management	UoE	74.8	69.3	72.1	71.9	-0.14	-2.9
	Sector	75.3	74.7	75.0	73.8	-1.23	-1.5
Learning resources	UoE	86.4	85.7	85.2	86.3	1.1	-0.1
	Sector	85.2	85.4	85.8	85.8	0	0.6
Learning community	UoE	73.5	69.9	67.7	69.2	1.47	-4.3
	Sector	77.2	76.6	75.9	75.7	-0.24	-1.6
Student Voice	UoE	66.7	65.2	66.8	65.6	-1.11	-1.1
	Sector	73.2	73.3	73.7	73.6	-0.1	0.4
The students' association	UoE	41.7	41.6	38.6	39.5	0.94	-2.2
	Sector	56.8	56.5	55.7	56.0	0.33	-0.8
Overall satisfaction	UoE	82.6	77.4	78.5	77.6	-0.9	-5.0
	Sector	84.2	83.5	83.7	82.7	-1	-1.5

Table 3 2020 Results by School

	The teaching on my course	Learning opportunities	Assessment and feedback	Academic support	Organisation and management	Learning resources	Learning community	Student Voice	Students Association	Overall satisfaction	No. Respondents
UoE	83.1	77.7	59.3	71.1	71.9	86.3	69.2	65.6	39.5	77.6	3012
BIO	82.7	75.4	55.4	76.2	80.3	84.4	79.2	65.7	43.1	80.8	126
BMS	83.3	77.6	62.2	72.6	78.9	87.3	67.3	70.0	36.1	84.0	150
BUS	75.2	73.2	56.1	67.1	79.0	81.7	70.3	58.8	36.7	67.8	153
CHE	86.3	79.1	63.5	78.1	70.4	86.0	78.4	70.6	31.3	83.2	102
DIV	88.6	81.0	62.1	72.9	80.0	83.8	64.3	75.2	39.4	85.7	35
ECA	80.3	76.7	64.5	67.3	66.6	81.8	70.5	59.5	40.8	68.4	280
ECN	77.8	68.7	60.1	67.0	75.6	85.6	58.8	65.8	29.8	73.2	97
EDU	86.0	83.3	60.2	77.2	69.5	87.7	81.5	71.2	52.0	79.2	221
ENG	76.7	78.5	48.5	67.0	73.0	85.8	74.6	65.5	47.5	74.3	183
GEO	85.2	83.7	64.6	73.7	71.8	87.7	75.2	74.8	42.9	78.7	123
HCA	82.6	72.6	55.8	66.4	73.4	83.3	45.3	54.6	27.2	74.8	203
HEA	93.0	93.8	86.7	90.6	88.5	95.8	89.1	89.6	83.9	90.6	32
INF	69.3	68.9	27.3	64.8	63.0	88.0	72.5	56.7	31.3	69.2	118
LAW	81.9	69.4	52.5	56.6	70.5	77.1	58.5	59.5	36.8	78.6	112

	The teaching on my course	Learning opportunities	Assessment and feedback	Academic support	Organisation and management	Learning resources	Learning community	Student Voice	Students Association	Overall satisfaction	No. Respondents
LLC	83.5	77.7	62.4	67.8	69.5	86.5	62.7	59.0	30.8	73.0	245
MAT	87.5	75.2	74.4	80.9	85.8	90.7	76.8	72.8	40.3	90.2	82
MED	91.5	89.4	63.1	79.0	62.1	92.7	91.3	77.1	52.8	87.4	183
PHY	83.3	74.8	66.3	78.3	83.8	86.9	70.5	65.7	19.7	83.3	66
PPL	84.1	71.5	53.9	69.0	73.0	91.0	48.1	61.1	37.0	77.7	185
SPS	81.6	76.6	55.1	60.1	68.4	86.7	52.2	60.4	33.5	72.9	182
VET	97.9	92.4	78.2	92.3	69.3	89.1	95.0	87.3	58.6	94.7	131

Table 4 PTES Primary Theme Scores

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2019 - 2020	2016 - 2020
Assessment and Feedback	72.3	73.7	70.3	73.0	71.8	-1.2	-0.5
Dissertation or Major Project	79.5	78.9	78.3	81.3	80.1	-1.2	0.6
Employability	-	-	-	75.2	71.0	-4.2	-
Engagement	78.9	79.0	78.0	79.5	78.2	-1.3	-0.7
Organisation and Management	75.3	75.0	71.9	76.8	74.0	-2.8	-1.3
Overall Satisfaction	84.0	82.9	79.3	83.2	78.3	-4.9	-5.7
Resources and Services	86.0	87.4	87.2	86.8	84.4	-2.4	-1.6
Skills Development	76.3	76.3	74.8	77.8	75.2	-2.6	-1.0
Teaching and Learning	83.2	83.2	81.2	84.0	81.3	-2.8	-1.9

