



University
of Dundee

Reflective
Analysis 2018

ELIR4



Introductory remarks



This Reflective Analysis captures the key features of our approach to quality assurance and enhancement and sets out our evaluations and conclusions from reflecting on our strategic approach to enhancement of the student learning experience. There is a particular focus on our contextual themes of student engagement, internationalisation and 'One Dundee', which is the term that we use for harmonising practices so that we take a consistent approach across the University.

The University is committed to excellence in learning and teaching and ensuring that our students have a first-class learning experience within a research-intensive environment. Our teaching provision also has a strong focus on the professions, and approximately half of all students graduate with professionally-accredited degrees.

We have a long-standing commitment to student engagement and working in partnership with our students. A culture of good relations between staff and students leads to effective formal and informal feedback practices and high levels of student satisfaction. We also have a strong community ethos. This is reflected in our approach to working together as a community of learners, scholars and practitioners, our robust links with the local Tayside and Fife communities and our commitment to widening access to higher education.

Our Reflective Analysis was developed in consultation with staff and students, and individuals were encouraged to reflect on University practices and processes, contribute to the construction of the Reflective Analysis and identify enhancement opportunities. The many individuals who contributed to its development are acknowledged at the end of the document.

The structure of the Reflective Analysis is aligned with the format described by QAA Scotland in the Enhancement-Led Institutional Review Handbook, 4th Edition. The approach to its structuring and development was also informed by the 'Preparing for Enhancement-Led Institutional Review' guidance document developed by Prof Ian Pirie on behalf of QAA Scotland.

The narrative is supported by a series of 'Focus On' mini case studies that are presented as blue speech bubbles. Areas that relate to evaluation and forward planning are shaded in beige. The symbol  adjacent to a hyperlink denotes a link to a webpage that is hosted and managed by the University. The symbol  adjacent to a hyperlink denotes a link to a webpage that is hosted externally. Appendices that contain the web links and abbreviations used in this document are provided. There is also an executive summary at the beginning of the Reflective Analysis which pulls together the outcomes from our evaluations for each chapter.

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Table of contents

	Page
Executive summary	1
1. Contextual information about the University, its student population and the review	13
1.1 Summary information about the University	13
Background	13
University structures	13
Student representation structures	15
Governance	16
University vision and strategy	17
Business Transformation and a One Dundee approach	19
Reflections on structural changes since 2015	19
1.2 Composition, key trends and anticipated changes in the student population	19
The student population	19
Entry tariffs	23
Widening access	23
Student retention	23
Student achievement	26
1.3 Preparation for ELIR	27
Development of the Reflective Analysis	27
The Advance Information Set	29
Contextualised themes for the Reflective Analysis	30
1.4 Follow-up to the previous ELIR	30
Outcome from ELIR 3	30
Actions taken in response to ELIR 3	31
1.5 Engaging students in the ELIR preparations	32
2. Enhancing the student learning experience	37
2.1 Evaluation summary	37
2.2 Student representation and engagement	37
Approach to student representation	37
Student partnership agreements	40
Responding to student views	40
Evaluation of our approach to student representation and engagement	46

2.3	Recognising and responding to equality and diversity in the student population	49
	Approach to inclusive practice	49
	Widening access	51
	Students studying at a distance	52
	Evaluation of our approach to recognising and responding to equality and diversity in the student population	52
2.4	Supporting students in their learning at each stage of the learner journey	55
	Pre-admission	55
	Arrival at the University	56
	Study skills support	56
	Pastoral support	57
	Retention and progression	58
	Participation and engagement	59
	Assessment and feedback	63
	Employability and enterprise	63
	Entrepreneurship	65
	Evaluation of our approach to supporting students in their learning at each stage of the learner journey	66
2.5	Postgraduate taught and research student experience	76
	Taught postgraduate students	76
	Research students	76
	Evaluation of our approach to enhancing the postgraduate taught and research student experience	79
2.6	The learning environment	83
	The Library and Learning Centre	83
	The Centre for Technology and Innovation in Learning	86
	Information technology	86
	Learning spaces	87
	Evaluation of our approach to enhancing the learning environment	87
2.7	Effectiveness of the approach to enhancing the student learning experience	89
	Good practice identified through reflection and evaluation of our approach to enhancing the student learning experience	89
	Areas for development identified through reflection and evaluation of our approach to enhancing the student learning experience	91
	Forward planning	91

3.	Strategy and practice for enhancing learning and teaching	95
3.1	Evaluation summary	95
3.2	Strategic approach to enhancement	95
	University Strategy 2012-17	95
	Approach to quality enhancement within the University Strategy to 2022	96
	Evaluation of our strategic approach to enhancement	96
3.3	Impact of the national Enhancement Themes and related activity on policy and practice	97
	Engagement with the Enhancement Themes	97
	Evaluation of the impact of the national Enhancement Themes and related activity on policy and practice	98
3.4	Approach to identifying and sharing good practice	99
	The Academic Skills Centre	99
	The Learning and Teaching Development Forum	100
	The Distance Learning Forum	101
	Learning and teaching awards and the Discovery Days	101
	University committees	101
	Participation in national and international events for sharing practice	101
	Evaluation of our approach to identifying and sharing good practice	102
3.5	Engaging, developing and supporting staff	104
	Staff development	104
	Recognition and reward of excellence in learning and teaching	106
	Evaluation of our approach to engaging, developing and supporting staff	108
3.6	Effectiveness of the approach to implementing institutional strategies and enhancing learning and teaching	110
	Good practice identified through reflection and evaluation of our approach to implementing institutional strategies and enhancing learning and teaching	110
	Areas for development identified through reflection and evaluation of our approach to implementing institutional strategies and enhancing learning and teaching	111
	Forward planning	111
4.	Academic standards and quality processes	115
4.1	Evaluation summary	115
4.2	Key features of the University's approach to managing quality and setting, maintaining, reviewing and assessing academic standards	115
	Organisational structures for the management of quality and academic standards	115
	Annual review of taught provision	117

	Periodic review of taught provision	118
	Accreditation of programmes by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies	120
	Approval of new taught provision	120
	Changes to taught provision	122
	Management of assessment	124
	External examining	125
	Evaluation of our approach to managing quality and setting, maintaining, reviewing and assessing academic standards	126
4.3	Use of external reference points in quality processes	130
	Evaluation of our use of external reference points in quality processes	131
4.4	Summary of actions taken since ELIR 3	131
4.5	Approach to using data to inform decision-making and evaluation	132
	Summary of our approach to using data to inform decision-making and evaluation	132
4.6	Effectiveness of the arrangements for securing academic standards	133
	Good practice identified through reflection and evaluation of our approach to securing academic standards and quality assurance	133
	Areas for development identified through reflection and evaluation of our approach to securing academic standards and quality assurance	134
	Forward planning	135
4.7	Effectiveness of the University's approach to self-evaluation, including the effective use of data to inform decision-making	135
	Good practice identified through reflection and evaluation of our approach to self-evaluation, including the effective use of data to inform decision-making	135
	Areas for development identified through reflection and evaluation of our approach to self-evaluation, including the effective use of data to inform decision-making	136
	Forward planning	136
5.	Collaborative provision	141
5.1	Evaluation summary	141
5.2	Key features of the University's strategic approach to collaborative provision	141
	Background and recent changes to our strategic approach	141
	Current scope of collaborative arrangements	142
	Strategy and plans for future developments	146
	Evaluation of our approach to collaborative provision	148
5.3	Effectiveness of the approach to managing collaborative provision	151

Good practice identified through reflection and evaluation of our approach to managing collaborative provision	151
Areas for development identified through reflection and evaluation of our approach to managing collaborative provision	151
Forward planning	152
6. Appendices	155
Appendix 1 Abbreviations	155
Appendix 2 Hyperlinks	156
Appendix 3 Units within key Professional Services Directorates	162
Appendix 4 Committees of Court and Senate	163
Appendix 5 Programmes delivered by online distance learning	164
Appendix 6 Strategy Action Plan: Learning and Teaching Committee	166
Appendix 7 The role descriptor for Associate Deans (Quality and Academic Standards)	168
Appendix 8 Summary of collaborative arrangements	170
7. Acknowledgements	177

List of figures

	Page	
Figure 1.1	Student representation structures	15
Figure 1.2	Strategy to 2022	18
Figure 1.3	Gender balance in the student population	20
Figure 1.4	Students with a known disability compared with the average across the higher education sector in Scotland	21
Figure 1.5	Proportion of Scottish students admitted from deprived areas	23
Figure 1.6	Retention rates for the University and its Schools (all years of study) for full-time undergraduate students (any domicile)	24
Figure 1.7	Retention rates for the University and its Schools (year 1 to year 2) for full-time undergraduate students (any domicile)	25
Figure 1.8	Retention rates (year 1 to year 2) for MD40 students and students who are not MD40	25
Figure 1.9	Retention rates (year 1 to year 2) for students who have declared a disability and students with no known disability	26
Figure 1.10	Retention rates (year 1 to year 2) compared with the Scottish sector average	26
Figure 1.11	Percentage of students receiving an upper second-class or first-class degree (or equivalent)	27
Figure 2.1	Graduate level employment or further study compared with the Scottish average	76
Figure 2.2	The Strawberry Bank Ideas Lab	81
Figure 2.3	The Magdalen Green Postgraduate Suite	81
Figure 4.1	Approval of new taught programmes	121
Figure 4.2	Approval of new modules	122
Figure 4.3	Approval of substantive changes to programmes	123
Figure 4.4	Approval of substantive changes to modules	123
Figure 4.5	Approval of withdrawal of programmes or modules	124

List of tables

	Page	
Table 1.1	Student numbers (full person equivalents, FPE)	20
Table 1.2	Domicile of the University's student population (all levels)	21
Table 1.3	Domicile of the University's undergraduate student population	22
Table 1.4	Domicile of the University's taught postgraduate student population	22
Table 1.5	Domicile of the University's research postgraduate student population	22
Table 1.6	Average UCAS tariff points	23
Table 2.1	NSS results for the Students' Association (2013-2017)	47
Table 2.2	NSS results for the Learning Community and Student Voice (2017)	47
Table 2.3	International Student Barometer satisfaction scores for sports facilities	69
Table 2.4	Student satisfaction for the main themes of the International Student Barometer	70
Table 2.5	Most satisfying elements identified from the International Student Barometer (2017)	71
Table 2.6	Least satisfying elements identified from the International Student Barometer (2017)	71
Table 2.7	NSS results for Assessment and Feedback (2013-2016)	73
Table 2.8	NSS results for Assessment and Feedback (2017)	74
Table 2.9	NSS results for Organisation and Management (2013-2016)	74
Table 2.10	NSS results for Organisation and Management (2017)	74
Table 2.11	NSS results for Learning Resources (2013-2016)	88
Table 2.12	NSS results for Learning Resources (2017)	88
Table 3.1	NSS results for Teaching (2013-2016)	110
Table 3.2	NSS results for Teaching (2017)	110

List of *Focus On* mini case studies

		Page
Focus On: Working in Partnership with Students in Responding to Feedback	Engaging students with the outcomes of the NSS	42
Focus On: A Partnership Approach to Designing the Learning Environment	Consultation with students on the design of the Library	45
Focus On: Student Support	Supporting students from areas of multiple deprivation	55
Focus On: Student Engagement with Representation	Recognising and rewarding representation	60
Focus On: Interdisciplinary Working	The Global Health Challenge programme	62
Focus On: The Postgraduate Student Experience	The PhD Students' Association of the School of Life Sciences	80
Focus On: Digital Literacies	Digital Friday	86
Focus On: Support for Distance Learners	Out-of-hours virtual enquiry service	89
Focus On: Sharing and Developing Practice	Strategic Thinking Days	103
Focus On: Enhancement of Teaching Practice	Peer support of teaching	106
Focus On: Assessment	Ensuring consistent marking of assessments	130
Focus On: Transforming Lives	Bringing Dundee to the world	144
Focus On: Study Abroad	Growing participation in outward mobility	148

Executive summary

Evaluation summary

The student experience at Dundee is a top priority for us. Our aim is for all of our students to benefit from a first-class learning experience with excellent graduate outcomes. We take a partnership approach to enhancement and work in close collaboration with the Dundee University Students' Association (DUSA) to ensure that the student view is at the centre of decision-making and strategy relating to enhancement of the student experience. We have a well-developed and effective student representation system and a culture of consultation and responding to feedback. We work to foster a strong sense of community and belonging and, together with DUSA, provide a comprehensive range of academic and pastoral support opportunities.

Our strong commitment to enhancement of the student learning experience is evidenced by: high levels of student satisfaction in national student surveys; excellent and improving employment statistics; strong retention and progression statistics; our investment in the learning environment; our responsiveness to students' views; and our continually-developing approach to working in partnership with our students through our Student Partnership Agreements and other strategic initiatives that are taken forward together with our students. We recognise the main areas for development, which include: representation for distance learning and postgraduate students; our Academic Advisers System; and ensuring that students know how their feedback has been acted upon, and are confident that we are taking an evidence-based approach to enhancement of the student learning experience. Although we are working within a resource-restrained environment, enhancement of the student learning experience remains an area of strength for the University.

Our approach to developing and implementing strategies has matured over the years and we are confident that our strategic approach to enhancing learning and teaching is effective. Our use of action planning grids and key performance indicators, as well as formal reporting on progress, ensure that strategies are kept alive and relevant. Our strategies for enhancement are supported by a strong staff development programme, recognition and reward of excellence in learning and teaching, and fora for disseminating and sharing good practice.

Our quality framework is mature and fit for purpose. Mapping of our policies and procedures to the UK Quality Code demonstrates good alignment with the expectations and indicators of sound practice set out in the Code. The restructuring of the University in 2015 provided opportunities for enhancement and we are confident that the structural changes have been beneficial, particularly around the development of a Quality and Academic Standards Committee and Associate Dean positions with responsibility for quality and academic standards.

We strive to ensure that our students are involved in quality processes and are proud of the high levels of student engagement. We are not complacent here, and recognise that there are areas for development. The close working relationship between staff and student representatives means that the views of students have a strong influence on the development of all of our policies and procedures relating to quality assurance and enhancement.

Over the past five years, the University has moved from a position where we undertook very little substantive collaborative activity to one where we are taking deliberate steps to increase our collaborative activity, particularly with international organisations. This strategic change in direction resulted in the instigation of a structured framework, including the establishment of an international collaborations development unit and investment in an expanded legal team, to help with the development and review of collaborative programmes. It has been a steep learning curve for the University and there have been lessons learned about the challenges of working with international partners, particularly around operational and legal risks, contingency planning, communication and shared understanding. There have also been many positives, including the opportunity for our academic staff to engage with teaching in international organisations. We are gaining experience and confidence in the area of international collaborations, but recognise the distance still to be travelled.

Good practice identified through reflection and evaluation of practice

Action planning grids. Our use of action planning grids, which include action owners and timescales, evolved from our Quality Enhancement Metastrategy that was part of our Strategy to 2017. Regular review of the grids means that most actions are fully implemented. The action plans are deliberately not viewed as static in recognition of the fact that changes in the national landscape and available resources can cause priorities to change.

Annual reports from Strategic Planning. The annual reports from Strategic Planning provide Institutional-level statistics relating to our performance measures which are benchmarked against other universities (where relevant). This provides a healthy level of transparency as the data sets and performance measures are considered by the relevant committees of Senate, and by Senate and Court as well as the University Executive Group. They are accompanied by a Red Amber Green (RAG) analysis so that areas for development are highlighted and interventions can be made if necessary. The annual reports have been an extremely effective way for the University to review performance in key areas and a similar approach will be taken to support the new Strategy to 2022.

Annual review of collaborative taught provision. Schools are required to formally review the effectiveness of their teaching collaborations through completion of a *pro forma* followed by annual discussions between the Associate Dean (International), School international leads, the Director of the Educational Partnerships Development Unit and relevant partnerships development managers. The reviews and the required data are

proportionate to the scale, complexity and risk of the activities. The annual discussions are an effective way to ensure that reviews of activity do not become a box-ticking exercise.

Associate Deans for Learning and Teaching and Quality and Academic Standards. These positions, which were developed in 2015 as part of the University restructuring, have been exceptionally effective in developing, sharing and enhancing practice across the University.

Associate student status for students on collaborative programmes. Students on our validated programme with Ballyfermot College of Further Education, our co-curriculum programme with Dundee and Angus College and our programme with International College Dundee all have associate student status which provides access to Dundee learning resources and helps to ensure that the students feel part of the University of Dundee. Students on our double degree programme with Wuhan University also have associate student status with the University of Dundee when they are studying in Wuhan, although we are currently reviewing this arrangement with a view to the students being fully matriculated at Dundee while in Wuhan.

Commitment to University strategies. Staff are encouraged to relate activities and all investment proposals to the University Strategy. The Strategy to 2022 was deliberately constructed to ensure relevance to all parts of the University so that activities can be clearly related to Strategy.

Community and belonging. Evidence from the NSS and the International Student Barometer suggests that our on-campus students have a strong sense of belonging to the University community.

Comprehensive quality assurance processes and academic policies. Our mapping of our policies and practices to the UK Quality Code shows good alignment with the expectations and indicators of sound practice. The Quality and Academic Standards Committee and the Learning and Teaching Committee both play key roles in ensuring that policies and procedures are fit for purpose and meet national expectations.

Data dashboards. We have made considerable progress in our approach to using data to inform decision-making and evaluation and are confident that the interactive data dashboards provided to staff through the Learning and Teaching Information section on the Virtual Learning Environment represent a step change in improvement. Previously, data sets were provided by Registry on request and this resulted in a level of staff frustration if there were delays. Importantly, the data sets now contain benchmarking tools which allow Schools/disciplines to benchmark performance in certain areas against national statistics. A recent development for 2018 is the provision of School Managers (and other key individuals) with bronze-level access to Heidi Plus, which has an interactive tool to analyse HESA data and benchmark with other organisations. This development has not yet been subject to any formal evaluation, but early indicators suggest that this will be a valuable self-service resource for Schools and Directorates.

The Educational Partnerships Development Unit's toolkit for teaching collaborations. The structured process for the approval and review of collaborative taught provision means that programme developers have an appropriate framework to work within and professional support throughout the journey. It also provides the means for appropriate institutional oversight of teaching collaborations.

Employment and employability. We have taken deliberate steps over the past 5 years to improve the employability of our graduates. Evidence from student engagement with careers modules, participation in Dundee Plus, engagement with the Centre of Entrepreneurship and graduate level employment statistics, shows that our approach is having a positive impact on the student experience and graduate prospects.

Evidence-based enhancement. We make good use of our data, including student feedback data, employment statistics and retention, progression and attainment data, to drive enhancement of the student experience. The consideration of data sets is an integral part of our annual enhancement meetings between the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching) and Schools, and Schools analyse the data dashboards on the Learning and Teaching Information section of My Dundee on a routine basis as part of their ongoing approach to quality enhancement. We also make effective use of external examiner reports and ensure that they form a core element of our approach to evidence-based enhancement.

Internal audits. Our approach to internal audit of areas relating to the student experience has been highly effective and has been a positive driver of enhancement. Examples where we have used evidence from the audits to enhance the student experience include: positive changes to the way we approach our student partnership agreements; our ongoing work to support distance learner representation; and enhancement of the Academic Advisers system.

Learning spaces. The quality of our learning spaces is an important component of the student learning experience, and we have made significant investments to ensure that we provide a first-class learning environment for on-campus students. This includes improvements in our campuses at Ninewells and Kirkcaldy. We are particularly proud of our Library and Learning Centre on the city campus. The Learning and Teaching Spaces Committee prioritises developments within a rolling programme of continuous improvements.

Quality and Academic Standards Committee. This committee provides effective Institutional oversight of quality and academic standards and is also a forum for sharing and developing practice. The Director of Quality and Academic Standards produces an annual report on its activities to the Governance and Nominations Committee of Court so that the University Court can be assured that its responsibilities for quality and academic standards are being discharged effectively.

Retention and progression. We take a proactive approach to retention and progression, and the development of our interactive data dashboards for Schools and disciplines to

analyse statistics and identify any hotspots is a positive feature. The use of attendance monitoring to identify and support students who may be disengaging has had some technical challenges, but teething troubles aside, this policy is helping Schools in their approach to supporting students to engage with learning and succeed at University.

Sharing practice. The restructuring of the University in 2015 provided an opportunity for a step-change in improvement to our approach to sharing practice through the creation of the Associate Dean positions with responsibility for learning and teaching and quality and academic standards. This has resulted in effective communication of practice through the Learning and Teaching Committee, the Quality and Academic Standards Committee and other fora.

