

UNIVERSITY OF EXETER
EDUCATION BOARD

A meeting of the Education Board was held on 05 October 2022 via Microsoft Teams.

MEMBERS: Professor R Freathy (Chair)

L Barnes	R Johnstone
Professor N Byott	Dr C Keenan
G Carey-Jones	Professor N King
Professor B Cooper	C Kiley
Dr S Cooper	J Liversedge
J Crotty	Professor V Nayak
Professor A Curnow	Professor C Parkin Hughes
Dr J Florêncio	Dr M Reza
Professor I Fussell	T Rushforth
Professor C Gallop	Professor D Russel
Professor M Gibson	H Sanderson
G Griškevičienė	Professor M Scott
K Glide	Dr D Wilkerson
A Hameed	Dr R Winsley
Professor B Hawkins	O Young
A Hume	

APOLOGIES: Professor B Cooper, J Crotty, and A Hume.

MINUTE TAKER: H Cameron, Senior Quality and Standards Advisor

IN ATTENDANCE: E Cordy *vice* J Crotty (present for the whole meeting).

A Janes, as a previous Senator, to provide handover/transition (present for the whole meeting).

C Taylor, Senior Quality & Standards Advisor (present for the discussions recorded under minute 22-23.07).

H Cameron, Senior Quality & Standards Advisor (present for the discussions recorded under minute 22-23.08)

The full papers referenced below may be found on the [Education Board webpages](#).

A summary of the actions referenced below may be found on the [Education Board webpages](#).

22-23.01 Welcome

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, including the members who were joining the Board for the first time;
 - a. The four new academic representatives from each Faculty, as well as the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellors for Education (APVCE) and Senior Education Partners (SEP) - see the membership for details (EDB_22-23_02C).
 - b. Rachael Johnstone Associate Dean for Taught Students (Degree Apprenticeships)
 - c. Dr Maisha Reza, Senator
 - d. Georgi Griškevičienė. Students' Union President, Exeter
 - e. Jack Liversedge VP Education, Students' Guild
 - f. Charlie Kiley, Academic Communities and Representation Manager, Students' Guild

1. It was noted that the Quality and Standards Team were now supporting this Board. Thanks were extended to Helen Cameron and Catherine Taylor for their dedicated support in this transitional period.

2. Thanks were extended to Abi Wooding for her much-valued support in her role as the Senior Policy Advisor to the Faculty Office (as was) throughout a number of years. Particular thanks were noted for her encyclopaedic knowledge of the TQA manual and dedicated support to the Faculties; the Board wished her the best of luck in her new role as a Deputy Education Partner, she will be greatly missed.

3. Thanks were also extended to Alex Janes for his valued support to the Education Board (formally the Taught Programmes Faculty Board) as well as the Sub-Committee, as a representative of Senate. Particular thanks were given for his work on Academic Misconduct. It was noted that Alex was in attendance to support a handover to the Senate representatives for the 2022/2023 academic year.

22-23.02 Minutes and Matters Arising

1. The minutes of the meeting held on 08 June 2022 were **CONFIRMED** (EDB/22-23/01A).

2. The Action Log was **CONFIRMED** (EDB/22-23/01B).

3. It was noted that the Dean's Report will be further reviewed and restructured (ID-22-7), and that two actions related to condonement in INTO were closed (ID-22-2 and ID22-28). The Chair noted that one action regarding Academic Personal Tutoring was outstanding from the outgoing Students' Union (SU) and Guild representatives, and as such, he would meet with the incoming representatives,

particularly the SU President, to discuss this further (ID-22-6). The Chair noted that the other actions will be progressed once the transition of the Quality and Standards team support to the Education Board (and related functions) has been completed.