Table 5 PTES results by School 2020

	Assessment and Feedback	Dissertation or Major Project	Employability	Engagement	Organisation and Management	Overall Satisfaction	Resources and Services	Skills Development	Student Safety	Teaching and Learning
BUS	69.0	76.1	82.8	78.8	73.0	72.4	87.4	80.1	89.6	77.9
CSE	80.9	36.8	71.0	85.5	74.5	93.9	85.2	73.0	72.7	87.8
BMS	73.2	83.2	69.7	79.4	73.3	83.2	82.9	78.0	75.9	80.5
CLI	79.1	77.6	79.3	81.2	78.7	88.6	82.3	84.1	74.3	84.6
MGP	74.0	82.4	74.1	80.2	74.6	87.4	87.0	79.9	82.2	86.0
ECA	64.9	77.2	64.2	73.3	64.6	70.9	74.4	71.8	82.9	73.8
MED	97.7	97.8	84.4	93.3	93.8	100.0	91.9	86.2	83.7	97.4
EDU	76.8	83.1	73.9	80.8	75.3	80.7	84.1	75.9	82.4	81.9
VET	77.8	79.4	71.4	82.0	81.7	89.2	87.4	78.6	77.1	88.5
BIO	77.1	80.9	74.9	77.5	77.9	80.7	87.6	74.3	86.0	88.3
CHE	88.9	90.6	94.4	88.9	94.4	94.4	95.8	92.6	97.2	89.6
DIV	71.4	75.0	54.5	71.4	87.0	85.7	80.4	65.0	88.9	80.6

	Assessment and Feedback	Dissertation or Major Project	Employability	Engagement	Organisation and Management	Overall Satisfaction	Resources and Services	Skills Development	Student Safety	Teaching and Learning
ECO	86.9	87.9	86.8	86.6	82.8	96.3	94.4	79.6	100.0	94.2
ENG	73.1	85.5	87.8	79.0	83.2	89.4	89.0	82.0	93.3	87.3
GEO	70.0	82.0	70.3	77.3	79.5	82.4	87.2	77.3	91.5	85.4
HEA	69.3	74.9	64.8	71.7	66.7	63.2	84.6	67.6	77.5	71.9
HCA	61.7	74.7	51.0	68.6	60.5	56.3	78.4	61.2	69.8	71.0
INF	57.4	88.1	74.1	74.1	76.1	87.3	88.3	79.3	89.4	84.2
LAW	71.3	84.6	68.1	76.9	75.1	78.5	84.7	74.1	84.1	81.9
LLC	76.2	80.2	58.5	83.4	74.1	71.1	79.5	68.9	76.5	81.9
MAT	71.3	84.1	87.3	81.6	82.9	89.7	93.5	77.8	91.6	90.0
PPL	65.4	80.4	58.0	80.7	71.5	76.0	86.7	68.6	76.8	81.4
PHY	49.1	71.2	61.5	62.9	62.3	64.3	72.3	61.9	64.3	78.6
SPS	66.8	73.2	65.2	76.0	67.1	70.2	83.4	72.4	80.9	77.4
UoE	71.8	80.0	71.0	78.2	74.0	78.3	84.4	75.2	82.6	81.3

Table 6 Student Safety Questions - NSS and PTES 2020

	NSS			PTES		
	Student safety	I feel safe to be myself at university/college.	My institution takes responsibility for my safety.	Student safety	I feel safe to be myself at university/college.	My institution takes responsibility for my safety.
UoE	75.4	88.7	62.0	82.5	89.2	75.8
BIO	77.0	88.1	66.2	86.0	93.0	78.9
BMS	73.7	89.7	57.7	75.3	85.9	64.6
BUS	69.2	83.6	54.2	89.6	93.5	85.7
CHE	75.5	82.4	68.6	97.2	100.0	94.4
CSC				74.3	76.6	71.9
DIV	66.7	86.7	46.7	88.7	92.9	84.6
ECA	75.5	88.5	62.5	82.8	88.6	77.1
ECN	76.1	89.1	63.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
EDU	71.0	86.7	54.7	82.4	88.3	76.5
ENG	83.1	88.7	77.5	93.3	98.1	88.5
GEO	82.9	92.9	72.9	91.5	95.6	87.5
HCA	63.7	81.7	45.3	69.9	79.7	60.0
HEA	86.8	94.7	79.0	77.3	88.6	66.1
INF	81.4	94.2	68.0	89.4	93.0	85.9
LAW	75.0	87.5	62.5	84.1	91.0	77.1
LLC	73.5	90.2	56.3	76.2	90.6	61.8
MAT	75.9	92.6	59.3	91.6	96.9	86.3
MED	89.1	95.5	82.7	83.7	83.3	84.0
MGP				82.1	89.6	74.7
PHY	77.1	91.4	62.9	64.3	71.4	57.1

		NSS			PTES	
	Student safety	I feel safe to be my self at university/co llege.	My institution takes responsibility for m y safety.	Student safety	I feel safe to be my self at university/co llege.	My institution takes responsibility for m y safety.
PPL	60.5	81.0	39.8	76.7	85.8	67.6
SPS	67.0	86.7	46.9	80.9	88.8	72.9
VET	92.4	96.2	88.5	77.0	81.3	72.8



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

18 August 2020

Counter Fraud Group Report

Description of paper

1. This paper describes the actions taken to update the Fraud Policy and Procedures which were last approved January 2010.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. University Executive are asked to review and comment on the Fraud Policy and Procedures.