Staff development. The staff development programme provided by the Academic Skills Centre, the Centre for Technology and Innovation in Learning, the Library and Learning Centre and Organisational and Professional Development is comprehensive and well received by staff. We have an annual Objective Setting and Review Process where individuals have a discussion with their line manager following the completion of a form that requires identification of staff development requirements. This means that there is good staff engagement with training and development opportunities.

Student engagement with quality processes. We have effective student engagement with quality processes which is enhanced by our close working relationship with DUSA and the training that they provide student representatives.

Student partnership agreements. We were one of the first universities in Scotland to develop student partnership agreements and have been continually refining our approach to ensure that they are meaningful and effective. The partnership agreements have been a driver for enhancement and have resulted in positive changes such as: the development of our reading list policy; improved training for student representatives; an enhanced approach to employability (including the development of Dundee Plus and the instigation of a new SRC role dedicated to employability); improved engagement of students with elections; and enhancement of the Academic Adviser system.

Student representation. Our positive approach to student representation is in the DNA of the University and there is an embedded attitude of working together with our students and their representatives. We are continually striving to enhance our representation system so that it is effective and powerful throughout the University community, and work in close partnership with DUSA to improve its impact and reach.

Student support. We are proud of the support that the University and DUSA provides to our students through our Directorates, Schools and disciplines and DUSA's Hive. There have been considerable investments in centrally-provided support including the Enquiry Centre and the Support Hub. These have contributed to the high levels of satisfaction seen in the International Student Barometer. In addition, the Academic Skills Centre and English for International Students provide first-class study skills and learning support.

Support for postgraduates who teach. This was identified as an area for development in the outcome from ELIR 3. The training has been further developed and is now mandatory. There has been good engagement with the programme and student feedback is positive.

Widening access. We have a long-standing commitment to widening access, and this has strengthened over the past 5 years. The evidence presented in the Reflective Analysis demonstrates that commitment and shows the progress that we have made. We are not complacent here and, through an evidence-based approach, are recognising and responding to the challenges faced by disadvantaged students.

Areas for development identified through reflection and evaluation of practice

Academic Advisers. Evidence from the NSS and a recent internal audit suggests that further improvements in this area are required. We have noted that the need for improvement is not uniform across all of the Schools and disciplines and that there are areas of good practice and high levels of student satisfaction in many places. This means that we can tackle this by sharing practice and further policy development.

Agility in responding to opportunities for teaching collaborations. The challenge with a staged approval process is the ability to be agile in response to time-limited opportunities. Colleagues also sometimes underestimate the time required to move from idea to formal approval. We will continue to review and refine our approval process. This includes strong encouragement for staff to contact the Educational Partnerships Development Unit at the earliest possible stage.

Assessment and feedback. Although we have made considerable progress with the student experience of assessment and feedback, particularly through our work with the TESTA method and the revision of our Assessment Policy, our NSS scores show that this remains an area for development.

Burden of administration. We recognise the challenge of a paperwork burden potentially being an unintended consequence of aiming for a gold-standard approach to quality assurance and enhancement. Although our processes have been developed to provide a framework for academic staff to approach quality enhancement in a structured way, we realise that a requirement to fill out forms and templates has a habit of growing so that the work associated with this becomes counterproductive and over burdensome for all parties involved. This an area for review in the future.

Consistent approach to module evaluations. At present, each School/discipline has its own way of conducting module evaluations by students with separately-designed questionnaires. Oversight of student feedback is at the level of the module or programme, and programme leaders and Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching, Quality and Academic Standards) sometimes find it challenging to pull the outcomes from student feedback together into manageable data sets. This is being addressed by the development of a defined set of module evaluation questions and the anticipated procurement of a module evaluation system.

Consistent use of centrally-held data. Although we have made significant progress over the past few years in developing centrally-held data sets that can be accessed and used easily by Schools on a self-service basis, there is still a tendency for Schools to hold their own separate data sets for certain purposes. This is an area for development that is being addressed by the Business Transformation project described in Section 1.

Enhancement of representation for distance learners and postgraduate students. We are taking a proactive approach to driving improvements in this challenging area. This involves working closely with DUSA and sparqs and is work in progress.

Grade improvement. In common with most of the higher education sector in Scotland, we have seen a rise in the numbers of students graduating with upper-second and first-class honours degrees. Although the rise can partly be explained by our move from being a recruiting university to primarily a selecting one, it is an area that we are keeping a close eye on and taking steps to minimise the possibility of any grade improvement that does not reflect the abilities of our students and the quality of our teaching.

One Dundee. Although we are making steady progress with a One Dundee approach to enhancing the student learning experience there are still a number of areas for development. These include further improvements to the consistency of the following: approaches to managing mitigating circumstances; the electronic submission of assignments; and approaches to module evaluations.

Organisation and management (timetabling). Our NSS scores and other stakeholder feedback show that this is an area for development. We anticipate that our new policy on timetabling will have a positive effect when it is implemented in academic year 2018/19.

Peer support of academic practice. This is an area where there are examples of excellent practice in parts of the University. Practice for peer support is not consistent across all Schools and disciplines. We recognise the need to refresh University policy and practice here to provide a better framework for staff to work within.

Plain English. Feedback from our students suggests that some of our policies are somewhat dense and impenetrable, especially for students for whom English is not their first language. This will be addressed by producing additional student-facing guidance where necessary.

Recognition of prior learning. Following on from the redevelopment of our Policy and Guidance on Recognition of Prior Learning, we realise that there is still work to be done here, particularly in ensuring that our processes for applicants are clearly signposted at the level of the University admissions pages rather than on School-specific pages. We also need to ensure that structured training opportunities are available.

Resourcing for the support of collaborative taught provision. The instigation of the Educational Partnerships Development Unit means that there are new collaborative programmes about to start and other agreements in the pipeline. We realise the importance of ensuring that Professional Services support is not front loaded only at the

business development side and that an appropriate staff resource is required to support a high-quality student experience and ensure that academic standards are secure. Professional Services support is now factored into all new business plans and we will continue to ensure that all arrangements are appropriately resourced.

Strengthening the reach and impact of the national Enhancement Themes. Although the national Enhancement Themes have been a positive driver of enhancement, there is still work to be done in raising awareness with a wider body of staff and students. There are many individuals who engage purposefully and with good effect and there are others who will have a limited knowledge of the Themes. That said, most staff will have knowledge of the impact even if they do not identify activities with the Themes. As we have adopted a strategy of effective use of evidence to drive enhancement for a number of years we are optimistic that we can strengthen the reach and impact for the current Theme.

Work placements and study abroad opportunities. Feedback from the student workshop on ELIR suggests that students would like to see greater opportunities to undertake work placement activities and study abroad. This is a strategic priority for the future.

Forward planning

Action planning for enhancement is embedded in the University Strategy, and the outcomes from the evaluation that we have undertaken as part of this Reflective Analysis will feed into the relevant action plans. Priorities, timeframes and identification of action plan owners will be developed through the creation of a detailed action-planning grid using a similar approach to that taken for our previous Quality Enhancement Metastrategy (which was put in place to ensure that quality enhancement was at the heart of the University Strategy 2012-2017). The action planning grid will be developed over the next six months and we envisage that a number of actions will be prioritised for delivery over the short to medium term with others being delivered over the five year strategy period. Specific actions for the future include:

- The development of a One Dundee approach to module evaluations (this is currently underway through the development of a standard set of questions in anticipation of procuring a module evaluation system in the future)
- The development of a good practice guide on representation for distance learners and enhancing training for postgraduate student representatives
- Improving our use of data to enhance the experience of students with protected characteristics
- The promotion of workplace learning opportunities (this work has already begun through the development of our Student Placement Toolkit)
- Further development of our learning and teaching policies to improve consistency of practice in areas relating to management of the student learner journey
- Reviewing and revising our approach to Academic Advisers

- The development of an Assessment and Feedback Hub (in partnership with DUSA) to provide a focal point for an enhancement-led approach in this area including the sharing of good practice resulting from the work of the TESTA team
- The development of a framework for peer support of academic practice
- The instigation of an Annual Review of Teaching and Scholarship to sit alongside the Annual Review of Research and inform the Objective Setting and Review Process
- The provision of enhanced data from Registry to Schools to allow them to calibrate grading on modules to help guard against grade inflation
- Exploring the development of more detailed University-wide criteria for grading assessments
- The development of plain English guides for students, particularly in the areas of assessment and academic misconduct
- Enhancement of our approach to induction of external examiners
- The production of a template for student handbooks
- The development of a new student management system as part of the Business Transformation project
- The further development and use of our data dashboards
- The continuation of our use of performance measures as part of our Strategy to 2022
- The development of learning analytics to enhance the student learning experience
- A review of our policy on recognition of prior learning and full implementation of the revised policy
- Reviewing our quality assurance processes with a view to reducing the burden of administration. This will be aligned with the introduction of the new student management system.
- Expansion of collaborative provision in China (including the further development of Joint Education Programmes and consideration of a Joint Education Institute)
- Expansion of partnership working in the rest of the world with a key focus on establishing new partnerships in emerging territories
- Further developing our approach to business and financial planning for taught provision
- Reviewing the scope of activities and the remit of the Educational Partnerships Development Unit
- Taking a systematic approach to increasing and streamlining study abroad opportunities (with a focus on strategic partners) for our students

Contextual information
about the University, its
student population and
the review



1. Contextual information about the University, its student population and the review

1.1 Summary information about the University

Background

1.1.1 The University of Dundee is a modern, research-intensive, student-centred university with a cultural heritage from the Scottish ‘older’ universities.¹ We first became an independent university in 1967, having been a college of the University of St Andrews since 1897. We expanded the breadth of our provision between 1994 and 2001 as a result of mergers with Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design, Tayside College of Nursing and Midwifery, Fife College of Health Studies and the Dundee Campus of the Northern College of Education. The University now has over 15,000 students, approximately 3,000 staff and an annual income of over £240 million (academic year 2016/17).

1.1.2 Teaching is primarily delivered on 3 campuses with the majority provided at the City Campus in the centre of Dundee. Our Medical School is at Ninewells Hospital on the outskirts of Dundee and we have a small campus in the town of Kirkcaldy, where a proportion of our undergraduate Nursing provision is delivered. We have a significant number of students who study with us by distance learning, and a small number of programmes that are delivered through a ‘flying faculty’ approach. In addition, we have recently started to develop collaborative awards with universities in China and Singapore.

1.1.3 We have a vibrant and engaged students’ association. The Dundee University Students’ Association (DUSA) was originally founded during the University of Dundee’s period as a college of the University of St Andrews. The ancient tradition of a Student Representative Council (SRC) was also preserved and further developed. The University has worked together with DUSA and the SRC over many years with an overarching ethos of mutual respect and partnership.

University structures

1.1.4 Our teaching provision covers a broad range of disciplines and, following a programme of restructuring in 2015, is organised into nine [academic Schools](#)[△]:

- Art and Design
- Dentistry
- Education and Social Work

¹ The Universities (Scotland) Act 1966 uses the term ‘older universities’ to refer to Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow and St Andrews. The act provided for the independence from St Andrews of Dundee, which was then granted a similar form of governance under its Royal Charter.

- Humanities
- Life Sciences
- Medicine
- Nursing and Health Sciences
- Science and Engineering
- Social Sciences

1.1.5 Each School is led by a Dean and four Associate Deans (International, Learning and Teaching, Quality and Academic Standards, and Research). Schools may have additional Associate Dean positions to represent other key areas of activity such as student recruitment and professional practice. All Schools have a School Manager to support the Dean on strategic issues and lead the operational management of the School. The Dean, the Associate Deans and the School Manager are the core members of each School Executive Group.

1.1.6 Leadership is provided centrally by the [University Executive Group](#)[△] which comprises: the Principal; four Vice-Principals (representing the areas of international activities, learning and teaching, planning and performance (Provost), and research); the University Secretary (Chief Operating Officer); the Director of Finance; the Director of Human Resources; and the Director of External Relations. Their work is supported by the University Management Group which comprises members of the University Executive Group plus School Deans, Professional Services Directors and School Managers. There is also a Professional Services Group convened by the University Secretary which comprises Professional Services Directors and School Managers. The purpose of this group is to support the work of the University Secretary in implementing strategic initiatives and operational priorities across the University.

1.1.7 [Professional Services](#)[△] are provided by 11 Directorates:

- Academic and Corporate Governance
- Estates and Campus Services
- External Relations
- Finance
- Human Resources and Organisational Development
- Institute of Sport and Exercise
- IT (UoDIT)
- Library and Learning Centre and Culture and Information
- Research and Innovation Services
- Student Services
- University Executive Office

Additional details about the key Directorates that relate to this Reflective Analysis are provided in [Appendix 3](#).

Student representation structures

1.1.8 We have a well-developed student representation system that includes Class Representatives, School Vice-Presidents, School Presidents, the [SRC](#)⁷ and [DUSA](#)⁷ (Figure 1.1).

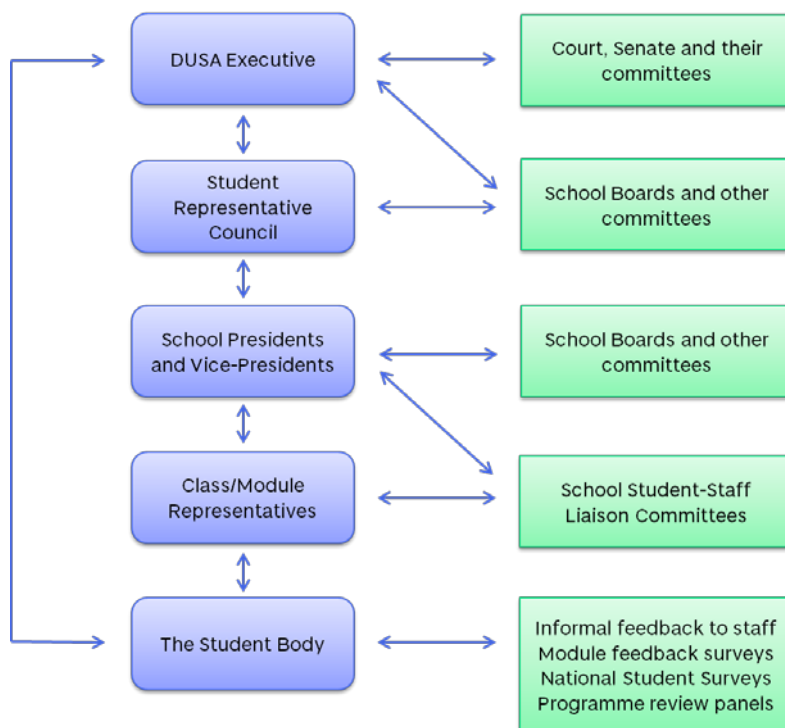


Figure 1.1: Student representation structures.

1.1.9 DUSA plays a key role in student representation at Dundee. Within the association there are six sabbatical officers and two non-sabbatical officers:

- President
- Vice-President Academia
- Vice-President Communications and Campaigns
- Vice-President Student Activities
- Vice-President Representation
- Vice-President Student Welfare
- Vice-President Fundraising (non-sabbatical)
- Vice-President Engagement (non-sabbatical)

All of the decision-making bodies of the University that relate to students include at least 1 sabbatical officer in their membership. The DUSA sabbatical officers also play a central role in our quality assurance processes and approach to quality enhancement.

1.1.10 The SRC is the membership body of the Students' Association and plays an important role in developing policy and holding the DUSA executive team to account. It is an elected body that ensures linkage between the students of the University and DUSA. It comprises the School Presidents and student

representatives with responsibility for specific groups of students including international and postgraduate students. There is also a School Presidents' Forum where School Presidents and members of the DUSA executive team meet regularly (approximately four meetings per semester). The principal focus of the Forum is on academic and representation matters, and the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching) attends regularly.

- 1.1.11 In common with the ancient Scottish universities, students at Dundee are represented by a Rector who is nominated and, where more than one candidate has been nominated, elected by our matriculated students. The Rector is a full member of University Court (although in practice this duty is normally carried out by an Assessor nominated by the Rector) and has responsibility for representing the interests of students on Court. Our current Rector is Mark Beaumont; endurance athlete, documentary-maker and author. He is an honorary graduate of the University and was installed as Rector in 2016.

Governance

- 1.1.12 The [University Court](#)[△] is the governing body of the University and has responsibility for oversight of performance, the employment of staff, the management and administration of property and finance and the strategic direction of the University. The [Senatus Academicus](#)[△] (Senate) is the supreme academic body. The composition, roles and responsibilities of Court and Senate are set out in the University's [Statutes](#)[△] and [Ordinances](#)[△]. The work of Court and Senate is supported by a number of committees which are shown in [Appendix 4](#).
- 1.1.13 The University works within a devolved structure where Schools may make certain decisions on policies, practices and procedures to reflect discipline-specific requirements. Each School has a School Board² which reports to Senate. School Boards have the following functions:
- To advise the Dean and the School Executive Group on all matters relating to the organisation of education and research in the subjects of the School including curricula and examinations
 - To be responsible for the oversight of such operational aspects of student admissions, student administration, the management of learning and teaching, quality assurance and research as may be delegated to it by the Senate
 - To discuss any matters related to the School and any matter referred to it by the Senate, and convey its views and recommendations thereon to the Senate

² School Boards and their membership are described in [Ordinance 57](#)[△].

- Such other functions as the Senate may authorise and prescribe

- 1.1.14 Each School has a Learning and Teaching Committee and a Quality and Academic Standards Committee. The functions of the two are combined in certain Schools (Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, Science and Engineering, and Social Sciences) and School Boards may choose to delegate authority for the management of learning and teaching and quality assurance to those committees. School Quality and Academic Standards Committees report to the Senate Quality and Academic Standards Committee to record their recommendations on areas relating to quality assurance.
- 1.1.15 Whilst many matters are devolved, Schools must work within the University's policy framework which is managed by the [Directorate of Academic and Corporate Governance](#)[△] ([Appendix 3](#)). The Directorate is responsible for leading and supporting all functions that relate to University governance and policy. It is a diverse Directorate that includes: the [Educational Partnerships Development Unit](#)[△]; the [Early Dispute Resolution](#)[△] service; [Legal](#)[△]; [Quality and Academic Standards](#)[△]; and the Secretariat. The Directorate plays a key role in supporting the work of the Principal and the Vice-Principals.

University vision and strategy

- 1.1.16 Our Royal Charter states 'The objects of the University shall be to advance and diffuse knowledge, wisdom and understanding by teaching and research and by the example and influence of its corporate life'. With these core aims in mind the University developed a 25-year vision for the future in 2012. The [University Vision](#)[△] focuses on the theme of Transformation and captures what is distinctive about the University of Dundee.
- 1.1.17 The Transformation Vision is supported by a rolling programme of 5-year strategies which are developed in consultation with staff, students and the academic and governing committees of the University. The current [Strategy to 2022](#)[△] has at its centre the ethos of the University as a high-performance community. The Strategy sets out our aims, purpose, vision and values which are shown below.

'The University's core purpose is to transform lives, locally and globally through the creation, sharing and application of knowledge.

Our vision is to be recognised as Scotland's leading university.

Our core values determine how we will achieve this ambitious vision. We will do this by valuing people, working together and with integrity, making a difference and pursuing excellence.

We will achieve our goals by working as a community committed to excellence. In doing so we will benefit our city and region by acting as a key gateway to the world. Our impact will be felt around the globe.'

1.1.18 There is a focus on four interdisciplinary themes which are: understanding and improving health and wellbeing; life-enhancing creativity and design; innovating technological solutions to tomorrow’s problems; and promoting social change to enhance diversity, justice and socio-economic prosperity.

1.1.19 Within the over-arching Strategy there are eight specific strands, each of which is accompanied by examples of key action areas (Figure 1.2).



Figure 1.2: Strategy to 2022.

1.1.20 A more detailed action plan has been developed to cover each of the action areas. The specific actions are each placed under the oversight of a Senate or Court committee. As with our previous Strategy to 2017, key performance measures have been developed to assess progress and impact.

Business Transformation and a One Dundee approach

1.1.21 Part of the outcome of the University restructuring in 2015 was a commitment to transform our business systems and take a One Dundee approach to administration and management. This resulted in significant investment in a [Business Transformation](#)[□] project which has been ongoing for the past 2 years. Business Transformation is about new technologies as well as cultural and organisational change. It is based on the following principles:

'We will move towards one version of the truth, with quality data available to those who need it, and fewer gatekeepers.