22-23.03 Terms of Reference and Membership for 2022/23

1. The Board **CONSIDERED** the Education Board Terms of Reference (EDB/22-23/02A).
2. The Chair invited members to consider whether an explicit reference to Teaching Excellence Action Plans (TEAP) and Teaching Excellence Monitoring Meetings (TEM) should be added to the Terms of Reference to align with the guidance provided in the Quality Review and Enhancement Framework. Members discussed that sharing of TEAPs was critical to the process; they are living documents.
3. **Action: The Education Policy Unit to add an explicit reference to TEAP and TEM processes to align with the guidance provided in the Quality Review and Enhancement Framework.**
4. **Action: The AVPCEs to ensure recommendations and actions within TEAPs are communicated within Departments.**
5. The Board **RECEIVED** the Terms of Reference of the Education and Student Experience Executive Committee for information and to aid comparison /alignment (EDB/22-23/02B).
6. The Chair noted that this was drafted in June/July 2022 and will have moved on somewhat.
7. The Board **RECEIVED** the Education Board Membership (EDB/22-23/02C).
8. It was also noted that the membership will be further updated once the Cornwall Education Partner vacancy is filled, and when one final HAAS Faculty Representative is known. Members discussed that the reference to the Cornwall Education Partner was unclear.
9. Appropriate alternations to the membership were discussed, such as clarity of reference to the Cornwall Education Partner.
10. **Action: The Education Policy Unit to revise how the Cornwall Education Partner is displayed in the membership, and to liaise with the Dean for Taught Students to ensure this role also includes the Truro Campus, and if**

it does not, to ensure Truro is represented through an additional representative.

11. **Action: The Education Policy Unit to add Elaine Cordy to the membership.**
12. **Action: The Education Policy Unit to amend the membership to state that Charlie Kiley is a representative of the Guild, not the Students' Union, and to remove any other references to "FXU"; this should be the Students' Union (SU).**
13. The Board **RECEIVED** the Postgraduate Research Board Terms of Reference and Membership (EDB/22-23/02D).
14. It was noted that the Postgraduate Research Board Terms of Reference and Membership had been split out from the Education Board Terms of Reference and Membership; in previous years they were grouped together.
15. It was noted that the Education Board Sub Committee Terms of Reference and membership will likely be presented to the November Education Board and then on to Senate, depending on when the first Sub-Committee of the academic year has taken.

22-23.04 Dean's Report

1. The Board **RECEIVED** a report from the Dean for Taught Students (EDB/22-23/03).
2. The Chair noted that the structure of the Dean's Report will change for future meetings, with a proposed move to annual reports from key areas in part 2 of the agenda, allowing an annual review of an area in its totality.
3. The Chair acknowledged that the report did not touch on the concerns that have been raised by Faculties regarding how the timetable operated at the start of the year, through the role out of the new system. The Chair recognised that the University is aware of the issue and hopes it will be soon resolved. It was noted that there may be a review of the project, including the gathering of lessons learned. Members noted the need to think about timetabling policies more broadly; i.e the impact on both staff and students in terms of those who are caregivers, those undertaking the early and late teaching slots, and also the impact upon students with Individual Learning Plans (ILPs).
4. **Action: The Dean for Taught Students to report back to the DVC Education and Student Experience and Director of Education Services and Student Experience to ensure that a review of the timetabling project considers**

broader issues, and a discussion of the policy housed within the Timetabling website, which was last written/updated in 2015.

5. Item 5 in the report was emphasized to members as a change to processes; for change of circumstances approvals, there is now more delegated support. The Chair noted, and members agreed, there was still a need to still gather data/metrics on the trends i.e data on why students withdraw.
6. Item 11, an update on Teaching Enhanced Learning (TEL), was discussed in relation to the support provided by TEL to academics, including consideration of how to ensure the best and most effective support is provided.
7. **Action. The Dean for Taught Students to liaise with the Director of Teaching Excellence and Enhancement, to ensure they are engaged in a review of provision from TEL. In the short-term, the Dean for Taught Students should also liaise with Matt Newcombe regarding his work on the alignment of TEL to Faculties.**
8. Concerns were raised about the number of vacancies in the Student Employability and Success (SEAS) team and the support available to Faculties, linked to item 13.
9. **Action: The Dean for Taught Students to contact Paul Blackmore regarding SEAS vacancies and available provisions to support Faculties, and to report back to the Education Board once known.**
10. It was also noted that the Staff-Student Liaison Committee (SSLC) reconfiguration was not clear, particularly how this will work in practice. The Associate Dean for Taught Students noted that a communication had been sent to APVCEs.
11. **Action: The Associate Dean for Taught Students (Oli Young) to reach out to Jake Hibbard in Quality and Standards to facilitate a talk to APVCEs to give clarity on SSLC reconfiguration and identify support requirements.**
12. The Dean for Taught Students (Degree Apprenticeships) and Director of the new Centre for Degree Apprenticeships was introduced and provided an update on key areas of Degree Apprenticeship activity. It was noted that the focus of the Centre will be on a community of practice, commonality of approach, to champion apprenticeships internally and externally to meet the aims of Strategy 2030, working with members of the Broad to develop the Centre's strategy and co-create a space for innovation in the area of apprenticeships. Please refer to the Dean's Report, item 9, for more information.