Paragraphs 3-11 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Risk Management

12. Through the implementation and dissemination of the policy and procedures we will provide the Audit and Risk Committee and ultimately Court with the assurances they require to be confident that risks of financial fraud are communicated to staff and that actions required are clearly understood. This will guard against reputational as well as financial risk.

Equality & Diversity

13. There are no equality and diversity issues associated with this paper.

Next steps & Communication

14. We would welcome feedback from the discussion above.

Consultation

15. The paper has been reviewed by Lee Hamill, Director of Finance.

Freedom of Information

16. This paper should not be included in open business as its disclosure could substantially prejudice the commercial interests of the University.

Further information

17. Author

Rachael Robertson
Deputy Director of Finance

Presenter

Rachael Robertson
Deputy Director of Finance

Lynne Ramsay
Financial Accountant
FIRST (Financial Information,
Reporting & Strategy Team)
2 July 2020



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

18 August 2020

Report on Whistleblowing Policy and Procedures

Description of paper

1. This paper describes the actions taken to update the Whistleblowing Code of Practice which was last revised in August 2015.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. University Executive are asked to review and comment on the new Whistleblowing Policy and Procedures attached as Appendix B.

Paragraphs 3-9 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Resources

10. There are no specific requests for resources in the paper.

Risk Management

11. Through the implementation and dissemination of the policy and procedures we will provide the Audit and Risk Committee and ultimately Court with the assurances they require to be confident that staff are aware of how to report and are sure that they will be listened to and supported when whistleblowing. This will guard against reputational as well as financial risk.

Equality & Diversity

12. There are no equality and diversity issues associated with this paper.

Next steps & Communication

13. We would welcome feedback from the discussion above.

Consultation

14. The paper has been reviewed by Lee Hamill, Director of Finance.

Further information

15. Author

Rachael Robertson
Deputy Director of Finance
Lynne Ramsay
Financial Accountant FIRST
(Financial Information, Reporting &
Strategy Team)

Presenter

Rachael Robertson
Deputy Director of Finance

30 July 2020

Freedom of Information

16. This paper should not be included in open business as its disclosure could substantially prejudice the commercial interests of the University.



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

18 August 2020

Revised Complaint Handling Procedure (CHP)

Description of paper

1. In line with the requirements of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) this paper sets out the need for agreeing a revised Complaint Handling Procedure (CHP) for the University of Edinburgh. The revised CHP has been prepared fully in line with the SPSO templates and its guidance published on 31 January 2020.

Action requested / recommendation

2. The Executive is asked to give formal approval to the revised CHP in order that it may be adopted at the start of the new academic year and within the deadline specified by the SPSO.

Background and context

3. The SPSO is the regulatory body for complaint handling in the public sector in Scotland, including universities. SPSO published a revised Model CHP for the public sector in Scotland, with a Higher Education specific version which universities must adopt no later than April 2021. It will replace the current CHP which was introduced in March 2013. As the revised CHP addresses some omissions from the previous model, we wish to move to adoption as soon as possible, and ideally for the start of AY 2020/21.

Discussion

4. In presentational terms, the CHP has been changed by the SPSO and is now published in five parts. Previously all information was incorporated in a single document. The documents can be found [via this link](#). Each part is aimed at different audiences:

- a) Introduction & overview;
- b) Information for staff on the model;
- c) Information for staff on the process ('how to handle complaints' and likely to be the section most widely used across the institution);
- d) Governance of complaint handling in UoE;
- e) Information for complainants.

5. This approach has led to much repetition from one part to the next. However, the overall approach to complaints – model, governance and case handling – is unchanged from the CHP which has been in place since March 2013.

6. The new CHP has clarified some points which had caused confusion or been omitted from the previous version, such as the specification of a time limit for a complainant to request Stage 2 investigation after receiving a Stage 1 outcome. There is also enhanced information about issues which are/are not appropriate for consideration through the CHP. These clarifications are to be welcomed and early adoption of the new CHP would therefore be helpful.

7. The section covering 'unacceptable behaviour' by complainants has been removed from the CHP, hence the need for a separate Expected Behaviour Policy for use with appeals, complaints and student conduct cases. This Policy has been developed and will move through a short consultative and committee process.

Resource implications

8. There are no specific resource implications. Complaint numbers have shown a significant increase year on year and in particular during 2019/20, and handling complaints efficiently becomes more important with increased numbers. Greater emphasis on staff training in the new CHP and clarity regarding certain points should assist with efficient and timely resolution of complaints.

Risk management

9. Any complaint poses some risk to the institution, but prompt and effective handling of complaints minimises risk. The CHP provides a robust framework for effective handling of complaints. The SPSO specifies that institutions must adopt the new Model CHP by April 2021 in order to be compliant with their requirements for the sector.