We will apply standard processes across the University, adopting proven out-of-the-box processes, and reducing the amount of bespoke work and customisations.

We will empower our staff, giving them the tools and skills they need, spending less time on repetitive, manual, low value work, and freeing up time to do work that will add value to our students, our research community and our learning and teaching.'

1.1.22 At the time of writing several work streams are in progress including: finance and procurement; human resources and payroll; research; and the student work stream which includes a new student management system to replace SITS. An interim student enquiry management system was launched in January 2018.

Reflections on structural changes since 2015

1.1.23 The radical and swift changes that were made to the University structures over the summer of 2015 meant that there was a requirement for fundamental changes to our ways of working over a relatively short time period. Although we are confident that the change from the old College structure to a flat School structure (with enhanced connections to central leadership and services) has been beneficial and positive, we are still refining some of the elements. Feedback from the Learning and Teaching Committee, the Learning and Teaching Development Forum and the Quality and Academic Standards Committee continues to inform our approach, and we have now reached a stage where we are fine-tuning arrangements to ensure effectiveness and promote enhancement rather than overhauling procedures.

1.2 Composition, key trends and anticipated changes in the student population

The student population

1.2.1 In 2016/17 15,390 students were enrolled at the University, with the student population comprising 10,590 undergraduate students and 4,800 postgraduate students (Table 1.1). Around 3,600 of our students are enrolled on distance learning programmes, predominantly at the taught postgraduate level, so that the student population on our campuses is approximately 11,800.

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Total number of students (FPE)	15,705	15,195	15,180	14,910	15,390
Undergraduate students	10,550	10,310	10,200	10,120	10,590
Taught postgraduate students	4,515	4,240	4,335	4,165	4,210
Research students	645	650	645	630	590
Female students (all levels of study)	9,400	9,335	9,460	9,390	9,815
Male students (all levels of study)	6,310	5,860	5,720	5,535	5,570

Table 1.1: Student numbers (full person equivalents, FPE). The data are from Heidi Plus³. The numbers may not always tally exactly because of the rounding method.

1.2.2 The percentage of the student population who are female has risen slightly over the past 5 years from 60% to 64% (Figure 1.3). The high number of female students reflects our subject mix where we have large numbers of female students in both Nursing and Health Sciences, and Education and Social Work. Gender imbalance is being addressed through our [Gender Action Plan](#)⁴.

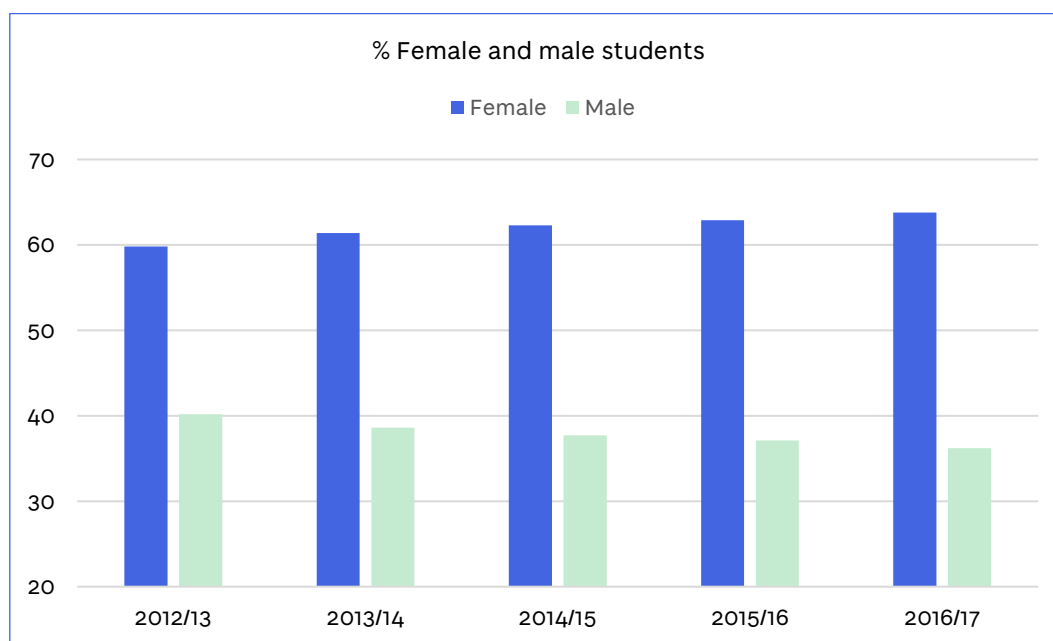


Figure 1.3: Gender balance of the student population. The data are derived from Heidi Plus.

³ The Heidi Plus data source is the HESA Student Record (2007/08–2016/17). Copyright Higher Education Statistics Agency Limited.

1.2.3 The percentage of disabled students has increased over the past 5 years (Figure 1.4). This increase is reflected across the sector and the percentage of our students with a known disability is now in line with the Scottish sector average, where 10.8% of students were known to have a disability in academic year 2016/17.

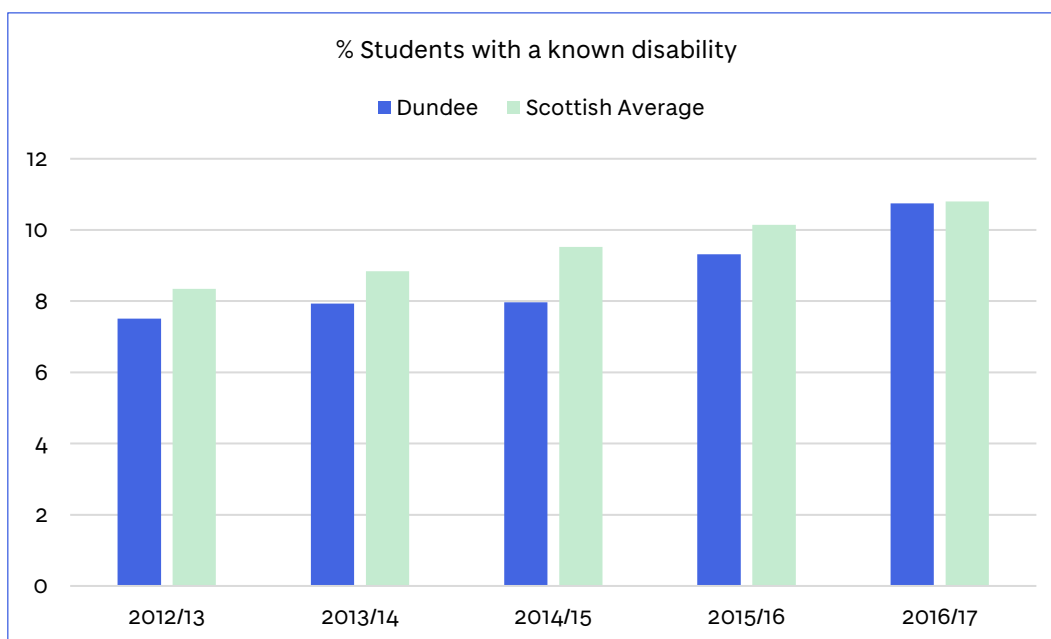


Figure 1.4: Students with a known disability compared with the average across the higher education sector in Scotland. The data are derived from Heidi Plus.

1.2.4 A breakdown of our student population by domicile is shown in Table 1.2. The data, derived from the FPE statistics provided by Heidi Plus, show a decline in the proportion of students from the rest of the UK, the European Union and the rest of the world over the past 5 years. Tables 1.3, 1.4 and 1.5 show a breakdown of the student domicile data by level of study.

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
% students from Scotland	58.9	60.3	61.0	63.0	66.0
% students from the UK (excluding Scotland)	23.6	22.5	22.4	21.0	19.5
% students from the EU (excluding the UK)	7.6	7.9	7.6	6.9	5.9
% students from the rest of the world	9.9	9.2	9.0	9.1	8.6

Table 1.2: Domicile of the University of Dundee’s student population (all levels). The data are derived from Heidi Plus.

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
% of the undergraduate student population from Scotland	71.4	72.2	72.2	73.4	75.7
% of the undergraduate student population from the UK (excluding Scotland)	15.3	14.2	14.4	13.6	13.8
% of the undergraduate student population from the EU (excluding the UK)	8.1	8.3	8.1	7.1	6.3
% of the undergraduate student population from the rest of the world	5.2	5.3	5.3	5.8	4.3

Table 1.3: Domicile of the University's undergraduate student population. The data are derived from Heidi Plus.

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
% of the taught postgraduate student population from Scotland	31.9	34.3	38.0	41.5	45.5
% of the taught postgraduate student population from the UK (excluding Scotland)	44.9	44.5	43.1	40.0	34.6
% of the taught postgraduate student population from the EU (excluding the UK)	5.8	5.7	4.7	4.6	4.0
% of the taught postgraduate student population from the rest of the world	17.4	15.5	14.2	13.9	15.9

Table 1.4: Domicile of the University's taught postgraduate student population. The data are derived from Heidi Plus.

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
% of the research postgraduate student population from Scotland	42.1	42.4	37.8	37.4	38.9
% of the research postgraduate student population from the UK (excluding Scotland)	10.4	10.6	10.4	14.1	14.6
% of the research postgraduate student population from the EU (excluding the UK)	13.8	16.2	20.2	18.3	14.3
% of the research postgraduate student population from the rest of the world	33.7	30.7	31.5	30	32.5

Table 1.5: Domicile of the University's research postgraduate student population. The data are derived from Heidi Plus.

Entry tariffs

1.2.5 Table 1.6 shows our average entry tariffs over the past five years.

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Average undergraduate tariff	384.0	392.8	405.5	405.6	413.1

Table 1.6: Average UCAS tariff points. The data are derived from Heidi Plus.

Widening access

1.2.6 We have a long-standing commitment to the local community and widening access, and in 2016/17 36.5% of our student intake were from the most deprived 40% of areas in Scotland (MD40), and 15.9% were from the most deprived 20% of areas in Scotland (MD20).⁴ Figure 1.5 shows the trend over the past five years.

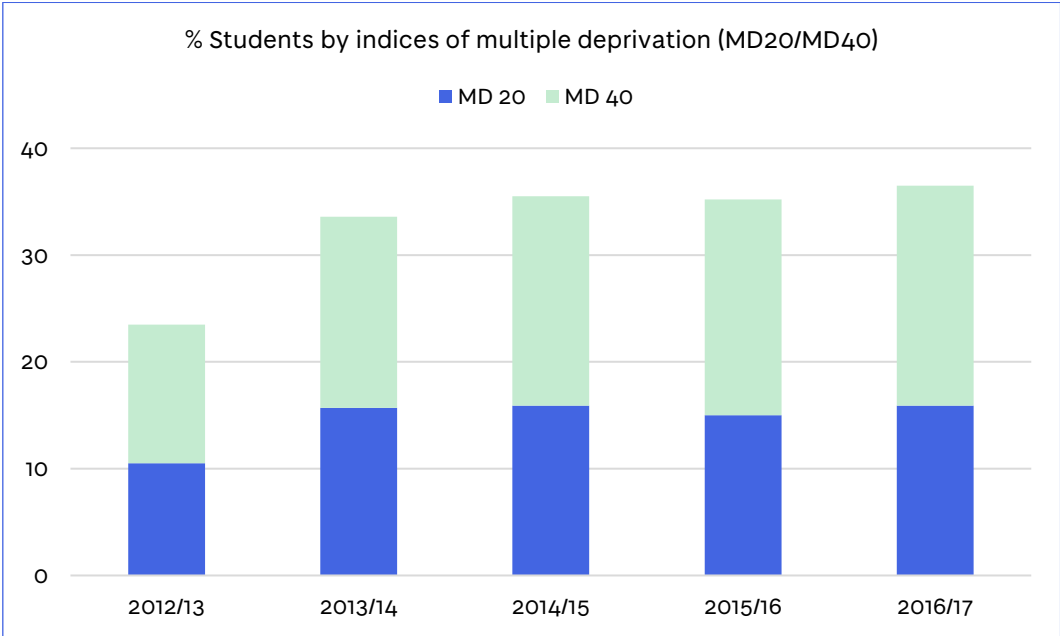


Figure 1.5: Proportion of Scottish students admitted from deprived areas. The data are from our student management system (SITS).

Student retention

1.2.7 Student retention is a high priority area for the University, particularly as we have such a high proportion of students from areas of multiple deprivation. Oversight is provided by a Retention and Progression Committee reporting to the Quality and Academic Standards Committee and the Learning and Teaching Committee. The University developed a [strategy for retention and progression](#)⁴ in 2014. The associated action planning is currently under review following the development of

⁴ The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is the tool used by the Scottish Government to identify areas of multiple deprivation in Scotland. We use the prefix 'MD' as shorthand.

the University Strategy to 2022. Figures 1.6 and 1.7 show our retention rates over the past 5 years. Figure 1.8 shows our retention rates for students admitted from deprived areas and Figure 1.9 shows our retention rates for students who have declared a disability. Figure 1.10 shows our retention rates compared with the Scottish sector average. The student retention data are discussed in Sections 2.3 and 2.4.

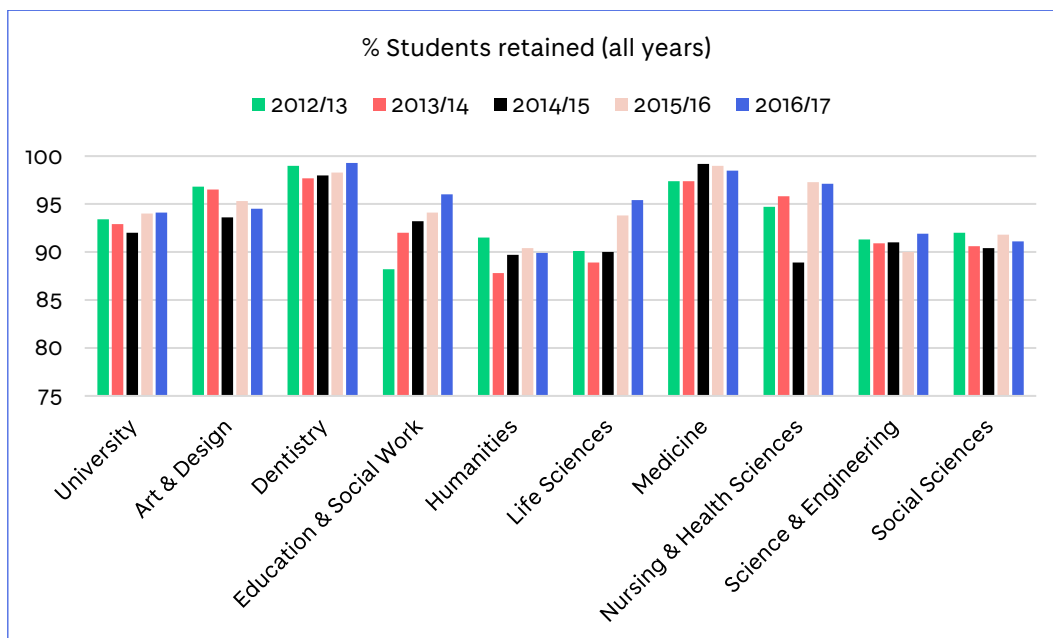


Figure 1.6: Retention rates for the University and its Schools (all years of study) for full-time undergraduate students (any domicile). The data are from our student management system (SITS).

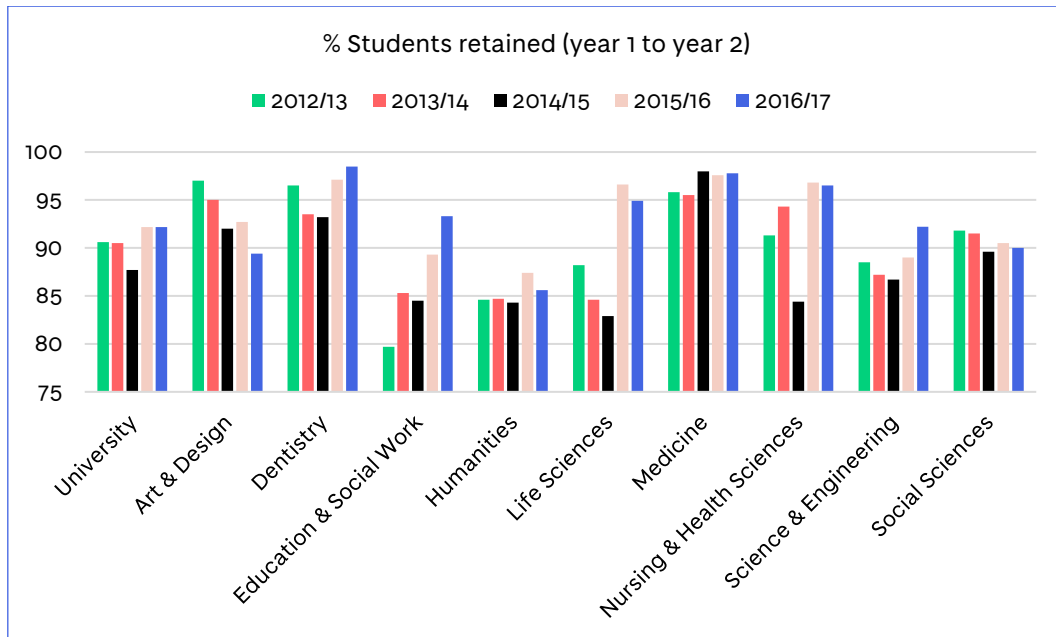


Figure 1.7: Retention rates for the University and its Schools (year 1 to year 2) for full-time undergraduate students (any domicile). The data are from our student management system (SITS).

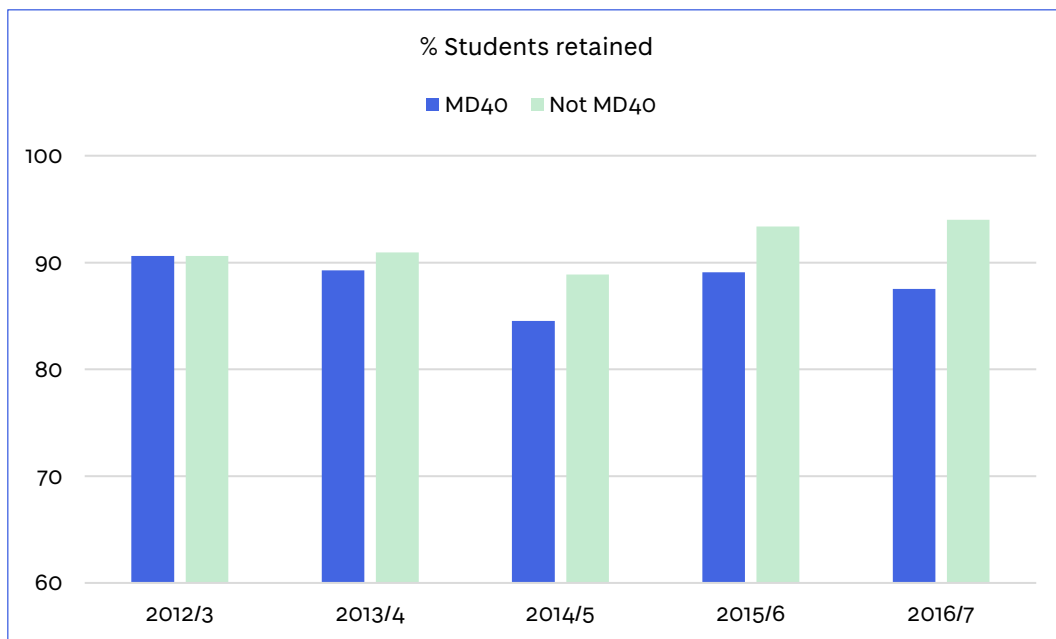


Figure 1.8: Retention rates (year 1 to year 2) for MD40 students and students who are not MD40. The data are from our student management system (SITS).