Part 1

22-23.05 Taught Representation Summaries

1. The Board **RECEIVED** reports from the Students' Union on taught student representations for the 2022/2023 academic year (EDB/22-23/04A).
2. The Chair thanked the SU President for their detailed report and noted that for this Board, the key areas of focus for this Board would be those related to the education portfolio and encouraged members to support this activity.
3. It was noted that Personal Tutoring is a very personal relationship and that further guidance for Personal Tutors could be advantageous. The Chair noted that there was an opportunity, as a result of the restructure, for Faculties to define the Personal Tutor role and create a tailored department-specific approach.
4. **Action: The Dean for Taught Students and SU President to further discuss the Personal Tutor role, including a discussion of any appropriate guidance that could be developed to aid approaches.**
5. The Board **RECEIVED** reports from the Students' Guild focusing on taught student representations for the 2022/2023 academic year (EDB/22-23/04B).
6. The VP Education noted the Guild is undergoing a period of change with new structures this year, and that recruitment for Department Officers (2-4 per department) is ongoing. It noted that Medicine does not follow a departmental structure. The VP Education acknowledged the impact of ongoing changes and recruitments on the Faculties and welcomed feedback.
7. The impact on the co-creation of TEAPs at the start of the academic term was noted, although it was also noted that there are other opportunities for Exeter students to feed into TEAP creation throughout the academic year.
8. The VP Education emphasized the need to empower representatives as change makers and leaders, and to empower students to themselves make changes.
9. The Chair thanked the VP Education for their detailed report and noted that there are lots of people ready and waiting to support these initiatives but that a clear understanding of Guild structures and personnel is key.
10. The APVCE Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy (ESE) noted the importance of the work proposed on Academic Misconduct, and the need to

collaborate on this so that students are best supported, as it can be complex and stressful for all involved. The Chair agreed that this was a key area of collaborative work.

11. The VP Education noted that page two of their report included a structure within the guild that was new for this academic year.

22-23.06 Revised Mitigation Policy and Process for 2022/23

1. The Board **RECEIVED** a report from the Dean for Taught Students regarding the final approved Mitigation policy for the 2022/23 academic year (EDB/22-23/05 and 05A-E).
2. The Chair noted that this paper was already approved via Chair's Action, and highlighted the extensive consultation undertaken during the development of this revised policy, as well as the onward communications to staff and students, including face-face events for students.
3. The Chair noted the commitment to review this implementation within the course of the year, likely via the Mitigation User Group, as well as a full end of year review.
4. The Chair highlighted that the grounds for mitigation and types of evidence that can be submitted have been widened, including evidence from academic staff. It was further noted that guidance for this will be provided to staff to add clarity to the expectations of what academics could be asked to provide and elevate academic concerns.
5. Members were invited to **CONSIDER** initial feedback on the implementation of the revised Mitigation policy so that this can be fed into the going implementation of the policy for 2023/2024, ahead of the proposed end of year review.
6. It was clarified that "self-certification" means the same "evidence-free" as referred to in the policy, and that Degree Apprenticeships cannot submit via eBART.
7. The Chair noted that communications will be sent to APVCEs and SEPs this week, including a copy of the communication and FAQs sent to staff so that everyone has sight of all information. The Chair encouraged the Associate Dean for Taught Students (Degree Apprenticeships), and any others who may have exceptions such as those programmes with Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies, to flag if any further communications or specific FQAs need to be developed.

8. **Action: The Dean for Taught Students and Education Policy Unit to bring these policy revisions back to either this Board, the Sub-Committee, or another Workshop later in this academic year to consider any other changes which could be implemented in 2023/2024, linked to the proposed end of the year review.**
9. The VP Education acknowledged the work required to develop the policy but noted that, from the Guild's perspective, the data suggests that students value self-certification for many reasons and that there could be a risk of disproportionate impact on students with disabilities. The Chair noted that further information about the Equality Impact Assessment had been included within a longer set of FAQs, which also explain how the consistency of application of the policy across the Faculties, especially in terms of exceptional three-week extensions in severe or complex cases.
10. The SU President highlighted the concerns linked to the cost-of-living crisis and the problems students will face academically. It was acknowledged that the policy now includes wording related to mitigation evidence related to financial hardship, and the Chair noted that those students facing long-term financial hardship should look for support through the Success for All fund, and other University initiatives. The Chair noted that the University would have to remain open to the possibility of this policy being reviewed within the academic year in relation to the impact of the cost-of-living crisis.
11. It was noted that there will be an item in the upcoming Senate meeting (November 2022) on the cost-of-living crisis.
12. It was also noted that it was critical for academic tutors and module staff to work with students to help them prioritise their workloads, manage their time ahead of assessment periods, and understand assessment schedules, in order to help support these policy changes and ensure students can succeed.