Equality & diversity

10. The CHP recognises the equality and diversity issues potentially arising through complaints, and the related challenges which may be faced by some complainants. The new CHP makes specific reference for the first time to adjustments, and will be made available in BSL routinely as well as other formats on request.

11. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out, and policy and practice have been assessed as robust.

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

12. The Head of Investigations and Student Casework will be responsible on behalf of the Director of Academic Services for communicating and overseeing the implementation of the new CHP. Briefings for Schools and Support Services are already a regular feature of the work of the complaints staff and specific sessions and briefing materials are in preparation for the roll-out, together with revisions to the web pages.

Further information

13. Author

Jean Grier, Head of Investigations
and Student Casework (and SPSO
Liaison Officer)
15 July 2020

Presenter

Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary
(Student Experience)

Freedom of Information

14. This paper is OPEN. The revised CHP and associated information will be published on the web once approved by Committee.



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

18 August 2020

Revisions to Fee Collection - Recovery Process

Description of paper

1. This paper considers the impact of our current student debt recovery process in the context of hybrid teaching and recommends amendment to that process. The change is initially proposed for 2020/21 with the expectation that, following review, the amended process is confirmed for future years.

Recommendation

2. University Executive is recommended to approve the intended approach to amending the change in debt management process outlined; such that students on “on-campus” programmes do not lose IT access mid-semester. The ability to start each semester/academic years would require payment of:

- a minimum of one instalment of fees to move between semesters, and
- the total annual fee prior to matriculation into the next academic year.

Background and context

3. Hybrid teaching responds to the constraints of suppressing the Covid-19 pandemic, by delivering teaching through a combination of digital and on-campus teaching activities. It also provides for students who are unable to attend on-campus immediately to begin their studies remotely. All students will therefore require access to their IT account and our systems in order to process their studies.

Discussion

4. Our usual debt recovery process includes the removal of IT account access as an intermediate step intended to articulate the urgency of the situation and encourage payment. The current collection policy is attached at Appendix A and the payment deadline schedule is at Appendix B.

5. In normal circumstances, an on-campus student can continue to access lectures and submit physical documents for assignment during the period before IT access is re-enabled. However, in the context of hybrid teaching, the removal of IT access would essentially suspend the student from their studies.

6. Personal tutors have expressed concern, in normal circumstances, about the disruption to academic studies associated with removal of IT access mid-semester and articulate the risk to/complexity of progression for the student; assuming that tuition fees are eventually paid.

7. Student Recruitment & Fees Strategy Group (SRFSG) considered a change to tuition fee payment schedules from 3 instalments to 2 instalments in June 2020 and concluded that this would create additional and unexpected pressure on students when their financial position might be impacted by Covid-19. This does not, however, remove the necessity for the University to collect tuition fees in order to provide teaching and to contribute to the financial sustainability of the institution.

Proposal

8. It is proposed that for 2020/21, the removal of IT access is not implemented as a step in the fee collection process.

9. Instead, the ability to move onto study in the next semester requires:

- Full payment or payment of 1st instalment (due c.15 Oct) required to continue study in Semester 2.
- Full payment or payment of 1st and 2nd instalments (due in December) required to continue study in Semester 3 (postgraduates only).
- Full payment required to progress to next academic year.

10. The use of an Authorised Interruption of Studies would allow students facing unexpected financial difficulties to suspend study at a natural “break point” and to recommence more easily. For those students who choose not to request an AIS, we would in effect be introducing a suspension.

11. No change to the process for students on distance-learning programmes is proposed.

12. The process for PGR students would be expected to focus on the “rollover” point between academic years rather than semesters.

13. Academic progression decisions would continue to be taken in the normal way.

Resource implications

14. There are no direct resource implications of this step. There will however need to be some adjustment to current processes in the Income team and in Student systems to implement the suspension of studies decision/need for interruption to resolve financial issues. It is however anticipated that this should be less impactful than allowing the current process to continue in a hybrid environment.

Risk Management

15. The proximity of the start of the new academic year means there is little time to make the changes proposed and to communicate those changes to students. However, given the proposed changes are intended to mitigate an impact of the increased reliance on digital delivery required by Covid-19 the balance of risks appears appropriate.

Equality & Diversity

16. This process solely impacts on self-funded students. As a consequence, the impact of fee collection and any change in the process is most likely to impact (positively or negatively) on international or postgraduate students. In this instance, the processed change should impact positively as it responds to the likelihood of increased financial difficulties for individuals, families and business because of the Covid-19 pandemic and the need to ensure that our process disrupt study as little as possible and allow re-commencement of study as easily as possible.

Next steps & Communications

17. Income section, Colleges and Student System to finalise the detail of the proposed new process.

18. Existing debt cases should be reviewed to consider whether suspension of studies prior to the new semester is appropriate. This should be undertaken in consultation with the relevant college.