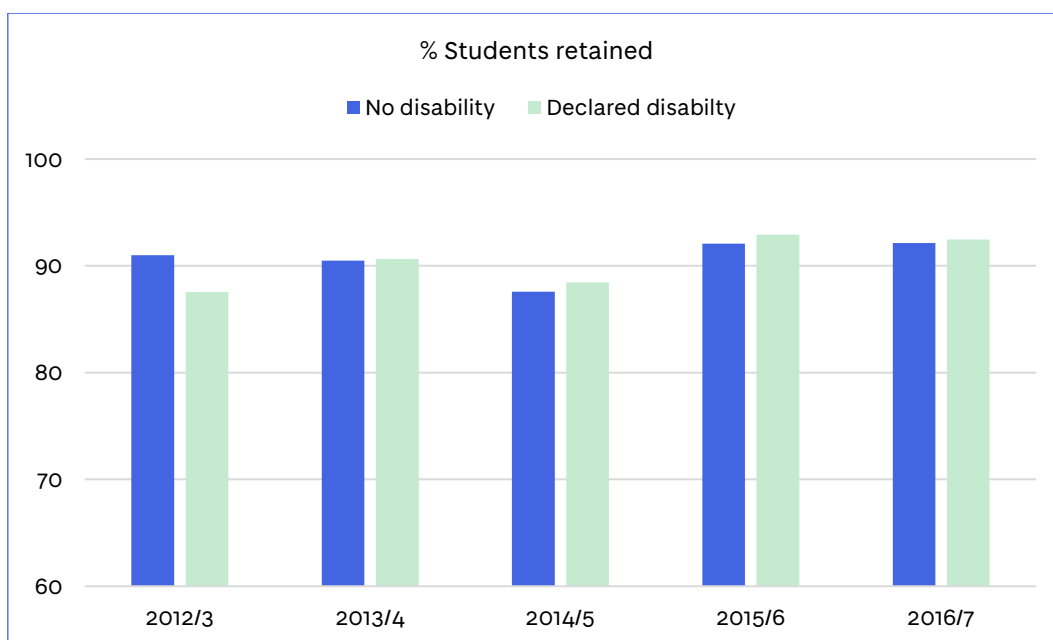


Figure 1.9: Retention rates (year 1 to year 2) for students who have declared a disability and students with no known disability. The data are from our student management system (SITS).

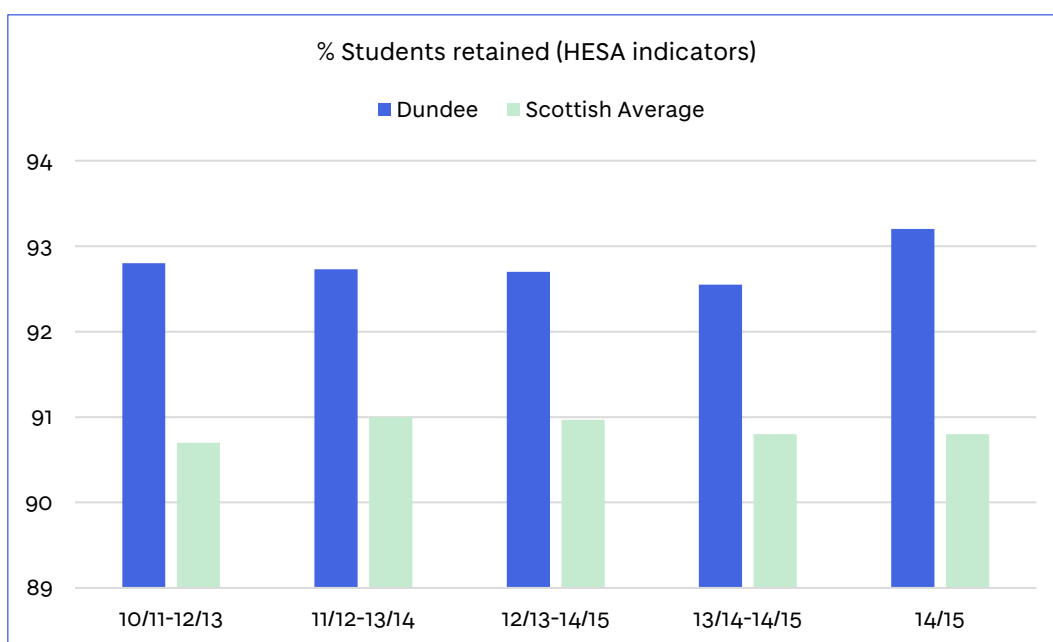


Figure 1.10: Retention rates (year 1 to year 2) compared with the Scottish sector average. The data are HESA indicators, where retention data are averaged over periods of time.

Student achievement

1.2.8 Figure 1.11 shows the percentage of students receiving an upper second-class honours degree or above over the past 5 years. This data is internal data and includes all students with honours degrees. It is slightly different to the Heidi data used in league tables, which differentiates between first degree and other

undergraduate students, and uses data from first degree students only.⁵ Note that the high achievement levels seen for Medicine and Dentistry reflect the fact that the unclassified undergraduate qualifying degrees (MBChB and BDS respectively) are recorded as upper second-class or above. The School of Nursing and Health Sciences is not included as the School did not offer honours level qualifications until 2017/18. The increase in the percentage of students achieving a first-class or upper second-class honours degree over the past five years is discussed in Section 4.2.

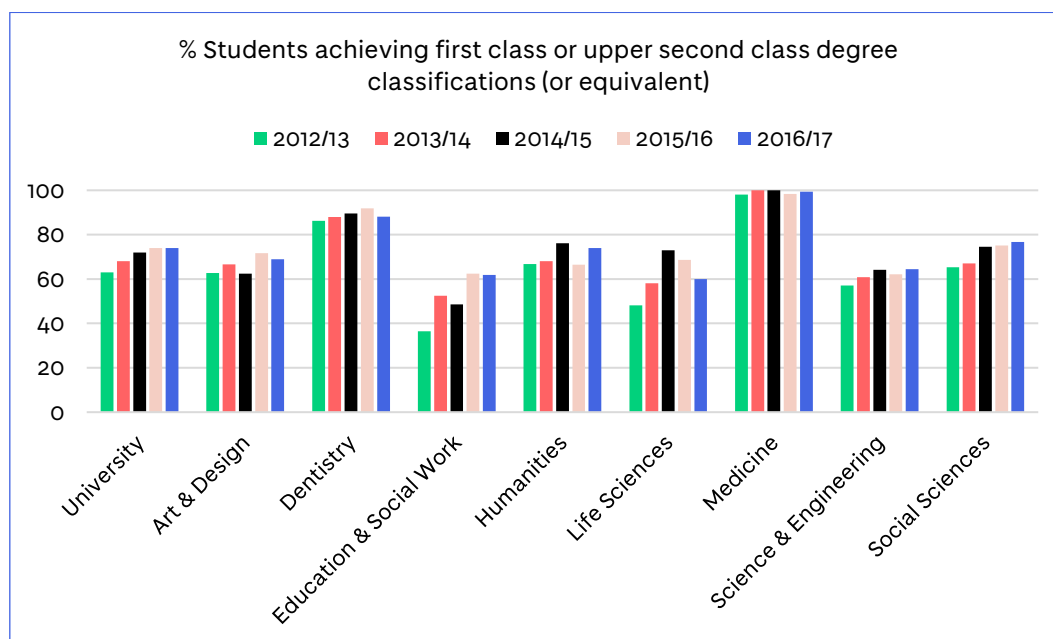


Figure 1.11: Percentage of students receiving an upper second-class or first-class degree (or equivalent). The data are from our student management system (SITS).

1.3 Preparation for ELIR

Development of the Reflective Analysis

1.3.1 As with previous ELIR cycles, we took the view that it is important that the ELIR method has a positive impact on the way forward for our University so that the outcomes and recommendations help us realise our Transformation Vision. We engaged with ELIR 4 with a view to promoting the further development of our strategic approach to enhancement of all aspects of the student experience. We took the approach that the Reflective Analysis should be a document that was developed by staff and students, containing a collective evaluation of where we are strong and areas where there needs to be development. In order to ensure that there was appropriate consultation on the drafting of our Reflective Analysis, we set up an ELIR Steering Group (which acted as the executive team) and an ELIR Working

⁵ 'Other undergraduate' refers to students where it is not their first degree. This group represents ~ 10% of our undergraduate student population.

Group (which was a larger consultation group) to manage the process. The roles of the two groups were to monitor progress with the Reflective Analysis, contribute to it and validate its content, as well as to agree on the contextual themes following a wider consultation with staff and students.

- 1.3.2 The ELIR Steering Group comprised: the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching); the Director of Quality and Academic Standards; the Head of the Academic Skills Centre; the DUSA President; the DUSA Vice-President Academia; the DUSA Democratic Support and Policy Coordinator; the Director of Academic and Corporate Governance; the Director of Strategic Planning; and the Quality and Academic Standards Officers.
- 1.3.3 The ELIR Working Group comprised: the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching); the Director of Quality and Academic Standards; the Head of the Academic Skills Centre; the DUSA President; the DUSA Vice-President Academia; the DUSA Democratic Support and Policy Coordinator; the School Associate Deans for Learning and Teaching or Quality and Academic Standards; the Director of Registry; and representatives from other Professional Services Directorates as required.
- 1.3.4 The Steering Group met on three occasions between October 2017 and April 2018 and the Working Group met on three occasions between November 2017 and April 2018. Once a substantive working draft of the Reflective Analysis had been developed, the Steering Group and Working Group merged and met on one further occasion to agree on the content of the final draft. Notes from the meetings are available to the ELIR team from Box⁶.
- 1.3.5 Key to our approach to consultation on the development of the Reflective Analysis was a series of four workshops held between December 2017 and April 2018. The first workshops focused on identification of areas of good practice and areas for development and capturing views on the context of the Reflective Analysis. For this purpose, we held separate staff and student workshops, with DUSA developing and organising the student workshop. The follow-on workshops comprised a mix of staff and students and focused on the detailed development of the Reflective Analysis. The workshops were structured so that staff and students from different areas of the University could work together in groups to develop the Reflective Analysis. They generated a rich source of developmental material (particularly around support for distance learners) as well as providing an opportunity for colleagues to reflect together and share practice. One of our Associate Deans who was facilitating the discussions described the process as ‘enhancement in action’. There were high levels of engagement with the workshops and informal feedback from participants

⁶ Box is the document-sharing software used by the University.

suggested that there was confidence that their contributions had been listened to and acted upon.

- 1.3.6 The initial drafting of the Reflective Analysis was carried out with oversight from the ELIR Steering Group. This group worked together to develop an outline Reflective Analysis for sharing with the Working Group and then with the wider University community. Post-holders with specific areas of responsibility and expertise contributed to particular elements of the Reflective Analysis. The School Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching and Quality and Academic Standards) made a major contribution to the consultative process of the Reflective Analysis development through communicating to and from School reporting structures.
- 1.3.7 A briefing paper and PowerPoint presentation were developed to help raise awareness of ELIR during the early preparation stages. These were presented to School and University committees by members of the Working Group. The DUSA Vice-President Academia and Vice-President Representation used the materials to brief the School Presidents Forum and the SRC. Our [Highlighter](#)[□] newsletter (see Section 3.4) was also used to help raise awareness and engage the University community.
- 1.3.8 A substantive working draft of the Reflective Analysis was considered by the Learning and Teaching Committee at its final meeting of the academic year (8 May 2018). A subsequent iteration was presented to Senate for consultation at its final meeting of the academic year (23 May 2017) with a request for the Senate to assign authority to the Quality and Academic Standards Committee to approve the final composition of the documentation at its meeting of 27 June 2018. The University Court was also asked to consider and approve a final working draft at its meeting of 11 June 2018 on the understanding that further minor revisions would be made before submission of the document to QAA Scotland.

The Advance Information Set

- 1.3.9 We decided to conduct the mapping of our policies and procedures to the UK Quality Code at an early stage of our preparations for ELIR so that the mapping exercise formed part of our evaluation of the effectiveness and relevance of our policies and practices. We mapped each of the indicators of sound practice and the supporting statements against our policies and practices and used a Red Amber Green (RAG) approach to identify any areas for development. Examples of areas for development identified through the mapping exercise include implementation of our policy on the recognition of prior learning (see paragraph 1.4.4) and a need to review and revise our policy on academic misconduct by students. The latter was addressed during academic year 2017/18 and a new policy has been developed for academic year 2018/19 (see Section 4.2). Our mapping exercise is summarised in the tables presented in the Advance Information Set which are also publicly available

within our Quality Framework webpages ([Mapping of University policies and practices to the UK Quality Code²](#)).

Contextualised themes for the Reflective Analysis

1.3.10 The contextualised themes were developed through gathering staff and student opinion at the initial ELIR workshops and discussions at the ELIR Steering Group, the Working Group and the Quality and Academic Standards Committee. We agreed that it was important that the themes should be aligned with the new University Strategy to 2022 and that they should reflect strengths that we want to build on and new areas for growth and development. With this in mind the following areas were chosen as the priority themes:

- Student Engagement
- Internationalisation
- One Dundee

1.3.11 Student Engagement was chosen as an area of strength that we want to build on. Internationalisation is an area for growth, and taking a One Dundee approach is an area for development. The last is aligned with our ongoing Business Transformation project described in Section 1.1.

1.4 Follow-up to the previous ELIR

Outcome from ELIR 3

1.4.1 Our ELIR 3 visits took place during autumn 2013, and the overarching judgement was that 'the University of Dundee has **effective** arrangements for managing academic standards and the student learning experience. These arrangements are likely to continue to be effective in the future. This is a positive judgement, which means the University has robust arrangements for securing academic standards and for enhancing the quality of the student experience.' The following areas of positive practice were identified:

- Effective development and implementation of Vision and Strategy
- Student engagement
- Proactive student support
- Widening participation
- Employability
- Staff support and development
- Enhancement from quality assurance processes

The following areas for development were identified:

- Institutional oversight
- Recognition of prior learning
- Support for postgraduate students who teach

Actions taken in response to ELIR 3

- 1.4.2 Our [follow-up report to ELIR 3](#)⁷ describes the actions taken one year on from publication of the [outcome](#)[□] and [technical](#)[□] reports. Here we describe the developments over the past five years, with a particular focus on the recommendations.
- 1.4.3 Of key importance in the discussion about the follow-up to ELIR 3 is the major University restructuring that took place in the summer of 2015. This resulted in a commitment to a One Dundee approach to many of our activities, which is fully aligned with the principal area for development identified by the ELIR 3 review team. An important element of this was a revision of our Assessment Policy (described in Section 4.2) to include a One Dundee approach to mitigating circumstances and dealing with late submissions of assignments amongst other things. The establishment of a central Quality and Academic Standards Office, along with the University Quality and Academic Standards Committee and the School Associate Dean positions with responsibility for quality and academic standards, have also been pivotal in the development and promotion of a One Dundee approach to enhancement of the quality of the student experience.
- 1.4.4 With regard to recognition of prior learning, we reviewed and revised our [Policy and Guidance on the Recognition of Prior Learning](#)[□] in 2014. There is still work to be done in this area. Our progress on recognition of prior learning was one of the areas for development that we identified during the mapping of our policies and procedures to the Quality Code, where we recognised that we had not progressed as well as we would have liked due to other competing priorities. For example, the public information on the University webpages for prospective students on recognition of prior learning is not as clear as it could be, and it is still down to Schools to publish their own information about application processes. The further work required to enhance our practice will be led by Quality and Academic Standards in collaboration with the Academic Skills Centre and Student Recruitment and Admissions. Developments will be aligned with the building of the new student management system.
- 1.4.5 We have made considerable progress with support for postgraduates who teach, where the [Academic Skills Centre](#)[□] provides a training programme which is now mandatory for postgraduates who teach. The [Learning to Teach in Higher Education](#)[□] programme is specifically aimed at postgraduates and comprises five interactive workshops:
- Introduction to teaching
 - Planning your teaching and supporting your students
 - Assessment and feedback
 - Teaching masterclass
 - Reflection and next steps

1.4.6 There is also observation of teaching by a member of the Academic Skills Centre who provides constructive feedback. The workshops are complemented by online materials from our Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice in Higher Education programme, and can provide a starting point for postgraduates who are considering engagement with the Associate Module and gaining Associate Fellow status with the Higher Education Academy (HEA, now incorporated into Advance HE).

1.5 Engaging students in the ELIR preparations

1.5.1 DUSA, School representatives and students played a major role in our ELIR preparations. The President of DUSA, the Vice-President Academia and the Democratic Support and Policy Coordinator were full and active members of the Steering Group and the Working Group. The Vice-President Academia and the Vice-President Representation provided a briefing about ELIR to the School Presidents' Forum and the SRC. As part of our series of ELIR workshops (described above in Section 1.3), the Vice-President Academia and the Democratic Support and Policy Coordinator organised a student-led workshop where the student facilitators received training from the University's Organisational and Professional Development unit. No staff members were part of the workshop, and the Vice-President Academia provided a note of the discussions which contributed to our reflections and helped shape the contextual themes for the Reflective Analysis. Following on from the initial workshops, the 2 workshops to develop the Reflective Analysis had a mix of staff and students, and all participants engaged purposefully and productively. The workshops were organised in a café-style format with a mix of students, academic staff and Professional Services staff at each of the different tables. The students were proactive and engaged, which ensured that an appropriate balance of student and staff views fed into the development of the Reflective Analysis.

1.5.2 The DUSA Vice-President Representation shared a working draft of the Reflective Analysis with the School Presidents' Forum. The School Presidents were asked to give particular attention to the evaluative sections at the beginning of Chapters 2-5. The feedback was generally positive, although with some criticisms about readability for a wider audience, the balance between reflection and description and the amount of critical analysis. Their views were taken on board for subsequent iterations.

1.5.3 DUSA's Democratic Support and Policy Coordinator gathered feedback from the executive team and provided detailed input to the various drafts of the Reflective Analysis, as well as providing the *Focus On* mini case study on Open Badges. The Democratic Support and Policy Coordinator also ensured that there was continuity between the outgoing DUSA executive team and the incoming executive team

during their handover in the summer of 2018. This meant that the incoming team could engage fully with ELIR 4 from the outset.

- 1.5.4 The involvement of students has been central to our approach to evaluation and forward-planning as part of ELIR 4. Their views have helped shape the overall look and feel of the Reflective Analysis, as well as making a major contribution to the identification of good practice and areas for development. Student engagement with ELIR 4 also ensured that a partnership approach was taken to identifying our contextual themes. As for ELIR 3, we set out on the premise that our approach to working in partnership with our students is effective. Student engagement with the process confirmed this, and ensured that our ethos of engagement and partnering with our students is appropriately highlighted in the Reflective Analysis.

2

Enhancing the student
learning experience



2. Enhancing the student learning experience

2.1 Evaluation summary

- 2.1.1 The student experience at Dundee is a top priority for us. Our aim is for all of our students to benefit from a first-class learning experience with excellent graduate outcomes. We take a partnership approach to enhancement and work in close collaboration with DUSA to ensure that the student view is at the centre of decision-making and strategy relating to enhancement of the student experience. We have a well-developed and effective student representation system and a culture of consultation and responding to feedback. We work to foster a strong sense of community and belonging and, together with DUSA, provide a comprehensive range of academic and pastoral support opportunities.
- 2.1.2 Our strong commitment to enhancement of the student learning experience is evidenced by: high levels of student satisfaction in national student surveys; excellent and improving employment statistics; strong retention and progression statistics; our investment in the learning environment; our responsiveness to students' views; and our continually-developing approach to working in partnership with our students through our Student Partnership Agreements and other strategic initiatives that are taken forward together with our students. We recognise the main areas for development, which include: representation for distance learning and postgraduate students; our Academic Advisers System; and ensuring that students know how their feedback has been acted upon, and are confident that we are taking an evidence-based approach to enhancement of the student learning experience. Although we are working within a resource-restrained environment, enhancement of the student learning experience remains an area of strength for the University.

2.2 Student representation and engagement

Approach to student representation

- 2.2.1 Our student representation structures are briefly described in Section 1.1 ([Student Representation Structures](#)) and are set out more fully in our annual [Joint Agreement Between DUSA and the University on Student Representation](#)¹. The Joint Agreement is based on the following commitments:
- DUSA and the University will collaborate to enhance student representation at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels
 - The University and its staff will promote and engage with student representation via forums such as: student-staff liaison committees; School- and University-level committees and their working groups; periodic programme review boards; and PSRB accreditation events

- DUSA will encourage student representatives to contribute fully to such forums and the University will assist in the training of representatives where appropriate
- DUSA will encourage students to provide constructive feedback at all levels, both via internal processes (for example module and programme feedback) and via national surveys (for example, the NSS, the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey, the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey and the International Student Barometer)
- The University and its staff will respond timeously and constructively to issues raised by students and will report back on actions taken
- The University will assist DUSA to run elections for representative posts, including delegating staff to act as returning officers and to support online electoral systems
- Staff in the Academic and Corporate Governance Directorate will be available to provide advice on representation issues to DUSA when required and similarly the DUSA executive will provide advice on representation issues to University staff
- The University and DUSA will together engage with national initiatives such as the QAA Scotland Quality Enhancement Themes and with national bodies, such as the QAA, sparqs (student partnerships in quality Scotland) and Advance HE

2.2.2 The representation structure has been designed to ensure that student representatives are involved at every level of decision making within the University. The structure ensures that issues are dealt with at the appropriate level. For example, matters concerning a specific module can be addressed by the Class Representative directly with the module leader or at a student-staff liaison committee without the need to escalate local issues. On the other hand, where an issue is of relevance to the entire student community, it can be reported through the representation structure to the DUSA executive team. Consideration and action will then be taken through formal mechanisms involving University committee structures or informal mechanisms such as discussion with members of the University Executive Group or Directors of the relevant Professional Services.