22-23.07 Degree Outcomes

1. The Board **RECEIVED** a report from the Chair and Quality and Standards on the work of the Degree Outcomes Steering Group, including on the preparation of a Supplemental Report to the already published Degree Outcomes Statement 2022, and on the provisional UG Degree Classifications Summary Report 2022 with overview, development and next steps. (EDB/22-23/06 and 06A, 06B and 06C respectively).
2. The Board **APPROVED** the Terms of Reference and membership of the Degree Outcomes Steering Group for 2022/23 (EDB/22-23/06A – Appendix 1).

3. The Chair noted that the Degree Outcomes Steering Group would also welcome new members, especially data experts and enthusiasts.
4. The Senior Quality and Standards Advisor (Degree Standards and Outcomes) noted that the first draft of the Supplemental Report to the Degree Outcomes Statement 2022 (EDB/22-23/06B and Appendix 1) and the Degree Outcomes Summary Report would also be reported to Senate and Council and include data for the 2020/21 academic year. The Supplemental Statement focuses on the University's response to the new commitments from UUK and GuildHE, aimed at addressing 'unexplained' degree grade inflation, as outlined in the paper.
5. The Senior Quality and Standards Advisor (Degree Standards and Outcomes) provided a presentation regarding the draft provisional Undergraduate Degree Classifications Summary Report (EDB/22-23/06C), and the following points were noted;
 - a. Introduction:
 - i. The report covers the five academic years up to and including 2021/22, in line with OfS and UKSCQA requirements and expectations.
 - ii. It is currently 'provisional' pending the addition of final Ref/Def results and Dean's Exceptions, with the version dated 29th September 2022 including 96.6% of expected results.
 - iii. It covers undergraduate and integrated masters only, excluding BMBS, with the postgraduate taught version to be presented in Term 2.
 - iv. It does not yet include sector-level comparisons, as HESA/Jisc data for 2021/22 will not be available until March 2023
 - v. It is, however, 'live' and monitored weekly to identify any changes and enable updates to be presented.
 - b. Main presentation:
 - i. A link to a PDF of the full report, held on the MI Data Hub, is embedded in the overview report. Please contact facultyoffice@exeter.ac.uk with any access issues.
 - ii. Observation 1: The award of first-class degrees by the University decreased by three percentage points in 2021/22, after two academic years of growth.
 - iii. Observation 2: First-class awarding patterns continue to vary between former Colleges, now Faculties, with CMH/EMS and SSIS not mirroring the institutional level decrease.
 - iv. Observation 3: The first-class awarding gap between UK-domiciled and International students has increased by four percentage points,

suggesting it is a contributory factor in the institutional level decrease.

- v. Observation 4: The first-class awarding gap between students that *disclosed* a disability and those that *did not* has reduced by four percentage points and is now closed, following previous progress made in closing the 'good honours degree' awarding gap.
 - vi. Observation 5: The first-class awarding gap between students from black and minority ethnic and white ethnic groups had reduced to 12 percentage points by 2020/21 but widened to 14 percentage points in 2021/22.
- c. Concluding comments:
- i. The 'provisional' data indicates progress being made towards addressing 'unexplained' grade inflation, post the COVID-19 pandemic, in line with OfS and UUK expectations (see agenda item EDB/22-23/6B).
 - ii. The decrease in the award of 1st class degrees and consequent increase in the award of lower degree classifications appears to be more marked amongst the following groups of underrepresented students:
 - 1. Mature students.
 - 2. Students from ethnic minorities.
 - 3. Female students.
 - 4. International students, including INTO progressors.
 - 5. Students from the areas with the lowest young participation rates.
 - 6. Students from areas with the highest levels of deprivation.
 - iii. Although some decrease was observed prior to the addition of Ref/Def results, it has become more noticeable since raising questions about the proportions of different demographic groups of students entering the Ref/Def periods and the impact on their outcomes.
 - iv. This may be a temporary fluctuation, however, if such trends persist it could pose challenges in relation to the reduction of 1st class awarding gaps for disadvantaged groups of students.
 - v. The ability and capacity to undertake more detailed analyses of the available data remains a significant limiting factor and although considerable progress was made by Academic and Professional Services colleagues during 2021/22, there is more work to do (see agenda item EDB/22-23/6A).