19. Publication of new process for students and mapping of process/communications between Fees team, Schools, and Student System should be finalised urgently. Communication should include reference to the wider debt recovery policy and recovery actions.

Consultation

20. The proposals in the paper have been discussed with relevant College leads as well as Student Systems and Fees Team.

Further information

21. Author & Presenter

Tracey Slaven, Deputy Secretary Strategic Planning

Freedom of Information

22. Open



Policy on Collection of Student Fees and Related Charges

Scope

1. This policy relates to all fees and charges payable to the University by current and former students for the use of its facilities and the provision of its services. This includes monies owed in respect of tuition, accommodation, programmes of study, examinations, conferment of degrees, field trip costs, library and other miscellaneous fees and charges, including the payment of money owed to the University in respect of loans, books or other equipment or materials.
2. The University will at all times seek to be sympathetic to, and understanding of, each individual student's financial circumstances. However, for the University to do so, students must engage in dialogue with officers of the University if financial difficulties are being experienced.
3. ***Action to enforce settlement of debt for outstanding fees and charges will be taken in respect of all current and former students who have failed to engage with the University to find a solution to any outstanding debt, or who have failed to honour agreements to pay.***
4. The Finance Department will, at all times, use the student's official email address. It is the student's responsibility to check this regularly.

Students who Experience Financial Difficulties

5. Students experiencing financial difficulties in paying any fees and charges must seek help at the earliest opportunity.
6. For tuition fees and related charges and costs, contact the Income Section, Finance Department - email: feepayment@ed.ac.uk or phone: +44 (0) 131 650 9214.
7. For accommodation matters, contact Accommodation Services - email: accom.rentenquiries@ed.ac.uk or phone: +44 (0) 131 651 2118. In addition, students in University accommodation can speak to a member of the Welfare & Support staff, who will advise them of the options available.
8. For all other fees, charges and costs contact the relevant service provider

Sources of Advice and Support

9. Support is also available from the Edinburgh University Students' Association's (EUSA) Advice Place www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/advice/. The Advice Place can be contacted on +44 (0) 131 650 9225.
10. Discretionary and Hardship Funds do exist, but please note that, while students can apply for help from these Funds, the funds are limited and are designed to provide supplementary support to students in financial difficulties. They are not intended to be a student's primary source of income. Student Administration works closely with EUSA's Advice Place in the administration of these funds and any student experiencing financial difficulty should go to one of the Advice Place offices for information and an application form in the first instance



Fees and Other Related Charges

11. The broad categories of fees and charges that the University maintains are noted below.

Tuition Fees

12. As part of the registration process, each student is required to sign a declaration acknowledging that they are personally liable to the University for payment of tuition and related fees. In the event of any fee-paying body not making payment on their behalf, each student undertakes to make payment of the full amount due to the University. This declaration states "I acknowledge that I am personally liable to the University for the payment of tuition fees. In the event of any fee-paying authority or other person or body not making payment on my behalf, I undertake to make payment of the full amount due to the University."

13. Students must pay tuition fees on time. Details of acceptable payment options and methods, including instalments, can be found at:

www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/finance/students/fees

14. Students who intend their fees to be paid on their behalf must provide evidence that their fees will be paid in full or in part by a recognised fee-paying body such as a research council or other home/overseas body. Student Administration requires written confirmation of funding from a fee-paying body if tuition and related fees are being paid in part or in full on behalf of the student. Please provide this to Student Administration as soon as you receive it. Please note that as data is received electronically from the Student Awards Agency for Scotland and Student Finance (England, Wales and Northern Ireland), Student Administration do not require your award letter for tuition fee purposes if you are funded from these funding bodies.

www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/finance/students/fees/payment-options/support-or-sponsorship

15. In the event that the fee-paying body fails to pay, or unduly delays payment, the student becomes liable for the amount due. In this event, an invoice will be issued to the student. In some cases, if the fee-paying body has consistently failed to meet the University's terms and conditions, advance payment will be sought from the body.

16. Tuition rates and other fees can be viewed at:

www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-funding/tuition-fees/overview

17. In the event of a query or dispute in relation to the actual student fees invoiced (as opposed to the method of payment or payment difficulties), please contact the Fees and Student Support, Student Administration: fees@ed.ac.uk or telephone +44 (0) 0131 650 2230.

18. It should be noted that academic tutors are not empowered to vary fees or agree payment schedules with students on behalf of the University.

19. Appendix A to this paper gives more detail on specific issues.



Accommodation

20. Accommodation offered by Accommodation Services is dependent on the student signing a lease for the period of accommodation and paying in full or agreeing in writing a payment plan to cover the accommodation fees.

21. Accommodation fees can be paid up front as a full payment for the period of accommodation, paid monthly in instalments (normally over 7 or 9 months) or semesterly (three instalments for a nine-month lease, or four instalments for a twelve-month lease). Students will be given an agreed payment plan shortly after the signing of their lease.