2.2.3 DUSA plays a key role in student representation and engagement through its oversight of the SRC and the School Presidents' Forum. Details of the individual roles of the SRC members are provided in our Joint Agreement on Student Representation. Their general duties are: to set and direct policy to improve the running of DUSA and the University of Dundee; to hold the DUSA executive team to account; to monitor and discuss policy proposals brought to the SRC; to campaign and lobby on behalf of the student body; to raise concerns on behalf of the student body about actions or policies at DUSA and the University of Dundee; to consider

views and comments of other councillors and of their own constituents; and pastoral obligations towards their constituents.

- 2.2.4 DUSA is responsible for the training of all student representatives with support, where required, from University staff. DUSA's Democratic Support and Policy Coordinator has developed a suite of training opportunities for student representatives. [Training for Class Representatives](#)⁷ comprises a series of face-to-face workshops and online training. Online training is also provided for [School Presidents and Vice-Presidents](#)⁷. The Presidents and Vice-Presidents are invited to complete a questionnaire to test their learning at the end of the programme, which provides the opportunity to be awarded an Open Badge after successfully completing the training (see also Section 2.4).
- 2.2.5 In addition to having a Rector to champion the student voice on the University Court, students are represented by the DUSA President as well as an independent student member. The independent student member is elected by the student body as part of the elections run by DUSA but is not part of the DUSA executive team. Elected individuals are full members of the SRC. In the event that there are no nominations for the independent student member of Court, DUSA will nominate one of its members to fulfil the role.
- 2.2.6 There is an additional route for students to feed their views into the student representation structures which has recently been taken forward by DUSA. [SRC Online](#)⁷ encourages students to feed back their ideas on improving areas such as: welfare services; learning and teaching; facilities; student activities and volunteering; housing; equality; employability; and representation. It provides an electronic form that any student can use to submit their ideas to the SRC.
- 2.2.7 We use a variety of means to encourage students to engage with representation including our annual [Student Voice](#)⁶ (previously known as Students Matter) publication which is co-created by DUSA and the University. This is a short flyer-type publication designed to raise awareness of student representation structures and opportunities to become student representatives. It is distributed to students during the Welcome Programme.
- 2.2.8 During semester 2 of academic year 2017/18 we piloted the deployment of Student Voice Support Officers to promote and embed representation in the Schools. DUSA appointed 2 student officers (who were paid and contracted to work for 8 hours per week) to work with student representatives in the Schools of Art and Design, Social Sciences and Science and Engineering. The role was designed to involve: working directly with the relevant School President to provide assistance, support and advice; coordinating and meeting with the School Vice-Presidents to monitor completion of their duties, collate feedback reports on the learning experience, and help communicate updates from the School President; collating and undertaking analyses of reports and student-staff liaison committee minutes, and

communicating their findings to the School President, the DUSA Democratic Support and Policy Coordinator and the Vice-President for Representation; and assisting the Democratic Support and Policy Coordinator in the training of Class Representatives. DUSA provided the Learning and Teaching Committee with an evaluation of the pilot at the last meeting of academic year 2017/18. There had been some challenges with clarity about the role and its breadth which will be taken on board for academic year 2018/19, where it is intended that 5 Student Voice Support Officers will be appointed for semester 1. The School of Social Sciences, which is our largest and most diverse School, will have one dedicated officer and all of the other Schools will have one officer who is shared with another School. It is anticipated that the Student Voice Support Officers will strengthen the link between DUSA and the School representatives but we are not yet in a position to evaluate fully the effectiveness of this new development.

Student partnership agreements

2.2.9 The University and DUSA work together to develop an annual [Student Partnership Agreement](#)[□] to further enhance the experience of our students. Our Student Partnership Agreements, which have been in place since 2013, detail agreed priorities for each academic year and include key performance measures to help with evaluation of effectiveness. We also set out statements on the context of the Student Partnership Agreement and the overarching principles that define student engagement and representation. The annual Student Partnership Agreement complements other strategic documents such as the [Joint Agreement on Student Representation](#)[□], the [Memorandum of Understanding between DUSA and the University](#)[□] and the [Code of Practice Regarding the Implementation of the Education Act 1994 - Provisions Relating to Students' Unions](#)[□].

2.2.10 We are continually working to improve the impact and effectiveness of our Student Partnership Agreements and during academic year 2017/18 have been piloting the development of School-level partnership action plans. These are aligned with the University-wide Student Partnership Agreements and comprise a series of School-specific actions agreed between the School Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) and student representatives. The action plans are informed by end-of-semester reports provided by School Presidents, the outcomes of student-staff liaison committees and discussions between student representatives and Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching, and Quality and Academic Standards). The action plans are approved by the School Learning and Teaching Committee.

Responding to student views

2.2.11 In addition to the student representation structures and Student Partnership Agreements described above, there are a variety of different structured ways that we listen and respond to student views. It is important to state that the structured

methods described below are in addition to our normal practices of listening and responding to students as individuals.

- 2.2.12 The National Student Survey (NSS).** We have been participating in the NSS for 10 years and have been listening to the student voice through the survey to continually drive improvements to the student experience. Whilst overall student satisfaction in the NSS was a key performance indicator for our University strategy 2012-2017, we also undertake forensic analyses of all of the data, including the optional questions that we use for areas that are of particular interest to us.
- 2.2.13** The Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching) and the Strategic Planning Office produce an annual analysis of the NSS results that is shared with Schools, Directorates and the Learning and Teaching Committee. In order to share good practice and promote enhancement we hold an annual NSS forum where the results are discussed together with representatives from Schools and Directorates in a semi-informal setting with short presentations from a selection of programme/discipline leaders to promote discussion and the sharing of ideas for enhancement.
- 2.2.14** Schools take a variety of approaches, including discussions at student-staff liaison committees and specific NSS dissemination events, to share the NSS results with their students and discuss actions to be taken as a result of the feedback. School Presidents are encouraged to engage with the data analyses and action planning, including via the School Presidents' Forum. The approach used by the School of Science and Engineering is described in the *Focus On* mini case study below as an example of good practice.

Focus On: Working in Partnership with Students in Responding to Feedback

Engaging students with the outcomes from the NSS. The School of Science and Engineering always aims to close the feedback loop in response to student feedback about the modules and programmes in the School. It was recognised that student feedback from the NSS was also a source of information that would benefit from a process of working with students to take forward actions from the feedback received. The Associate Deans for Learning and Teaching and Quality and Academic Standards worked closely with their School President and Vice-Presidents to develop a way of involving students in the way the School responds to the NSS outcomes. Together they developed a process that makes the student representatives key partners in producing actions plans with each of the programme leaders to develop enhancements to their programmes.

The process for preparing the action plans was student focused and started with the School President meeting with the Associate Deans for Learning and Teaching and Quality and Academic Standards. This meeting allowed the students and staff to decide on an appropriate strategy to manage a response to the NSS from across the School. The School President was provided with full access to all of the data generated from the NSS to help understand the topics that had been raised. The School President and Associate Deans then met with each discipline lead in the School to outline the main areas for consideration, after which student representatives met with each programme team to prepare an action plan. The draft plan was subsequently discussed at student-staff liaison committees to gain further student input into the process. To disseminate good practice and promote enhancement across the School, an opportunity was taken at a School Board meeting for each discipline lead to present their action plans to the rest of the School. This was promoted as an enhancement opportunity, as the good practice that had been developed in individual programmes could then be reflected upon by other programme teams.

2.2.15 The International Student Barometer. Since 2007 we have also been using the International Student Barometer to evaluate the experience of international students and to respond to their feedback. The survey is hosted by i-Graduate and is sent to all of our full-time EU and international undergraduate, taught postgraduate, research and exchange students across all levels. This is the main mechanism for us to measure how satisfied our non-UK students are with their experience across a number of areas and respond to feedback from our international students.

2.2.16 The Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey and the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey. The surveys for postgraduate students provided by the former HEA (now incorporated into Advance HE) have been our principal mechanism for garnering feedback from postgraduate students for many years. Analyses of the results of the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey and the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey are produced by the Academic and Corporate Governance Directorate and are discussed at the Learning and Teaching Committee and the Research Degrees Subcommittee respectively. Following on from the revision of the HEA's subscription model, we are piloting our own taught postgraduate student survey in 2018. At the time of writing, a working group is

exploring how we might work in partnership with other Scottish institutions, including the University of St Andrews, to enable benchmarking to take place.

- 2.2.17 Transforming the Experience of Students Through Assessment (TESTA).** We adopted the [TESTA](#)⁷ method in 2012 and now use it as part of our periodic programme review process. The essential aims of TESTA are to analyse assessment and feedback as experienced by students and to use that information to guide curriculum review and development (see Section 2.4). Students' experiences of assessment are captured through surveys and focus groups, and their views are a key driver of enhancement of assessment and feedback through the TESTA method.
- 2.2.18 Module evaluations.** The University requires that student feedback on modules is sought, and there is a section in the annual programme and module enhancement reports that requires reflection on student feedback.
- 2.2.19 DUSA surveys and focus groups.** DUSA regularly conducts surveys and focus groups to gather the student view on a variety of subjects. An example is their 'Student Matters' survey, conducted during academic year 2016/17, which focused on student welfare and resulted in the University providing additional staff resource for the Support Hub. DUSA also works with the Business School in commissioning market research projects to be undertaken by their students as part of their course work. The market research projects relate to the student experience and the results provide information that is used by the DUSA team for enhancement.
- 2.2.20 Feedback from School Presidents.** A new development for academic year 2017/18 is the formal gathering of feedback from School Presidents on their experiences of each semester. This initiative is led by DUSA, and School Presidents are provided with a structured framework within which to provide their reflections. These are gathered and analysed by DUSA's Democratic Support and Policy Coordinator, as well as being used at the level of the Schools to inform the development of future School Partnership Action Plans. They are also shared at the level of the University.
- 2.2.21 School surveys.** Several Schools carry out School-wide surveys to augment their NSS data sets, particularly to gather the view of non-final year students.
- 2.2.22 Periodic programme review.** As described in Section 4.2, student feedback on the curriculum and the quality of learning and teaching is an integral part of the periodic programme review process. Student representatives are full members of periodic programme review boards.
- 2.2.23 Programme and module development.** Proposed changes to taught provision and the development of new modules and programmes involve input from students and their representatives (see Section 4.2).
- 2.2.24 General approach to consultation with students about improvements and changes to facilities.** Students are always consulted where major developments

that impact on the quality of the learning environment are proposed. This can be at the level of the Learning and Teaching Spaces Committee or the Digital Strategy Committee, where there is DUSA representation, or direct engagement of the student body in the design of their learning environment. We also have a Student Experience Oversight Group, comprising the President of DUSA, the Vice-President Academia, the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching), the University Secretary, the Director of Academic and Corporate Governance and the General Manager of the Students' Union, which is in place to make collective decisions about enhancement of the student support environment. An example of our approach to consultation with students on the design of their learning environment is provided in the *Focus On* mini case study below.

Focus On: A Partnership Approach to Designing the Learning Environment

Consultation with students on the design of the Library. The first stage in any planning process to develop our Library buildings is to consult the students. The Library is at the heart of the student experience, and by listening to the opinions of those who use the building the most, we make sure that the building works for them.

In Autumn 2015 we consulted students and University staff on our plans for the refurbishment of the middle floor of the Main Library. We used a variety of methods to capture as much feedback as possible:

- We ran an online survey
- An interactive display of other recently refurbished academic libraries was placed in the foyer with photos of innovative features. Students were invited to 'vote' for the designs they favoured by placing stickers on the appropriate photo
- A graffiti whiteboard invited suggestions and comments
- A suggestion box was provided
- A presentation was given to the SRC
- An open meeting was held for staff and students
- We met individually with student representatives and senior University managers to discuss the design plans

The next stage in the process was to discuss the feedback gathered from these various exercises with the SRC. Following a lively debate, the plans were adapted to include many of the features suggested by students, both undergraduate and postgraduate, and from academic staff in the Schools.

Some of the headline changes to the original plans were as follows:

- To create a chill-out zone for quiet relaxation breaks from study
- To compartmentalise the space as much as possible to provide a rich variety of study spaces, including a mix of silent and collaborative space and more bookable rooms with multimedia technology
- To create a separate study area for postgraduate students

In the event, the budget was not available for the Project that year. When budgets were approved the following year, we ran a further consultation to make sure we had captured the most up to date feedback, which resulted in further changes: an expansion of the postgraduate area to 60 places; a re-design of the positioning of the shelving to break up the space; and the provision of zip taps to enable students to make their own hot drinks. The refurbishment was carried out during the summer of 2017 and was completed in time for the beginning of academic year 2017/18.

2.2.25 Appointing committees. A student representative (normally the DUSA President or other DUSA sabbatical officer) is a full member of appointing committees for senior University staff. This includes the appointment of the Principal, the Vice-Principals, Deans and Directors.

Evaluation of our approach to student representation and engagement

- 2.2.26** With respect to our priority theme of student engagement, we have a strong track record in this area, and enhancement of the student experience through engagement and representation is an area where we will continue to build on existing strengths.
- 2.2.27** DUSA is a key player in our approach to student representation and engagement, and over the past 5 years the University has increased its support for DUSA through the funding of additional sabbatical officers (Vice-President Representation and Vice-President Student Welfare) as well as the full-time staff positions of Democratic Support and Policy Coordinator and Student Advice and Welfare Coordinator. The establishment of the roles of Democratic Support and Policy Coordinator and Vice-President Representation has resulted in significant improvements in the approach to training student representatives and engaging students with democratic processes such as the elections for student representatives. Academic year 2017/18 saw the highest ever turnout for the March elections for the DUSA executive team and the School Presidents, where we saw a 20.4% turnout with 27,626 individual votes cast. As we have moved to a new, more user friendly, election platform it is not possible to make accurate comparisons with previous years (nor discount the positive impact of an improved voting platform), but the data suggest that the number of individual voters has approximately doubled compared with previous years.
- 2.2.28** The University has chosen the route of funding and empowering DUSA to take charge of many elements of student representation, including the running of elections and delivering training for student representatives. This approach has appropriate oversight from the University through its Student Experience Oversight Group and the Election Liaison Committee (see the [DUSA Bye Laws⁷](#)), and is predicated on many years of working in partnership and an ethos of mutual trust.
- 2.2.29** Our students have been consistently satisfied with their Students' Association for many years, and the NSS scores for 2013 to 2016 (Table 2.1) show that we have been in the top 10 in the UK for this measure over that period. We were also top in Scotland over the 4-year period. The new NSS question 26 about effective representation by students' associations (Table 2.2)⁷ shows a lower level of satisfaction than when the question about students' associations was more generic, but we are still ranked in the UK top 20 and 2nd in Scotland for this measure.

⁷ Data for 2017 are presented separately as the changes to the questions in 2017 means that comparisons cannot be made.

NSS Question	% Satisfaction (UK ranking*)			
	2013	2014	2015	2016
Q 23 I am satisfied with the Students' Union (association or Guild) at my institution	82 (9)	86 (4)	88 (4)	88 (4)

Table 2.1: NSS results for the Students' Association (2013-2017). *The ranking excludes specialist organisations. Some of the ranks are tied.

2.2.30 The NSS questions for 2017 about the Learning Community and the Student Voice have provided valuable learning for us about students' views of their experience of community and being listened to (Table 2.2). Whilst there are high levels of satisfaction about the learning community, opportunities to provide feedback and staff valuing students' views, students were less positive about our approach to closing the feedback loop (Q 25).

NSS Question	% Satisfaction (UK ranking*)
	2017
Learning community overall	84 (9)
Q 21 I feel part of a community of staff and students	79 (8)
Q 22 I have had the right opportunities to work with other students as part of my course	89 (25)
Student voice overall	73 (24)
Q 23 I have had the right opportunities to provide feedback on my course	88 (20)
Q 24 Staff value students' views and opinions about the course	79 (26)
Q 25 It is clear how students' feedback on the course has been acted on	58 (79)
Q 26 The students' union (association or guild) effectively represents students' academic interests	65 (18)

Table 2.2: NSS results for the Learning Community and Student Voice (2017). *The ranking excludes specialist organisations. Some of the ranks are tied.

2.2.31 In recognition of the fact that only 58% of our undergraduate students agreed that it is clear how their feedback has been acted on, closing the feedback loop became a priority theme for our [Student Partnership Agreement](#)⁸ for academic year 2017/18. We agreed to tackle this issue by strengthening our approach to student representation, establishing a representatives' reporting structure and promoting a more consistent and effective approach to the operation of student-staff liaison committees. Performance indicators⁸ include the roll out of Open Badges to recognise the work of student representatives, stronger performance in the Student Voice section of the NSS, improved engagement with DUSA elections and positive

⁸ Our Student Partnership Agreements have included performance indicators since 2015. This development was a result of an internal audit and is a positive driver for actions being taken forward.

feedback from student representatives on the effectiveness of School student-staff liaison committees.

- 2.2.32** Our annual Student Partnership Agreements are an important component of our proactive approach to enhancing student representation and engagement. As they evolved we became aware that their effectiveness could be greatly improved if we could extend their reach further to the student body. Anecdotal evidence from DUSA suggested that there was limited awareness of the Partnership Agreements with our students. In order to improve the relevance of the Student Partnership Agreements and ensure that students can properly engage with strategic priorities we are currently piloting annual School Partnership Action Plans which are in place to bring the DUSA/University Student Partnership Agreements to life for the student body. It is intended that the School Partnership Action Plans will be informed by the end of semester reports from School Presidents. The School Partnership Action Plans are still at an early stage of development, and at the time of writing it is too early to evaluate their effectiveness. We are, however, optimistic that they will further engage students with a partnership approach to enhancement.
- 2.2.33** The high level of student satisfaction with their learning community ([Table 2.2](#)) provides evidence that our work to provide an inclusive and welcoming community for most of our undergraduate students is being effective. Our analyses of the NSS data in 2017 included a more comprehensive examination of student demographics than in previous years, and this revealed that part-time students (many of whom are studying by distance learning) are less satisfied with their learning community than full-time students. Here only 56% of students agreed with the statement 'I feel part of a community of staff and students'. Although this is perhaps not surprising, given that this student body is predominantly studying at a distance, it is an area where we wish to improve.
- 2.2.34** Our internal audit of the student experience (see Section 4.5) in 2017 was specifically aimed at the experience of distance learning students. With regard to student representation and engagement there was a recommendation for the University to work in partnership with DUSA to ascertain ways of improving the number of distance learning student representatives, which might include the introduction of incentives for students to volunteer to become student representatives. A working group, chaired by the President of DUSA, was convened during the summer of 2017 to address this recommendation. The group contributed to the development of a questionnaire for distance learners around their experience of representation, and 142 responses were received. At the time of writing the working group is in the process of developing a series of recommendations to the Learning and Teaching Committee which are based on the outcomes of the survey, shared good practice within the working group and a [new toolkit](#)⁷ on engaging students in online distance learning from sparqs. The sparqs toolkit development was facilitated through a meeting of participating Scottish universities hosted by DUSA.

2.2.35 A key aim of the [University Strategy to 2022](#)[□] is to ‘substantially grow and diversify our student body, ensuring that we remain a uniquely welcoming community’ and whilst we are confident that we are building from an area of strength for this arm of the Strategy, we recognise the need to ensure that this aim encompasses our students who are learning at a distance. We have a number of successful online distance learning programmes which we have been delivering for several years (Appendix 5). Sharing practice and enhancement of provision is supported by a [Distance Learning Forum](#)[□] which meets eight times each academic year (four times on campus and four times online) to showcase, share and develop good practice across the University. The Forum is attended by academic staff, Professional Services staff and student representatives, and has the explicit aims of fostering a strong sense of belonging beyond the University’s physical environment and championing the needs of distance learners. Recent Forum topics have included: inclusion and diversity; academic misconduct; the University’s virtual learning environment; effective tools for online learning and teaching; and accessibility.