6. **Action: The Senior Quality and Standards Advisor (Degree Outcomes and Standards) to email members to invite comments on the draft Supplemental Report to the Degree Outcomes Statement 2022 (EDB/22-23/06B) and to make comments or suggestions about further degree**

outcomes data and analyses for consideration by the Degree Outcomes Steering Group, ahead of Senate (paper deadline of 21 October for the November meeting).

22-23.08 Faculty Programme Enhancement Process (FPEP)

1. The Board **CONSIDERED** the final FPEP policy from the Chair and Quality and Standards (EDB/22-23/07 and 07A and 07B).
2. The Chair highlighted the extent of consultation on the proposed policy and invited members to raise any concerns with the proposed pilot. No concerns were raised.
3. The Board **APPROVED** a pilot year during the 2022/23 academic year, with a view to receiving lessons learned/outcomes of the pilot during 2023, ahead of a proposal for full implementation.
4. It was noted that communications would be sent to APVCEs and SEPs with further details following this meeting.

22-23.09 Education Board Priorities 2022/23

1. The Board was invited to **CONSIDER** the priorities of the Education Board for the 2022/23 academic year (EDB/22-23/08A) following the meeting, and to raise any points for consideration via email, sending these to facultyoffice@exeter.ac.uk
2. The Chair noted that this can also be reviewed at the first Education Sub-Committee meeting of the academic year.
3. The following was proposed for the consideration of incorporation within these priorities: ILPs only apply to teaching and assessment but really do not cover processes on enrolment, module choice, and other administrative aspects of a student's life. This, in particular, is not sufficient for some students with certain neurodivergent diagnoses. Work should be considered to better assess and mitigate the barriers that neurodivergent students may encounter when engaging with our wider administrative procedures, including ways in which students with certain ILPs may have better support and exceptions when engaging in module choice.
4. The Board **RECEIVED** a report from the Education and Student Experience Executive Committee for information and to aid comparison/alignment (EDB/22-23/08B).

22-23.10 Chair's Action

1. The Board **RECEIVED** amendments to the TQA (EDB/22-23/09A and EDB/22-23/09B) approved under Chair's Action following the June meeting of the Board.
2. The **DVC (EDUCATION AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE)** approved:
 - a) Amendments to the Quality Review and Enhancement Framework – Annual Module Review (AMR) (EDB/22-23/09A)
 - b) Amendments to the Quality Review and Enhancement Framework – Teaching Excellence Action Plans (TEAPs) and Teaching Excellence Monitoring (TEM) guidance (EDB/22-23/09B)

22-23.11 Amendments to the University Calendar/ TQA Manual

1. The Board **CONSIDERED** proposed amendments to the University TQA Manual (EDB/22-23/10A-E).
2. Following this, the Board **RECOMMENDED TO THE DVC (EDUCATION AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE)** approval of the amendments to the;
 - a) Academic Partnerships Handbook (EDB/22-23/10A)
 - b) Credit and Qualifications Framework (EDB/22-23/10B)
 - c) Special Provisions for Degree Apprenticeships (EDB/22-23/10C)
 - d) Accreditation of Prior Learning (EDB/22-23/10D)
 - e) Unsatisfactory Student Progress and Engagement (EDB/22-23/10E)
3. Following this, the Board **APPROVED ON BEHALF OF THE SENATE** the amendments included in item b above to the Regulations Governing Academic.

22-23.12 Programme Approval

1. The Board **RECEIVED** a report on Programme Approval (EDB/22-23/11).

22-23.13 External Examiner Nominations

1. The Board **APPROVED ON BEHALF OF THE SENATE** the Nominations and extensions to External Examiners appointments (EDB/22-23/12A and B).

22-23.14 Academic Development and Skills

1. The Board **RECEIVED** a report on Programme Approval (EDB/22-23/11).

22-23.15 Boards of Study

1. The Board **RECEIVED** the minutes for the INTO Academic Board held on 27 June 2022 (EDB/22-23/14).

22-23.16 Any Other Business

1. No points were raised.

22-23.17 Date of next meeting

1. The next meeting will be on Wednesday, 30 November 2022 at 14:00.