22. If a student is living in University-let accommodation, fees must be paid in accordance with the payment schedule agreed with Accommodation Services. If a student does not meet the payments agreed, and does not engage with the Accommodation Services Office to agree an alternative payment plan, action will be taken to recover the debt. Failure to settle accommodation fees will result in students being asked to leave University accommodation, and details of their account will be passed to the University's solicitors for recovery of the debt.

Other Fees and Charges

23. Payments for the use of University facilities or provision of resources must be paid in accordance with the agreed payment terms and conditions. Students should contact the relevant service provider.

Additional Charges

24. The University reserves the right to levy additional charges for the non-payment of fees and cancellation of direct debit instructions, where students have failed to provide the requisite prior notification 20 days before the collection date to the Finance Department.

25. Any tuition fee (and related charges and costs) balance overdue after 30 days from the invoice issue date will be subject to either:

- a) a late payment charge of 3% applied to the balance outstanding at the start of each month until the debt is cleared

or:

- b) late payment charges applied on a sliding scale dependant on the outstanding balance:

balances up to £200	no charge
balances £200 to £1,000	£50 charge
balances £1,000 to £5,000	£100 charge
balances £5,000 to £10,000	£200 charge
balances over £10,000	£300 charge



26. An administration charge of £20 will be levied against a student's account if any direct debit instruction is cancelled without sufficient prior notice to the Finance Department. Cancellation of an arrangement in such circumstances will also result in forfeiture of the concession to pay by instalments, and all remaining sums due for the year in question will become immediately due for payment. The student will then be regarded as having fallen into debt, triggering the process described at Appendix B.

27. An administration charge of £20 will be levied against a student's account if a payment is not honoured by the student's bank, for example through lack of funds at the time. The student will then be regarded as having fallen into debt, triggering the process described at Appendix B.

28. In the event of a query or dispute in relation to any additional charges levied, please contact the Income Section, Finance Department, at feepayment@ed.ac.uk or phone +44 (0) 131 650 9214. Under special circumstances, the 'late payment' charge may be waived in any case where there is clear evidence that the late payment was not the fault of the student.

Debt Recovery Process

29. The debt recovery process will be triggered (a) where an invoice for fees or charges is not settled within thirty days of the date of issue, or (b) where a payment in accordance with an agreed instalment plan is not received. The debt recovery steps are detailed at Appendix B of this paper and will be followed where debt is identified.

30. Steps in relation to student academic fees debt include withdrawal of IT facilities, withdrawal from Programme of Study, and instigation of third party/legal action to recover sums owed.

31. Steps in relation to accommodation fees debt include eviction from accommodation and instigation of third party/legal action to recover sums owed.



Appendix A

1. Deferral or Interruption from a Programme of Study

Where a student has paid fees (all or part) for the relevant academic session and subsequently arranges and is granted an interruption or deferment of study any credit balance (overpayment) will be retained until study resumes or begins. Students on an approved interruption of study remain liable to pay any outstanding fees which may be due at the point of interruption. When the student returns to the University they will be liable for the fee at the current tuition fee level.

2. Early Withdrawal from Accommodation or a Programme of Study

In the event of a student withdrawing from a programme of study, the date of withdrawal will be the date either from which the student notifies their Director of Studies or Programme Director of their intention to withdraw, or the date from which the student advises Student Administration either by e-mail or in writing of their decision to withdraw. For students who withdraw from a programme of study, an assessment and, if appropriate, adjustment in the fees due will be made. This may result in a revised invoice requiring payment, or a refund. For further details, please refer to the tuition fee policy:
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-funding/tuition-fees/undergraduate/fee-policy
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-funding/tuition-fees/postgraduate/fee-policy

If a student leaves University accommodation early, the sum for which he/she remains liable is set out in the Terms and Conditions of Residence for University Accommodation.

Students considering withdrawing from a programme of study are encouraged to contact an academic advisor, Student Administration and Finance staff and if applicable International Office staff so your decision will be based on a clear understanding of the consequences of withdrawing from all classes. In the event of non-payment, action will be taken to recover all amounts due to the University.

3. Annual Registration

Students will NOT be allowed to fully register for the next year of their programme whilst they have unpaid student academic fees due to the University. Students who are not fully registered will not be permitted to pay tuition fees by instalment, and details of non-fully registered students will be passed to College and School offices for attention.

4. Final Year Students

Students with unpaid student academic fees due to the University will NOT be allowed to graduate. In order to attend the graduation ceremony, final year students must make full settlement of fees or other charges due to the University at least twenty-one days before the date of the graduation ceremony. Students who fail to do so will not be eligible to attend for presentation of their award.

5. Former Students

Former/withdrawn students with debts outstanding will be managed through the University's normal debt recovery procedures.



Appendix B

Collection Processes to be followed for Arrears

Late payment – tuition fees

Note: The Finance Department addresses all emails to students' official University email addresses. It is the student's responsibility to check this account on a regular basis.