2.2.36 The University has also recently appointed an Academic Lead for Distance Learning. Part of the remit of this new position is to act as a champion for distance learning to ensure that the University always has due regard to the needs of distance learning programmes and students, and to work with DUSA and Quality and Academic Standards to strengthen the student voice of distance learners.

2.3 Recognising and responding to equality and diversity in the student population

Approach to inclusive practice

2.3.1 The University is committed to providing inclusive and equitable learning opportunities for all prospective and current students. This commitment is reflected in the relevant policies and guidelines described in the University’s Equality and Diversity webpages, the Student Services webpages, the Disability Services webpages, the Quality Framework and in the student-facing information provided by External Relations. University [policy and statutory publications](#)[□] recognise the responsibilities and requirements described in the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty in Scotland and the [British Sign Language \(Scotland\) Act 2015](#)⁷ (which requires universities to promote and support the use of British Sign Language as a language and to improve access to services for deaf and deafblind people). Oversight of our approach to inclusive practice is provided by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee which reports to the [People and Organisational Development Committee](#)[□] of Court. The University’s response to the Public Sector Equality Duty, including our Mainstreaming Report and Equality Outcome Plan is available on our [Statutory Duties Publications](#)[□] webpage. Our response to the British Sign Language (Scotland) Act, including our British Sign Language Plan, will

be available from our British Sign Language webpage which is expected to go live in October 2018.

- 2.3.2 The University supports disabled students through a range of dedicated facilities and services offered by [Disability Services](#)[△] (part of the [Student Services](#)[△] Directorate), including a regional [ACCESS Centre](#)[△] which has up to date facilities for evaluating and supporting a wide range of student needs and provides training on enabling technologies to assist learning. The ACCESS Centre is recognised as an accredited Disabled Students' Allowance needs assessment centre by student funding authorities. Disability Services works closely with staff and students across the University to ensure reasonable adjustments for students are implemented (see [Academic Adjustments Policy](#)[△]) and to raise awareness of inclusive practice, including through the provision of a range of [staff development](#)[△] opportunities.
- 2.3.3 There is also an [Alternative Formats Service](#)[△] to support staff in the provision of material in a suitable and accessible format for print disabled users. This service is a collaboration between University of Dundee IT (UoDIT), the Library and Learning Centre and Disability Services. It sources and provides library books in alternative formats, adapts examination papers and develops and distributes University-wide accessible Microsoft Office templates.
- 2.3.4 Evaluation of the effectiveness of services for disabled students is undertaken annually with consideration of the feedback received from all stakeholders. [Annual reports](#)[△], summarising Disability Services' activities, evaluation outcomes and progress against identified priorities, are considered by the Learning and Teaching Committee and published on the Disability Services webpages.
- 2.3.5 In 2009 the University introduced an online equality and diversity training programme to ensure that staff members are appropriately informed about their responsibilities and legal obligations. All members of staff are required to complete the following four modules:
- Diversity in the Workplace
 - Disability
 - Stress in the Workplace
 - A Manager's Guide to Stress
- 2.3.6 Staff involved with learning and teaching are also required to complete a Diversity in Learning and Teaching module. All new academic staff members are required to complete the online training as part of their probation. Staff participation in the training modules is monitored by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and the People and Organisational Development Committee of Court. Schools and Directorates are regularly provided with a breakdown of staff who have successfully completed the modules. Participation rates have improved significantly over the past five years, and currently stand at approximately 70%. More recently, a training module for students has been developed which is available for students on the

Virtual Learning Environment. It is not currently mandatory for students to complete the training module and we are considering ways, such as integration into credit-bearing modules or awarding Open Badges, to encourage greater participation.

- 2.3.7 Our [Periodic Programme Review](#)[□] and [Programme Approval](#)[□] procedures require the completion of an [inclusive curriculum checklist](#)[□] to ensure that due consideration has been given to equality and diversity and associated training requirements. The process for [Annual Review of Taught Provision](#)[□] also has a requirement to evaluate the inclusive nature of the curriculum and whether all teaching staff have undertaken the online equality and diversity training programme.
- 2.3.8 The University makes annual awards to recognise performance in teaching (see Section 3.5), one of which is the Honorary Graduates' Award for Inclusive Practice. This award is in place to recognise and encourage development of inclusive practice across the University and promote the removal of barriers to access for students protected by the Equality Act. The winner(s) receives a prize to fund practice development and the opportunity to present their work at our annual [Discovery Days](#)[□]. In addition, an [Inclusive Practice Showcase](#)[□] has been established to publicise examples of efforts aimed at improving inclusion across the University's activities (including the winners of the Inclusive Practice Award), and to encourage and inspire staff to adopt similar good practice.

Widening access

- 2.3.9 For many years the University has been committed to widening participation so that individuals from non-traditional or disadvantaged backgrounds have equal opportunities in higher education. This commitment has been further strengthened year-on-year through our annual [Outcome Agreements](#)⁷ with the Scottish Funding Council. The University has substantially increased the proportion of Scottish domiciled undergraduate entrants from MD20 and MD40 areas over the past 5 years (see Section 1.2 and [Figure 1.5](#)).
- 2.3.10 Our approach to [widening access](#)[□] is underpinned by articulation arrangements with local further education colleges, a [Contextual Admissions Policy](#)[□] and a suite of access programmes. The access programmes comprise both face-to-face ([Dundee University Access to Learning](#)[□], DUAL) and online ([Online Summer School](#)[□] and [Discover Learning at Dundee](#)[□]) programmes. The University also coordinates [Reach Tayside](#)[□], which is an initiative to encourage young people from 'non-traditional' backgrounds to consider university, particularly in the fields of Law, Medicine or Dentistry. In addition, we are the Tayside coordinator for [ACES](#)[□] (Access to Creative Education in Scotland) which provides senior year pupils with an insight into studying Art and Design and Architecture at university and offers support with university applications, including providing advice on building portfolios. We also run a [Discovering Degrees for Schools](#)[□] programme in order to help increase

participation in higher education from under-represented groups. Local secondary school pupils are invited to participate in sessions based on the University campus, which include interactive workshops, meeting University students, subject tasters, campus tours, visiting DUSA and working with pupils from other schools.

2.3.11 We have an articulation arrangement with Dundee and Angus College where students studying on Higher National programmes are also associate students with the University, with a view to them progressing into year 2 of our undergraduate programmes. The associate student arrangement helps them to integrate into university life and is supported by a [STEP UP](#)[△] (Student Transition Enhancement Programme for University Progression) module delivered by our [Academic Skills Centre](#)[△]. This module is specifically designed to support college students in transitioning to study in a university environment.

2.3.12 Care experienced applicants are invited to disclose their status directly to the University so that, wherever possible, individuals can be given a contextually-recognised offer that includes support through participation in DUAL or the Online Summer School. This ensures maximum pre-entry support and preparation prior to Student Services taking the support lead post-entry ([Care experienced/care leaver students](#)[△]). An action plan for Corporate Parenting has been developed, and plans to involve care experienced students in the University's Corporate Parenting Working Group are being progressed.

Students studying at a distance

2.3.13 Our online distance learning student population has access to the provision offered by Disability Services, with arrangements for Skype conversations being made as necessary. For students studying on our validated and double degree programmes support for students with protected characteristics is provided locally. An assessment of a prospective partner organisation's approach to equality and diversity is carried out as part of the due diligence and programme approval process, as well as being built into our normal programme review process.

Evaluation of our approach to recognising and responding to equality and diversity in the student population

2.3.14 Feedback from the ELIR workshops and the ELIR working group suggests that there is a strong and heartfelt commitment to inclusive practice across the University's Schools and Directorates. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Unit and Disability Services work together to support that commitment through the provision of support and the development of policies and practices. Disability Services provides a first-class service for students (and staff) and feedback on the service is very positive as evidenced by their [annual reports](#)[△]. The International Student Barometer (2017) showed that 88% of respondents were satisfied with Disability Services. This is close to the global and national averages. Our retention statistics for disabled students are similar to those for students with no known disability ([Figure 1.9](#)).

- 2.3.15 DUSA has recently developed a [zero tolerance policy](#)⁷ which seeks to eliminate sexism and sexual harassment and promote inclusion. Individuals who violate the policy are liable to face disciplinary action, and students are encouraged to speak out if they have been victims of sexual harassment, discrimination or behaviour that is bullying, threatening or intimidating. A large number of students sign up to this at matriculation, and the Vice-President Student Welfare actively promotes engagement. The promotion of the zero tolerance policy, with proactive encouragement for students to come forward with their concerns, has resulted in DUSA and the University experiencing an increase in the number of reports on issues relating to sexual harassment, discrimination and bullying behaviour. Alongside the DUSA zero tolerance policy development, there has been a recent review and revision of the University's Dignity at Work and Study Policy. The revised policy includes the further development of designated harassment advisor positions within the Schools and Directorates and clear descriptions of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. The University has also established an Equally Safe Working Group, chaired by the Director of Academic and Corporate Governance and comprising students and staff from across the Professional Services Directorates and Schools. The purpose of the group is to introduce appropriate support, signposting and guidance for staff and students affected by gender-based violence. The group is currently considering the implementation of the Equally Safe Toolkit developed by the University of Strathclyde.
- 2.3.16 Strategic Planning provides an interactive tool to analyse NSS satisfaction data by student characteristics (including age, disability, domicile, ethnicity, gender and mode of study). This supplements our existing NSS data dashboards and has been available to all University staff from 2017. Our internal data for 2017 show that, in terms of overall student satisfaction, there is little difference in the % satisfaction for the different student characteristics. The only exception to this relates to domicile, where EU students (excluding the UK) had an overall satisfaction score that was 6% lower than the University as a whole. There were certain themes that showed lower satisfaction for specific groups of students. For example, disabled students showed less satisfaction in the Student Voice section than the University as a whole. Disabled students (excluding students with a learning disability) were less satisfied with the learning community and students with a learning disability were less satisfied with organisation and management. Non-white students were less satisfied than white students in the Careers section of our optional questions. These are all areas that we will keep a close watch on and examine trends over time. It is worth noting that without benchmarking data it is difficult to know whether these trends are common to the sector or unique to Dundee.
- 2.3.17 We embed consideration of equality and diversity in all of our quality assurance processes as a way to encourage programme and module developers to ensure that the curriculum is inclusive. Programme approval and periodic programme review

requires the completion of an inclusive practice checklist which includes a declaration that all staff who teach on the programme have completed the University's online equality and diversity training. Staff are also encouraged to use the [Teachability](#)⁷ tool developed by the University of Strathclyde as part of programme development and review. The challenge with using quality assurance processes to promote inclusive practice is that it can sometimes be seen as a form-filling exercise rather than an opportunity to consider and reflect on equality and diversity in the curriculum. Feedback from the ELIR workshops suggests that there is more work to be done to ensure that inclusive teaching and assessment practices that anticipate the wide range of learner needs are embedded in the curriculum. With this in mind, Disability Services, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Unit and Quality and Academic Standards are working together to develop an Inclusive Learning Policy to replace the existing [Academic Adjustments Policy](#)⁸. This should be in place within the next 12 months.

- 2.3.18** We are particularly proud of our approach to widening access and [Figure 1.5](#) shows the proportion of our students admitted from deprived areas. It is of critical importance for us to make sure that this body of students are retained, progress and have positive attainment outcomes. With regard to student retention, retention of students from MD40 backgrounds is only slightly lower than the Scottish domiciled population as a whole ([Figure 1.8](#)). For those who participate in pre-entry support via DUAL or the Online Summer School, informal tracking suggests that retention is higher than those who do not. In some fields students who have participated in pre-entry support outperform the Scottish domiciled average.
- 2.3.19** Other than the support offered to participants in the pre-entry programmes, MD20/40 students are not routinely targeted for additional support as we aim to provide high quality support for all of our students. We may wish to review this approach in recognition of the additional challenges that this group of students faces. The School of Medicine found that many of their MD20/40 students are struggling to progress at the end of first year and has developed an evidence-based method to identify at risk students and provide additional support. This is described in the *Focus On* mini case study below.

Focus On: Student Support

Supporting students from areas of multiple deprivation. The School of Medicine has made significant progress with its widening access programme over the past few years, including the development of contextualised admissions, a Gateway to Medicine programme and, more recently, a summer school. As part of the contextualised admissions process applicants are given scores for adverse circumstances affecting their performance at school. Those who have experienced high adversity are more likely to be invited to interview.

Analysis of a formative assessment taken in the middle of semester 1 showed poor performance in subsets of students. The data showed that many MD20/40 students, particularly those with high adversity scores, were struggling with this assessment. The pattern was repeated in the end of year exams. Many students in this group were then required to repeat year 1 of the programme. In addition to the financial implications for the individuals concerned, this experience also had a negative impact on their confidence to progress.

The School recognised that this specific group of students needs additional support to 'learn how to learn', and has introduced specific interventions including the summer school, the formative assessment in semester 1 (including detailed analyses of the outcomes) and a series of extra sessions to support this student group in their learning.

This approach provides an example of how additional support can be provided to students from areas of multiple deprivation using an evidenced-based approach. Although it is too early to fully evaluate the effectiveness of the School's method of targeted support for disadvantaged students, it has been noted that MD20/40 students with high adversity scores who enter the programme through the Gateway to Medicine programme (which provides a substantial amount of study skills and confidence building work) do not struggle in the first year.

2.3.20 As our approach to using data improves, we are also starting to undertake more detailed analyses of student achievement in relation to demographics and protected characteristics. Although this data is now available through our data dashboards on the Virtual Learning Environment (My Dundee) for Schools to analyse, we have not yet undertaken a systematic analysis at the level of the University.

2.4 Supporting students in their learning at each stage of the learner journey

Pre-admission

2.4.1 The University provides a series of [open days](#)[△] and [campus visits](#)[△] in advance of the application cycles. These allow prospective students to visit our campuses and meet with staff and current students. We also work with secondary schools across the UK and organise events, such as Discovering Degrees for Schools, aimed at introducing pupils to higher education early. Activities coordinated by the Reach Tayside and ACES Tayside projects also help to encourage pupils from non-

traditional backgrounds and prepares them to make an application as described in Section 2.3 above.

2.4.2 Applicants to the University are provided with an applicant IT account which gives them access to email, eVision and My Dundee. These facilities are accessed through an [Applicant Dashboard](#)[□]. Applicants can check their application, upload documents and book events such as selection interviews through eVision. Undergraduate applicants with offers are invited to attend an Applicant Visit Day on our campus, giving them a further opportunity to meet with staff and current students before they decide which offer of a place to accept. We also regularly invite international applicants to meet travelling recruitment or academic staff in their own country so that we can answer any further questions they, or their families, might have. We have an applicant communications plan covering all stages of the application process from the point of initial receipt of the application up to the point of matriculation.

2.4.3 There is also a comprehensive [Welcome](#)[□] webpage which provides a range of information for both UK-based students and those from overseas. Our approach to pre-arrival communications is currently under review and, with regard to support of international students, Student Services is working in partnership with DUSA to produce a new international student handbook. Of particular importance in supporting students with entry to the University are the DUAL, Online Summer School and Discover Learning at Dundee programmes described in Section 2.3 above.

Arrival at the University

2.4.4 We run a Welcome Programme for new arrivals before and during Semester 1 and Semester 2. The Welcome Programme is specifically designed to induct students into university life at Dundee. It provides a range of social events and information and is aimed at both undergraduate and postgraduate students. In addition, the Welcome webpage describes all of the things that students have to do when they get here. A group, chaired by the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching), is currently reviewing welcome and induction activities for late-arriving students, predominantly from overseas.

Study skills support

2.4.5 Our [Academic Skills Centre](#)[□] is in place to support students in developing their academic skills as well as supporting academic staff in their teaching, learning and continuing professional development. [Academic Skills for Students](#)[□] provides: quick query drop-in sessions; an academic skills toolkit; an exam revision toolkit; and an 'exam bites' resource. One-to-one appointments are available to support students with their academic writing and other academic skills. The Centre also provides a Gateway to Learning series of generic workshops as part of the student Welcome Programme. It provides support for [digital literacies](#)[□] and a suite of

[modules and workshops](#)[△] to support student learning, as well as hosting the Royal Literary Fund (RLF) Writing Fellows. The RLF is an independent organisation that provides specific one-to-one support to students from professional writers, poets and journalists who advise on writing styles and technique. The Academic Skills Centre, the Library and Learning Centre and Student Services have developed a [LIVE Smart](#)[△] and [LEARN Smart](#)[△] resource for students which signposts students to key information to help with study and wellbeing.

2.4.6 English language support for international students is provided by [English for International Students](#)[△] which runs a variety of language courses throughout the academic year to support students who do not have English as their first language. English for International Students also provides pre-sessional English programmes to give students the language and study skills required to study in the UK. English for International Students is accredited by the British Council for the teaching of English in the UK.

Pastoral support

2.4.7 In addition to the study skills support described above, the Student Services Directorate ([Appendix 3](#)) provides a range of advisory and pastoral support services which includes the following:

- [Accommodation](#)[△]
- [Counselling](#)[△]
- [Disability Services](#)[△]
- [The Global Room](#)[△]
- [Health Service](#)[△] (including [Mental Health](#)[△])
- [Immigration Compliance](#)[△]
- [International Advice](#)[△]
- [Nightline](#)^{△9}
- [Nursery](#)[△]
- [Peer Connections](#)[△]
- [Stay on Course](#)[△]
- [Student Funding](#)[△]

2.4.8 An important aspect of student support is the provision of a first-stop-shop where students can receive direct support or clear signposting. The University has an [Enquiry Centre](#)[△] located at the heart of the city campus where students can receive direct help and advice about a range of matters including: accommodation; careers advice; CV preparation; exams; fees; general wellbeing and support; graduation; ID cards; international support/visas; money issues; and study support. The Enquiry

⁹ Nightline is a confidential listening and information service run by students for students.

Centre provides signposting to key services where direct help cannot be provided there. We also have drop-in provision one afternoon each week from the [Citizens Advice Bureau](#)[△].

- 2.4.9 DUSA also plays a key role in the pastoral support of students, particularly through [the Hive](#)⁷ which offers advice that is independent from the University. The Hive offers advice to students on any issues that they may face, and where help cannot be provided directly they help students with contacting appropriate support services. Advice is provided about academic support (including student appeals), employment, health care, housing, international student issues, mental health, money and budgeting, safety and sexual health, as well as on how to deal with any complaints that students might have about the University.
- 2.4.10 The University [Chaplaincy](#)[△], which forms part of the Principal's Office, provides a multi-cultural and supportive environment for various faith groups as well as for students with no religious beliefs. Its services and resources are available to all students and staff. Student Services and the Chaplaincy work closely together in the provision of pastoral services.
- 2.4.11 Academic year 2016/17 saw the development of our Support Hub, which provides a comprehensive range of support services for all students including those with diverse needs and those from disadvantaged backgrounds. The Counselling Service, the University Health Service, Disability Services and the Student Funding Unit are all now co-located within the Hub and have seen considerable benefits from sharing premises. The Support Hub is based in an accessible, centrally-located building on the city campus which makes it easier for students to access these services within a discreet, confidential setting. All Support Hub services are available to students based at other University campuses and those studying at a distance. Distance learners can, for example, be supported through the use of Skype.

Retention and progression

- 2.4.12 The University is committed to increasing rates of retention and progression and, in addition to the study skills and pastoral support described above, several key measures to help improve retention and progression have been put in place:
- An interactive, self-service data dashboard has been developed by Registry to allow Schools to examine the University data on retention and progression at the level of programmes and Schools. The data dashboard is available on My Dundee to all staff and can be interrogated so that trends over time and any trends with specific groups of students can be identified.
 - The University instigated a [policy on attendance monitoring](#)[△] and common procedures so that disengaging students can be identified and supported to re-engage.

- Academic Advisers are assigned to students on taught programmes to provide academic guidance and where necessary to refer students to the range of support services on offer.

Participation and engagement

- 2.4.13** Students are encouraged to participate and engage with the University community through a variety of approaches. The Careers Service supports [Dundee Plus](#)⁶; a personal skills development programme which recognises and adds value to the activities that students engage with outside of their degree. Through a combination of workshops, reflective writing and peer review, the programme helps students to reflect upon the skills they are developing, communicate their achievements, and investigate their desired career pathway. At the time of writing, 1544 students are registered on the Dundee Plus programme. A review of the award structure in 2018, which included feedback from DUSA, has led to a new structure that includes a more streamlined application process and a wider range of student-designed pathways to the award. The Careers Service launched a Leadership Plus programme for academic year 2017/18. Leadership Plus is aimed at students undertaking or about to undertake a leadership role in a club, society, team, job, voluntary role or other similar position, and provides skills development workshops, mentoring and a framework for reflection on learning.
- 2.4.14** DUSA plays an important role in student participation and engagement. It supports almost 200 [student societies](#)⁷ and is proactive in its approach to encouraging students to engage with societies and volunteering. The Vice-President Student Activities is responsible for extracurricular activities such as societies and volunteering. The Vice-President Engagement works to encourage students to get involved with a series of campus campaigns.
- 2.4.15** We have also been developing Open Badges to recognise and reward activities undertaken outside the curriculum. This is still at an early stage of development and is part of our overall commitment to foster student engagement. A pilot was taken forward as a collaborative project between DUSA, the Academic Skills Centre and the Centre for Technology in Innovation in Learning and focused on the recognition of and reward for students who actively engaged with student representation, including the training programme provided by DUSA. It forms part of our strategy to continuously improve student representation in partnership with DUSA, and it is hoped that the Open Badges will incentivise student engagement in representation, capture the impact of representation and reward achievement. The pilot is described in the *Focus On* mini case study below.

Focus On: Student Engagement with Representation

Recognising and rewarding representation. DUSA led a pilot on the use of Open Badges to recognise and reward student representatives during the summer of 2017. School Presidents and Vice-Presidents were the targeted cohort groups for the pilot. This corresponded with a number of new/amended tasks which were expected of these representatives. These tasks included:

- Successfully completing the online training
- Completing a Planning Tool
- Completing two semester reports (School Presidents only)
- Completing a reflective review

Each badge was designed to reflect important operations but was also complemented with specific meta-data. The meta-data provided an overview of what the badge represented and what the student had demonstrated in order to be awarded the badge. At the time of writing, DUSA has issued 27 Open Badges to school representatives and there have been 2,373 incidents of badge activity (Linkedin and Twitter). This represents each time a badge has been viewed, shared, placed or displayed.

The majority of the badges awarded were for the completion of the online training. Seven of the nine School Presidents were awarded badges and the rest were Vice-Presidents. Note that these figures only show those who submitted an end of training assessment and were awarded a badge. It does not indicate how many engaged with the training. Two students completed and submitted the planning badge and seven were awarded a badge for submission of their semester 1 report.

It is believed that there is great merit in the development of Open Badges to recognise and reward school representatives' work. Although certain activities and associated badges were not engaged with as much as others, this represents an important step in embedding them into the representation culture. We recognise that for the badges to increase in relevance and worth, it is vital for them to be accredited by the University as well as DUSA as it will allow them to be more closely tied to employability schemes such as Dundee Plus. Future developments to be considered include an Open Badge scheme for Class Representatives. It is clear that there is real potential for Open Badges to enhance students' employability and qualifications.

2.4.16 Students are also encouraged to engage with quality processes such as periodic programme review (see Section 4.2), TESTA (see below under [Assessment and Feedback](#)) and the development and approval of new taught provision. We also expect that Schools share and discuss external examiner reports with students (see Section 4.2).

2.4.17 Engagement with learning is promoted using different approaches that are often specific to the discipline. For example, the School of Humanities (which led an HEA-funded project in 2015 looking at approaches to learning and teaching that are most likely to engage and motivate Level 1 students in order to enhance retention and

attainment) developed a 'Human Futures' module which is specifically focused on active learning through collective/group learning and student engagement. The School of Social Sciences worked with English for International Students to develop a bespoke in-session English language module for international students undertaking Business programmes. This was designed to engage students with their learning by providing contextualised language support, and similar collaborations are being piloted in Architecture and Urban Planning. A further example is the development of the [Global Health Challenge](#)[□] programme, which won the Herald Higher Education Awards for Enhancing Student Learning in 2018. It is described in the *Focus On* mini case study below. Further Challenge programmes are in development including one on Social Justice and another on Mental Health and Wellbeing.

Focus On: Interdisciplinary Working

The Global Health Challenge programme. We created the Global Health Challenge as an opportunity for people from across different knowledge domains to work together to make a difference and transform lives by tackling one of the key challenges that the University has identified: improving social, cultural and physical wellbeing. Launched in October 2016, this annual initiative seeks to develop genuine solutions in an enterprising and entrepreneurial way, tackling the thorny problem of health equality under a range of themes.

As a collective the initiative is fuelled by a need to think radically about the future for global health and social care and is motivated by the power of human-centred design to solve real, everyday issues and accelerate innovation. We seek fresh-thinking students, equipped with a pioneering attitude from across all nine Schools, who are willing to volunteer to work on tackling global health challenges over a five-week period. They are tasked with learning and practising five skills for enterprise: creative problem solving; deep listening; immersive empathy; networking; and visualisation. They are encouraged to see the world differently and to be concerned with social justice and uncover deep insights. Input is received from local charities, national industry speakers and recognised mentors from business, design, healthcare and academia to inspire and inform their work on innovation.

Everything about this initiative is voluntary. It is an opportunity to do some good and it has an interdisciplinary and entrepreneurial character. Examples of student outcomes are the creation of a new society, 'Dundee University Against Poverty', and being a finalist in the national Converge Challenge entrepreneurship competition with the *Open Ears* social enterprise idea. Their final idea was captured in a short [8-minute film](#) that includes a Q&A session with some members of the team to help others with their future journey.

Our commitment to students through the Global Health Challenge is to help them stand out from the crowd, to afford people opportunities to develop a process of genuine discovery, to think, be enterprising, to let them fail and get things wrong, and to work with them to understand how to fix it. Importantly, it is about interdisciplinary teamwork and learning to work creatively and productively as an interdisciplinary team. We are committed to building people's agility, resilience and individual capacity to empathise with the world around them so they may lead, manage, innovate, and excel in their future professional worlds.

2.4.18 The Academic Skills Centre, in collaboration with DUSA, also delivers an Academic Skills Week half way through Semester 1. This is a week of workshops and drop-in tutorials to help students with essential academic skills such as essay writing, referencing, analysing sources and giving presentations. It also encourages networking and participation.

2.4.19 An important element of student engagement is the creation of a culture of activity, health and wellbeing. Sport, exercise and physical activity make a uniquely important and valuable contribution to University life, offering health, social, welfare and educational benefits that contribute enormously to the students' experience, wellbeing and enjoyment as they undertake academic study. The University's [Institute of Sport and Exercise](#)[△] provides the dynamic lead to the

University's sporting and physical activities by creating and delivering a positive culture and vision. The promotion of health and wellbeing is a key element of the University's vision to transform lives, and the work of the Institute of Sport and Exercise makes an important contribution in supporting the health and wellbeing of our students and staff.

Assessment and feedback

2.4.20 DUSA took the lead on a collaborative project with the University on assessment and feedback during academic year 2012/13. A triangulated approach was taken, where NSS scores, open comments from the NSS and the outcomes of focus group interviews with students were examined together to identify common themes where improvements could be made. The project report included a series of recommendations which led to modifications of programme/module approval and review templates to include greater emphasis on assessment and feedback, and supported the University's decision to implement [TESTA](#)⁷. TESTA takes a programme-level approach to examining assessment and feedback regimes. In addition to auditing the balance of assessment across an entire programme, the method focuses on students' experience of assessment through questionnaires and student focus groups. To date, the TESTA method has been applied to around 20 programmes including: Accountancy; Animation; Childhood Practice; Computing; Dentistry; Education; Finance; Fine Art; Geography; History; International Business; Law; Marketing and Management; Mechanical Engineering; Medicine; Nursing; Oral Health Sciences; Pharmacology; Social Work; and Textile Design. TESTA has resulted in positive changes to our assessment regimes, including rationalisation of assessment and more effective testing of learning outcomes, and has contributed to improved student satisfaction in this area.

2.4.21 In recognition of the importance of timely feedback for students, our assessment policy, revised for academic year 2015/16, now requires that students are provided with their provisional grades and feedback within 3 weeks of submitting coursework in order that feedback can be taken into account when preparing for the next assignment. In addition, there is a requirement that students receive feedback on their performance in examinations.

Employability and enterprise

2.4.22 The theme of Employability and Enterprise is of key strategic importance to the University, with 'Develop employability, enterprise and work-based learning' being one of the 20 action areas depicted on the Strategy Wheel (Figure 1.2). We treat enterprise as being distinct from entrepreneurship (see below). By enterprise we mean that all our students should develop an enterprising mind-set that will be of value to future employers. The [Employability and Enterprise Committee](#)⁸ has oversight of performance, strategy and action planning in this area. Membership comprises student representatives, Professional Services staff and the

Employability and Enterprise Leads from each academic School who have responsibility for sharing good practice and driving enhancements within their respective Schools. An example of a cross-University activity resulting from the work of this committee is the University-wide Enterprise Education Symposium which took place in 2015 and 2016. The symposium has now been replaced by an Entrepreneurship Week (see paragraph 2.4.31).

- 2.4.23** Over the past five years we have developed a variety of approaches to improving employability and enterprise. We embed career planning into our programmes in a variety of ways, tailored as far as possible to the needs of students on the programme. In some programmes this means the inclusion in the curriculum of a subject-specific careers module. In others it involves the embedding of career planning elements at key points in the programme. These elements are co-developed by the School and the [Careers Service](#)[□]. The Careers Service also offers credit-bearing career planning modules in both classroom-based and online learning modes that are open to students across the University. The online module offers individually tailored learning in a supportive online environment and received the University's Honorary Graduates' Award for Inclusive Practice in 2012 in recognition of its flexibility in catering to the needs of a diverse range of students such as those with family responsibilities, disabilities and health conditions. The strong focus on employability across the University saw numbers taking these optional modules increase from 122 in 2013/14 to 221 in 2016/17. A recent Higher Education Careers Services Unit funded research project undertaken by the Careers Service has demonstrated the impact of these modules, with the chances of students who have completed them reaching a positive graduate destination being 21.9% higher than if they had not taken the module. This project has attracted significant national and international attention since publication in 2017, with the Careers Service receiving the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS) [Award for Research-Informed Practice](#)⁷ and the 2018 Career Development Institute Award for [Research undertaken by a Careers Professional](#)⁷ as a result.
- 2.4.24** The Careers Service is also actively developing routes for students to enhance their employability through structured work experience. Internship Modules combine a 30-hour placement, arranged flexibly to fit around students' commitments, with career planning classes, and are assessed through a reflective online portfolio. These modules have seen a 95% increase in uptake between 2014/15 and 2017/18 and the digital portfolio format won the [AGCAS Award for Technology](#)⁷ in 2017. The [School Tutoring Programme](#)[□] offers an extra-curricular route to gaining experience in a classroom environment for students considering a teaching career and was completed by over 100 students in 2017/18.
- 2.4.25** In addition to delivering career planning modules and working in partnership with the Schools to embed employability into the curriculum, the Careers Service offers a wide range of services outside of the curriculum to promote employability. This

includes the [Dundee Plus](#)[□] award (see [Participation and Engagement](#) above), and one-to-one careers advice through daily drop-in slots, bookable appointments, telephone and email. This service is accessed by over 2,000 students annually and a full service is also available to graduates. In 2017 this was extended from five years after graduation to full lifetime access.

2.4.26 A wide range of graduate employers, small and medium-sized enterprises and voluntary organisations attend five annual Careers Fairs and offer regular presentations and skills development workshops. The Careers Service also provides an online personal development and career planning tool, [MyCareerPlan](#)[□], featuring a range of video resources, online learning programmes and self-review exercises.

2.4.27 The Careers Service works closely with DUSA, collaborating on a ‘Design your Career’ series of lunchtime workshops covering a range of employability topics. During academic year 2017/18 the Careers Service and DUSA collaborated to produce a part-time job guide, outlining students’ rights when seeking part-time employment. In recognising the importance of employability, the SRC has a representative for employability who sits on the [Employability and Enterprise Committee](#)[□].

2.4.28 Our programme approval, monitoring and review procedures (see [New Taught Provision](#)[□], [Annual Review of Taught Provision](#)[□] and [Periodic Programme Review](#)[□]) are all designed to ensure that there is a strong focus on the achievement of high levels of graduate employability or further study. The programme approval process advises consultation with potential employers, and in describing intended learning outcomes in programme specifications there are three recommended headings, one of which is ‘transferable, employability and enterprise skills and attributes’. Annual programme review requires a description of plans for enhancement of graduate employability, and our annual School Learning and Teaching Enhancement Reports, which are the focus for annual discussions between School teams and the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching) and the Director of Quality and Academic Standards, require a critique on employment and employability including transferable skills, enterprise and approaches to personal development planning. Periodic programme review also requires full consideration of graduate destinations.

Entrepreneurship

2.4.29 We define entrepreneurship specifically as the development of ideas that have the potential to lead to new businesses, and have recently launched, in collaboration with [Elevator](#)[↗], a [Centre of Entrepreneurship](#)[□]. As well as supporting start-up businesses through its accelerator programme, the Centre is an umbrella body to promote entrepreneurship amongst students. The Centre of Entrepreneurship also has an important role in promoting enterprising skills for all students by offering, in collaboration with the Academic Skills Centre and the Careers Service, both credit-bearing modules in Enterprise and an extra-curricular [Enterprising Skills](#)[□]

programme that exposes students to enterprising thinking. The programme is supported by a team of student interns who benefit from the opportunity to network with a wide range of business contacts as well as developing skills in organisation and professional communication. Almost 1,000 students engage with Enterprising Skills each year.

2.4.30 For those students ready to progress to the next stage, the Centre provides a bespoke programme of support to nurture entrepreneurship. This part of the Centre's activities is overseen by an Entrepreneurship Steering Group which has strong representation from leading Scottish entrepreneurs. The Centre's activities also include an Entrepreneurship Week and a suite of challenges and competitions.

2.4.31 For the past 2 years we have been running an Entrepreneurship Week, which is a public-facing event designed to inspire and inform staff, students, alumni and the general public about enterprise and entrepreneurship. The programme comprises workshops, competitions and keynote lectures. The week culminates in the final of the University-wide [Venture Competition](#)[△] which awarded £26,000 in prizes in 2017/18 for promising new business ideas developed by students, staff and recent graduates. The competition attracted over 50 entries representing all academic Schools.

Evaluation of our approach to supporting students in their learning at each stage of the learner journey

2.4.32 Whilst the key role of our recruitment team is to encourage prospective students to apply, an important part of their recruitment activities also focuses on giving advice and guidance to support the decision-making stages for prospective students. Activities such as 'Discovering Degrees for Schools' and Reach Tayside/ACES Tayside are well planned and give a valuable insight into life as a university student, with many school pupils who have participated successfully progressing to become students at Dundee or elsewhere.

2.4.33 The University has a key focus on improving the experience that our applicants have in their interactions with us. In 2016, External Relations underwent a restructuring that led to the creation of teams with an upfront focus on enquirer and applicant communications and the applicant experience. Since 2016 we have introduced a more robust and transparent applicant communications plan which captures the content and timing of communications we send during the application process. These communications guide applicants through the various stages of the process, but more importantly give them much of the information they need to make an informed decision and support their pre-arrival preparations. This is coordinated and managed by External Relations in collaboration with academic Schools and other Professional Services, and reported up to various committees, such as the Conversion Working Group and International Deans Operating Committee. The plan is reviewed annually and changes are made based on feedback from our recently

introduced Student Insight Panel and applicant decline and acceptor surveys, as well as external research in this area. In addition, our International Engagement Team communicates with and supports international offer-holders at each stage of the application process and up to their arrival in Dundee, before introducing them to the support offered by Student Services.

- 2.4.34 We are proud of our approach to supporting students through their learner journey. Our retention and progression statistics, which can be regarded as proxy indicators of performance in this area, are solid and better than the Scottish average ([Figure 1.10](#)).
- 2.4.35 We introduced an [Attendance Monitoring Policy](#)[□] in 2014 with revision and full implementation in 2016 following on from the University restructuring. The purpose of attendance monitoring is to encourage student engagement with all aspects of their programme and to identify students who may be disengaging so that support can be offered to them. Prior to 2014, some professionally accredited programmes had attendance monitoring in place as part of the requirements of the professional body but this was not commonplace across the University. The School of Life Sciences were early adopters of attendance monitoring to identify and support disengaging students and have seen marked improvements in student retention ([Figure 1.6](#) and [Figure 1.7](#)), since academic year 2014/15.
- 2.4.36 Although the attendance monitoring policy does not currently apply to distance learners, programme and module leaders monitor active participation in learning through analysing engagement with material on the Virtual Learning Environment. Students who are not accessing learning materials or participating in online activities are contacted by staff so that they can be supported to engage.
- 2.4.37 Academic Advisers play an important role in student support, and the University and DUSA jointly reviewed arrangements for Academic Advisers in 2014, prior to the University restructuring, and developed a [guidance document](#)[□] that sets out baseline expectations. Student feedback, including our NSS optional question 'My Adviser of Studies provided me with adequate support', suggests that there are some parts of the University where the system is not working as well as it should be. We are below the UK and Scotland sector averages in this area and our internal NSS data set shows that student satisfaction about Academic Advisers is not uniform across the Schools, with a number having less than 70% satisfaction. Strengthening the Academic Adviser system is one of the key themes set out in our [Student Partnership Agreement \(2017-18\)](#)[□]. The policy and guidance document is being reviewed and a Handbook for Academic Advisers is under development. This is aligned with the outcomes of our recent internal audit of our Academic Adviser system (our internal audits of the student experience are described in Section 4.5).
- 2.4.38 The audit concluded that 'all students have an Academic Adviser who is available for meetings, and we noted a strong commitment to student welfare from all

interviewees. However, there are opportunities to improve processes for identifying students in need of support, such as those who may be disengaging from their studies, and providing the required support in a timely manner'. The auditors noted examples of good practice in a number of areas including the use of senior advisers and an Advisers' Forum in the School of Science and Engineering and embedding meetings with Academic Advisers into the mandatory personal development planning module in the School of Life Sciences. Areas for development included: early interventions for struggling students; support and guidance for Academic Advisers; sharing best practice about the role; and clarity of guidance to students, including clear signposting and consistent use of terminology. Feedback from students at the ELIR workshops also supported a need to improve our approach to clear and consistent signposting for students. The recommendations from the audit were discussed and the actions agreed at the Learning and Teaching Development Forum in May 2018.

- 2.4.39** The Academic Skills Centre offers academic skills support to students from pre-entry programmes, such as the DUAL Summer School and the Discover Learning at Dundee online access routes, through all stages of student learning to Doctoral level. The Gateway to Learning workshops, which provide generic skills advice during the Welcome Programme, are well-attended with an average of 60 participants per workshop at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Many subject disciplines, including Dentistry, Computing and Engineering, also ask for individualised Gateway workshops for their cohorts during the first few weeks of the semester. The Centre also supports the ASK (Academic Skills and Knowledge) programme in the School of Nursing and Health Sciences, and delivers workshops to the year groups in both Kirkcaldy and Dundee campuses.
- 2.4.40** The STEP UP module described in Sections 2.3 and 3.3 offers a transition experience for Higher National students whilst supporting their academic skills at the same time. The module attracts around 20 students and is well received by participants. There is also a STEP UP to Business module, which is an embedded core module within the first year of the Business Management programme. Through project work and more traditional learning and teaching approaches, students develop their academic skills while also integrating effectively into their degree programme. The module involves a co-construction approach to curriculum design where students are involved in developing the criteria for the engagement and participation grade, providing them with greater ownership of the learning process. All 55 students enrolled on the Business Management programme participated in the module during academic year 2017/18, and it will continue to develop over the next few years. Some examples of student feedback on the STEP UP module are provided below.

‘STEP UP is like polish, polishing off the rough edges. There is a way that academic work is supposed to be done.’

‘Before we started the STEP UP module, we very much felt like college students because this is where we always were. [...] When you came on to actual campus to be there once a week and associating with the staff and being sent off to do research in the library or, as we discovered, all the hidden IT suites at the bottom of the tower building which never knew were there. It was good to get to know the place and to get to know people in it.’

‘For the first time you actually felt like you were a University student rather than a College student.’

‘[The tutors] gave you a lot more independence, it’s almost like they see you as adults and they taught you that way.’

‘It’s working for me so well [note-taking technique]. I would never have known about that if it wasn’t taught to me in STEP UP. I feel like now my revision is so much more effective because of that way of notetaking.’