Day	Activity	Action
1	For Debt Recovery purposes, Day 1 is the day following the date on which a payment is due. For those due to settle an invoice, standard terms are 30 days. In that case, Day 1 will be the 31 st day following the invoice date. For those paying by instalments, Day 1 will be the day following the date on which an instalment was due for collection.	<p>The student's account is deemed to be in arrears, and a late payment charge will be applied to the account. Notification of this additional charge will be made by email to the student. The email will also constitute the first reminder for payment. Students paying by instalment will immediately forfeit the concession to continue paying by instalments, and their entire balance outstanding will become immediately due. Students will be asked to make payment.</p> <p>Students in genuine difficulty are asked to contact the Finance Department to discuss their circumstances. They are also strongly advised to contact the Advice Place (see Paragraph 9).</p>
15	Students whose accounts remain in arrears by Day 15.	Students whose accounts remain in arrears by Day 15 will be advised, by email, that their account remains in arrears, and that their access to University facilities will be removed within five days. This means loss of access to University systems including email, loss of access to buildings and services for which card access is required. Access to facilities will not be restored until arrears of tuition fees are paid in full (and funds have cleared).
30	Students whose accounts remain in arrears by Day 30.	Students whose accounts remain in arrears by Day 30 will be advised in writing, by letter, that their status as a matriculated student of the University is being withdrawn pending full payment of tuition fee arrears. The University reserves the right to recover any unpaid sums due through collection agencies and/or by legal process. Any additional costs incurred as a consequence of such action will be charged to the student's account.



Late Payment – Accommodation Fees

Day	Activity	Action
1	Process Direct Debit/Credit Card for payment	Payment due in accordance with payment plan agreed at lease signing
5	Notification to Finance that Direct Debit/Credit Card declined	Letter sent to the student's term time address advising payment declined and requesting payment, and reminding the student that legal action will be taken in the event of non-payment.
13	Check debtors tracking report; if no action, the Accommodation Manager is advised of the situation.	Accommodation Manager visits student, advising that a Notice to Quit (NTQ) will be issued if not resolved, and that legal action will commence; Director of Studies will also be advised. The student is advised to contact Accommodation Services Finance section.
21	Check debtors tracking report.	Senior Accommodation managers meet to issue NTQ and pursue legal action.
29	Check debtors tracking report.	Send NTQ and legal letter to student, letter to Director of Studies. Advise the University Finance Department Income Manager.
58	If no response, action Notice To Quit	Evict student if still in accommodation, inform student of imminent court action, and pass details to Solicitors

If the student is nearing the end of the lease period and the Notice To Quit would not be effective, the case is passed to the Solicitors on day 29 as no Notice To Quit will be issued.

No references will be provided to private landlords for a student that has an accommodation debt.

PAYMENT TIMETABLE

New students

	in full	instalments				
Programme start / Matriculate during	Student fees full payment	1st payment (*exclusions below) - 50% of tuition fees	Direct Debit Mandate - complete online	Instalment Confirmation letter	next Instalment Date	final Instalment Date
	FINAL DATE	FINAL DATE	FINAL DATE	FINAL DATE	by direct debit	by direct debit
August-2020	15/10/2020	03/10/2020	15/10/2020	15/11/2020	03/12/2020	03/02/2021
September-2020	15/10/2020	03/10/2020	15/10/2020	15/11/2020	03/12/2020	03/02/2021
October-2020	15/10/2020	03/10/2020	15/10/2020	15/11/2020	03/12/2020	03/02/2021
November-2020	15/12/2020	03/12/2020	15/12/2020	15/01/2021	03/02/2021	03/04/2021
December-2020	15/01/2021	03/01/2021	15/01/2021	15/02/2021	03/03/2021	03/05/2021
January-2021	15/02/2021	03/02/2021	15/02/2021	15/03/2021	03/04/2021	03/06/2021
February-2021	15/03/2021	03/03/2021	15/03/2021	15/04/2021	03/05/2021	03/07/2021
March-2021	15/04/2021	03/04/2021	15/04/2021	15/05/2021	03/06/2021	03/08/2021
April-2021	15/05/2021	03/05/2021	15/05/2021	15/06/2021	03/07/2021	03/09/2021
May-2021	15/06/2021	03/06/2021	15/06/2021	15/07/2021	03/08/2021	03/10/2021
June-2021	15/07/2021	03/07/2021	15/07/2021	15/08/2021	03/09/2021	03/11/2021
July-2021	15/08/2021	03/08/2021	15/08/2021	15/09/2021	03/10/2021	03/12/2021

Continuing students

Students who previously paid by direct debit the first instalment (50%) will be by direct debit from the nominated bank account.

	in full	instalments				
Programme start	Student fees full payment	1st Instalment (*exclusions below) - 50% of tuition fees	Direct Debit Mandate - complete online	Instalment Confirmation letter	2nd Instalment Date	3rd Instalment Date
	FINAL DATE	by direct debit	FINAL DATE	FINAL DATE	by direct debit	by direct debit
August-2020	15/10/2020	03/10/2020	15/10/2020	15/11/2020	03/12/2020	03/02/2021
September-2020	15/10/2020	03/10/2020	15/10/2020	15/11/2020	03/12/2020	03/02/2021
October-2020	15/10/2020	03/10/2020	15/10/2020	15/11/2020	03/12/2020	03/02/2021
November-2020	15/12/2020	03/12/2020	15/12/2020	15/01/2021	03/02/2021	03/04/2021
December-2020	15/01/2021	03/01/2021	15/01/2021	15/02/2021	03/03/2021	03/05/2021
January-2021	15/02/2021	03/02/2021	15/02/2021	15/03/2021	03/04/2021	03/06/2021
February-2021	15/03/2021	03/03/2021	15/03/2021	15/04/2021	03/05/2021	03/07/2021
March-2021	15/04/2021	03/04/2021	15/04/2021	15/05/2021	03/06/2021	03/08/2021
April-2021	15/05/2021	03/05/2021	15/05/2021	15/06/2021	03/07/2021	03/09/2021
May-2021	15/06/2021	03/06/2021	15/06/2021	15/07/2021	03/08/2021	03/10/2021
June-2021	15/07/2021	03/07/2021	15/07/2021	15/08/2021	03/09/2021	03/11/2021
July-2021	15/08/2021	03/08/2021	15/08/2021	15/09/2021	03/10/2021	03/12/2021

Online learners: the online learner mandate must be completed as the direct debit mandate due dates and instalments must be paid by the instalment due dates - as above.

note* The option to pay by instalment is not available to:

1. Any student with fees outstanding from previous years;
2. Any student who has repeatedly defaulted on instalments in the past;
3. Visiting students admitted to full-time study for one semester only;
4. Students for whom the tuition fees charged are £500 or less;
5. Students billed for modular fees (not dissertation) or other tuition related charges;
6. Sponsors (not family or friends) - invoice terms are strictly 30 days.



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

18 August 2020

REF 2021 update and route to submission

Description of paper

1. This paper lays out the changes to the REF2021 exercise since lockdown.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. This paper is for information only.

Paragraphs 3-17 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Next steps & Communications

18. All Units of Assessment are aware of the project deadlines, both internal and external. A version of the project timeline is kept on the SharePoint page for the REF project.

19. Academic members of staff being submitted in REF2021 who currently do not have a REF-eligible output will be contacted at the beginning of August with a reminder that they are invited to declare any circumstances that might have affected them in the period 2014-2020.

Consultation

20. The UK REF consultation response was coordinated by the REF team in GaSP and the REF Board.

21. In recognition of ongoing uncertainty about the effects of Covid-19, UK REF have set a review date of November 2020. This will consider the level of disruption being experienced, and whether further contingency arrangements for the exercise may be necessary. Any further changes from that date will be highlighted to REF Board for consultation.

Further information

22. Author

Dr Charlotte Brady
REF Project Manager

Presenter

Professor Jonathan Seckl
Senior Vice-Principal

Freedom of Information

23. Closed, as business critical and competitive until REF is submitted.



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

18 August 2020

Guidance on Recommended Student Technology

Description of paper

1. This paper provides the University Executive with an update on the type of technology students might need, to ensure the best possible teaching experience, in line with the necessary move to hybrid teaching.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. The University Executive is requested to note the content of this paper.

Paragraphs 3-27 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Risk Management

28. This proposal aims to mitigate the risk around the impact of moving to a hybrid model through providing advice to students on the technology that best suits their study with the University; and providing support for those students who do not have, for whatever reason, access to their own, suitable technology providing a range of laptop loan options.

Equality & Diversity

29. An EqIA has been undertaken in parallel with the proposal and will be published on the university website.

Paragraph 30 has been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Consultation

31. The work to produce this paper involved representatives from all three Colleges, Lisa Dawson, Student Systems Operations and the Student ART Workstream.

Further information

32. Author

Jo Craiglee
Director, Knowledge Strategy &
IS Planning

Tony Weir
Director, IT Infrastructure
July 2020

Presenter

Gavin McLachlan
CIO & Librarian to the University

Freedom of Information

33. This paper is closed.



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

18 August 2020

**People and Money Systems and HR/Finance Transformation
Programme Update**

Description of paper

1. This paper provides the University Executive with an update on the People and Money System, Finance Transformation and HR Transformation Programmes. Following the decision to stand the Service Excellence Board down a single report on a monthly basis is provided to the University Executive.
2. This paper provides an update on:
 - The next steps in the people transition process commencing end of August to ensure the new Finance Operations and Procurement Service teams are in place by March 2021 in advance of the implementation of phase 3 of the People and Money system; The focus and preparation across our HR end-to-end processes in advance of the implementation of phase 1 of the People and Money system;
 - The latest programme status update from the People and Money programme, progress being made and focus on one key area of risk.

Action Requested/Recommendation

3. The University Executive is asked to **note** the paper.

Paragraphs 4-34 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Further Information

35. Author
Barry Neilson
Director
Service Excellence Programme

Freedom of Information

36. This paper is **closed**.