2.4.41 The Academic Skills Week workshops attracted over 250 students in October 2017. Academic Writing appointments amounted to approximately 900 appointments in academic year 2016-17, split between the RLF Writing Fellows and the Academic Skills Tutors. The development of improved digital resources in 2018 has been a priority with enhancements to the LIVE Smart and LEARN Smart resource and the creation of a series of videos called Exam Bites. These resources are available to all students but will be of particular benefit to distance learners who are unable to access the on-campus support directly. The new Exam Bites resource was the joint winner of the Honorary Graduates’ Award for Inclusive Practice 2017/18.

2.4.42 The work of the Institute of Sport and Exercise is at the very heart of the University community and creates opportunities for students of different cultures, backgrounds, ages and disciplines to come together. This helps to promote social networks and create a culture of shared identity, unity and togetherness. The University is committed to supporting our student aspirations in health and wellbeing through the ongoing investment in the Institute’s facilities, programmes and services. This investment has provided the most modern and extensive suite of facilities in the region, supporting and promoting a wide range of activities and opportunities for our students. International Student Barometer satisfaction ratings for our sport facilities have been consistently high over the past five surveys.

International Student Barometer (Living)	% Satisfaction				
	2012	2013	2014	2016	2017
The sports facilities	90	93	89	89	93

Table 2.3: International Student Barometer satisfaction scores for sports facilities. We did not participate in the survey in 2015.

2.4.43 Approximately 3,500 student members engage with the Institute’s programmes and services (with more than 31,500 attendances per year), and internal surveys demonstrate a 94% student satisfaction rating. Collectively, the evidence shows that the Institute of Sport and Exercise makes an invaluable contribution to the University’s student engagement activities and the student experience.

2.4.44 With respect to our priority theme of Internationalisation, the International Student Barometer is the main mechanism for us to measure how satisfied our non-UK students are with their experience across a number of areas. We use the Barometer to identify areas for development as well as celebrate achievements, and oversight is provided by the Internationalisation Committee and its subgroups. The University achieved excellent results in 2017, where we were in the top 10 out of 120 institutions globally on a number of measures. Table 2.4 shows that our satisfaction ratings for the main elements of the International Student Barometer have been consistently high over the past five surveys.

International Student Barometer Themes	% Satisfaction				
	2012	2013	2014	2016	2017
Support overall	90	92	91	91	97
Satisfaction overall	91	93	91	91	94
Living overall	91	92	88	91	93
Learning overall	91	88	86	89	89
Arrival overall	92	92	91	88	89

Table 2.4: Student satisfaction for the main themes of the International Student Barometer. We did not participate in the survey in 2015.

2.4.45 External Relations (Student Recruitment and Admissions) provide a post-survey analysis of the data for each round of the survey. This is reviewed by the Internationalisation Committee and its subgroups, relevant School committees and Directorates, so that areas of good practice can be identified and disseminated, and areas for development can be addressed. A cross-University working group led by the Assistant Director (International and Student Wellbeing) of Student Services was set up in semester 2 of academic year 2017/18 to undertake a more detailed review of the results, with a focus on the areas where we did less well and to consider ways to increase participation. This working group will report to the Internationalisation Committee.

2.4.46 Table 2.5 shows the top 10 elements where there were the highest levels of international student satisfaction in 2017/18. The data demonstrate high levels of international student satisfaction with student support and the learning environment. Table 2.6 shows the 10 elements which had the lowest levels of international student satisfaction. These relate mainly to logistical considerations (some of which will be related to UKVI requirements) but making friends was also a key theme.

International Student Barometer Elements	%Satisfaction (Dundee)	%Satisfaction (global average)
Confidence about managing a research project	100	89
Meeting academic staff	98	90
International office/engagement team	98	92
University clubs/societies	98	94
Chaplaincy or multi-faith provision	97	94
Enquiry Centre	96	93
The quality of laboratories	96	91
The physical library	96	90
IT support (UoD IT)	96	94
The learning technology (PCs, networking etc)	95	91

Table 2.5: Most satisfying elements identified from the International Student Barometer (2017).

International Student Barometer Elements	%Satisfaction (Dundee)	%Satisfaction (global average)
Making friends from this country (living satisfaction)	78	72
Advice and guidance on long-term job opportunities and careers from academic staff	76	71
Setting up a bank account	76	79
Campus eating places	75	83
Making friends from my country (arrival satisfaction)	73	86
Making friends from this country (arrival satisfaction)	73	74
Opportunities for work experience/work placements as a part of my studies	71	68
The cost of accommodation	69	58
The availability of financial support/bursaries etc	60	56
The opportunity to earn money while studying	60	53

Table 2.6: Least satisfying elements identified from the International Student Barometer (2017).

2.4.47 During academic year 2016/17 a short-life working group carried out a review of the Global Student Experience. The group was supported by [SUMS Consulting](#)⁷ and provided a report which included a recommendation to establish a steering group with oversight of welcome for international students and the identification of a dedicated physical space. In relation to the latter, the University opened [The Global Room](#)⁸ in December 2017. The Global Room provides an informal social space for students to relax, meet new people and celebrate cultural events. It is anticipated that this will provide our international students with better opportunities to make friends and that satisfaction will improve in this area. The Global Room has a

steering and user group to oversee and develop welcome, induction and social activities for international students, and to encourage home students to gain an international experience. After opening at the beginning of December 2017, the footfall in the Global Room was over 8,000 in the first five months.

2.3.48 An important element of enhancing the experience of international students is the provision of English language support. [English for International Students](#)[△] provides both pre-sessional and in-sessional English language programmes. The programmes are now attracting a significant number of participants, and feedback from students, Schools and external examiners suggests that these are high-quality, supportive programmes. The International Student Barometer showed 91% satisfaction with English for International Students in 2017/18, putting the University first in Scotland and second in the UK for English language support. We experienced some teething troubles with the pre-sessional programmes in terms of the study time required to raise students' English language skills to the required levels for study at the University. In response to feedback from the programme team and external examiners, we have now increased English language entry requirements, extended the duration of study and are offering an additional 14 week pre-sessional programme. Data suggest that students who undertake a pre-sessional module hold their own or outperform international students who have not had to take a pre-sessional module. This is based on module results at the end of semester 1 and is a testament to the relevance of programme and the competencies developed by the learners.

2.4.49 We recently participated in the QAA Review of Transnational Education in the Republic of Ireland (2017) in relation to our validated programmes delivered by Ballyfermot College of Further Education (see also Section 5). This provided us with a valuable opportunity to reflect on our approach to enhancing the learning experience of international students who are studying at a partner organisation. The report from the review is publicly available on the [QAA webpages](#)⁷, but it is worth noting here that there were a number of recommendations that relate to enhancement of the student learning experience. These include communication about feedback on assessment, provision of appropriate resources for students, closing the feedback loop, clarifying complaints procedures and monitoring information provided to students and prospective students. The School of Art and Design worked with Ballyfermot College to ensure that all of the recommendations were addressed. In addition to helping us identify areas where we could further enhance the quality of the student learning experience for this validation arrangement, the outcome of the review also provided us with learning for other existing collaborative arrangements and for those in development.

2.4.50 The restructuring of the University in 2015 provided us with the opportunity to further improve our approach to enhancing the student learning experience by adopting the principle of One Dundee (see Section 1.1). The flat School structure

along with the development of the Associate Dean positions with responsibility for learning and teaching and quality and academic standards (who normally have a workload allocation of 0.5 FTE for the role) has facilitated more systematic sharing of practice and debate and discussion about best practice. The restructuring also involved the development of better links between Professional Services and the Schools. Collectively this has provided the route for Schools and Directorates to agree and adopt more consistent approaches to managing the student learning experience.

2.4.51 As described in Section 4.2 the area of assessment and feedback is one where we believe that we have made significant progress with our One Dundee approach. We now have a single University policy and application form for dealing with mitigating circumstances; all Boards of Examiners are expected to use anonymised candidate data; we have a single University procedure for dealing with academic misconduct; and there is an expected turnaround time of 3 weeks for students to receive feedback on their work. Table 2.7 shows the improvements made in student satisfaction with assessment and feedback between 2013 and 2016. Unfortunately, it is not possible to compare these results with the 2017 data (Table 2.8) as the questions were changed for 2017. Our ranking in the UK for assessment and feedback in 2017 does, however, suggest that we have more work to do in some Schools to improve the students' experience of assessment and feedback.

NSS Question	% Satisfaction (UK ranking*)			
	2013	2014	2015	2016
Assessment and feedback overall	67 (91)	71 (74)	75 (36)	77 (21)
Q 5 The criteria used in marking have been clear in advance	72 (95)	75 (77)	78 (53)	81 (26)
Q 6 Assessment arrangements and marking have been fair	76 (66)	77 (66)	79 (38)	82 (8)
Q 7 Feedback on my work has been prompt	61 (99)	66 (85)	72 (38)	69 (77)
Q 8 I have received detailed comments on my work	65 (95)	68 (88)	75 (37)	78 (23)
Q 9 Feedback on my work has helped me clarify things I did not understand	60 (99)	67 (58)	72 (24)	76 (11)

Table 2.7: NSS results for Assessment and Feedback (2013-2016). *The ranking excludes specialist organisations. Some of the ranks are tied.

NSS Question	% Satisfaction (UK ranking*)
	2017
Assessment and feedback overall	73 (56)
Q 8 The criteria used in marking have been clear in advance	73 (55)
Q 9 Marking and assessment has been fair	71 (81)
Q 10 Feedback on my work has been timely	71 (71)
Q 11 I have received helpful comments on my work	77 (29)

Table 2.8: NSS results for Assessment and Feedback (2017). *The ranking excludes specialist organisations. Some of the ranks are tied.

2.4.52 Another challenge for us has been organisation and management, particularly around timetabling and communication of any changes. Feedback from DUSA and the SRC, along with our NSS results, suggest that a number of our students have not been satisfied with our approach here. Table 2.9 shows our NSS scores for organisation and management between 2013 and 2016, and Table 2.10 shows the data for 2017. Whilst improvements have been made since 2013, we recognise the need to progress this further.

NSS Question	% Satisfaction (UK ranking*)			
	2013	2014	2015	2016
Organisation and management overall	73 (83)	79 (58)	77 (76)	81 (39)
Q 13 The timetable works efficiently as far as my activities are concerned	76 (99)	81 (65)	82 (48)	84 (27)
Q 14 Any changes in the course or teaching have been communicated effectively	73 (93)	78 (63)	76 (82)	81 (42)
Q 15 The course is well organised and is running smoothly	70 (95)	76 (64)	74 (81)	78 (46)

Table 2.9: NSS results for Organisation and Management (2013-2016). *The ranking excludes specialist organisations. Some of the ranks are tied.

NSS Question	% Satisfaction (UK ranking*)
	2017
Organisation and management overall	76 (51)
Q 15 The course is well organised and running smoothly	70 (61)
Q 16 The timetable works efficiently for me	80 (44)
Q 17 Any changes in the course or teaching have been communicated effectively	78 (41)

Table 2.10: NSS results for Organisation and Management (2017). *The ranking excludes specialist organisations. Some of the ranks are tied.

2.4.53 A new [Policy on Timetabling and Room Bookings](#)^Δ was developed (including a comprehensive review of user feedback) and approved by Senate during academic year 2017/18 for full implementation in academic year 2018/19. The policy takes a

One Dundee approach and includes a commitment to deadlines from the Schools and Registry. The Policy is accompanied by on-going developments in technology to produce personalised timetables through automatic population of student and staff Outlook calendars.

2.4.54 A significant advance towards personalised student timetabling was achieved with the acquisition of data integration software, which has enabled a daily feed of student module selection data from our student record system to our timetabling database. This has enabled the timetable to be constructed over the summer vacation using returning students' real module selections. The Central Timetabling team has then been able to undertake the 'first-time' allocation of students to small-group teaching activities, resulting in a personalised timetable for each student displaying only the teaching events that they are expected to attend. Once teaching has started, in-term changes to students' modules can quickly be reflected in the timetabling database, with students being allocated to the appropriate activities for their newly-selected module one working day after the change was recorded in the student record system. The improved accuracy of the timetable database has supported our approach to attendance monitoring. We also have more confidence in pushing personalised timetable information to various student apps allowing improved access. An aim for 2018-19 is to extend our calendar service, currently on offer to teaching staff (where teaching activities in the timetabling database are pushed into their personal Outlook calendars), to all students. This was piloted in April-May 2018 before full implementation in the 2018-19 session, and requires full commitment from Schools to submit in-term changes to the central timetabling team so that the central timetable remains correct/up to date.

2.4.55 Using Graduate Level Employment or Further Study as a metric to consider our approach to employability and enterprise, we have made considerable improvements over the past five years (Figure 2.1). Another measure of our progress here is the fact that we were ranked 8th overall in the UK for graduate employability by the Sunday Times in 2017. The University is ranked top in Scotland and 6th in the UK for graduate level employment (Complete University Guide 2019, up from 8th in Scotland and 46th in the UK in 2015). The Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education statistics for 2017 show that 85% of our graduates are in graduate-level employment. Increased engagement with careers and employability can be seen through steady growth in the numbers of students accessing both curricular Careers modules and recording skills gained through extra-curricular activity via the Dundee Plus Award. Students are also highly satisfied with careers support, with our internal data for our optional NSS questions on careers showing 80% satisfaction for careers overall. The most recent International Student Barometer showed that 93% of respondents were satisfied with the Careers Service (ranked 4th

amongst all participating institutions for this question) and in 2017 the Careers Service was ranked 3rd in the UK by the [Student Crowd](#)⁷.

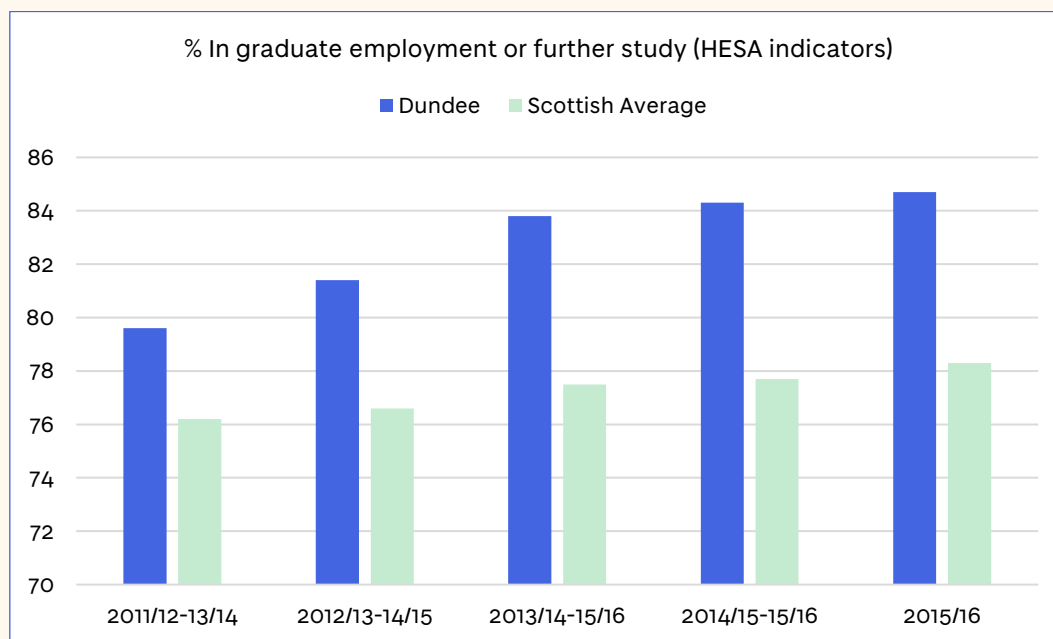


Figure 2.1: Graduate level employment or further study compared with the Scottish average. The data are derived from Heidi Plus.

2.5 Postgraduate taught and research student experience

Taught postgraduate students

2.5.1 Oversight of quality assurance and enhancement for all taught programmes is provided by the Quality and Academic Standards Committee and the Learning and Teaching Committee. We previously had a Postgraduate Taught Degrees Subcommittee to champion the specific areas that relate to postgraduate programmes but decided to subsume the business into the main Senate committees in order not to create any divide in expectations for quality enhancement. We have been participating in the HEA's Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey for many years and the outcomes of the survey are considered by the Learning and Teaching Committee and at the relevant School committees. The data analysis from the survey undertaken during AY 2016/17 is available as part of the Advance Information Set. Over the years the surveys have shown that most postgraduate students are generally satisfied with their experience at Dundee, with our satisfaction scores aligned with or above national averages.

Research students

2.5.2 The [Research Degrees Subcommittee](#)⁸, which reports to the Senate [Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee](#)⁹, is responsible for the quality assurance and enhancement of research degrees. The remit of the committee is as follows:

- To provide institutional leadership and promote best practice on all matters relating to research degrees and research students

- To consider strategic issues in relation to research degrees and students
- To provide a forum for the discussion of external policy issues relating to research degrees and students, for instance from the Research Councils or other funding bodies
- To oversee generic degree regulations for all research degrees
- To oversee programme approval mechanisms for new research degrees
- To oversee the content and implementation of the [Research Degrees Quality Code](#)[□], including determining institutional mechanisms for monitoring student progression on research degrees
- To oversee quality assurance arrangements for research degrees including the periodic review of research programmes in individual Schools
- To ensure the appropriate training and development of research supervisors

2.5.3 The University has a [Researcher Development Policy](#)[□] which is in place to support the career and professional development of researchers and specifically endorses the RCUK recommendations of a minimum number of hours (80 per year) to be set aside for development activities. The Policy was approved by the People and Organisational Development Committee (previously known as the Human Resources Committee) of Court in 2014.

2.5.4 Researcher development and transferable skills training is provided to postgraduate research students by [Organisational and Professional Development](#)[□] (OPD). Provision includes training workshops on writing, research funding, data analysis/visualisation, enterprise, presentation skills, project management, wellbeing, interpersonal skills, coaching, career advice and a University-level Welcome for research students. The Welcome programme includes meetings with the Vice-Principal (Research, Knowledge Exchange and Wider Impact) and the Director of Student Services and provides an introduction to the research culture at Dundee and the support facilities available. It also offers the opportunity for social interactions and networking with other researchers. Full details of the provision for postgraduate researchers are available in the annual [OPD Programme](#)[□] and on the [Researcher Development](#)[□] site. All workshops have been mapped to the [Vitae Researcher Development Framework](#)[↑].

2.5.5 An intensive Thesis Bootcamp programme was proposed and endorsed by the Research Degrees Subcommittee in December 2015. A two-day pilot programme was developed that saw 48 postgraduate researchers working towards the completion of their thesis. Following the initial success of this programme, a new one-day pilot and the two-day programme were delivered in 2016/17 and 2017/18.

2.5.6 Each year an international facilitator is invited to give a workshop or seminar to research students, and have included Jorge Cham (PhD Comics), Inger Mewburn (The Thesis Whisperer) and Hugh Kearns (Seven Secrets of Highly Successful

Research Students). Many of the wider programme workshop offerings from OPD are also available to research students, who also have access to online training through the University's subscription to Lynda.com. A [subsection of the Lynda resources](#)[△] has been mapped to the Researcher Development Framework.

- 2.5.7 In addition to the skills training described above, OPD has developed an online training resource with an external expert, under the direction of the University's Research Governance and Policy Sub-Committee, on research integrity. The Responsible and Ethical Practice in Research and Publication training includes a video, quiz and case studies on each of the following topics: research integrity and the responsible and ethical conduct of research; ethical approval and practice; plagiarism and recycling of text and research outputs; authorship; collaborative research and data management and integrity; and peer review and publication ethics. All research students who commenced their studies from August 2016 are required to successfully complete the online research integrity training before their upgrade review, and ideally within 3 months of starting their research degree.
- 2.5.8 There is currently a consultation being carried out with stakeholders to look at the feasibility of having a more formal and structured approach to the professional development of our research students through a University-wide postgraduate certificate that aligns with the skills training provided by OPD and by the Schools/disciplines. This development stems from an existing credit-bearing programme offered to research students in the School of Science and Engineering.
- 2.5.9 University policy is that all research student supervisors must complete training on supervisory skills. This is provided by OPD through their 'Developing Effective Relationships in Postgraduate Supervision at Doctoral Level' workshop which supports supervisors in reflecting on their own practice, addresses issues and challenges in PhD supervision and ensures that supervisors are up to date with latest developments in the field.
- 2.5.10 The mandatory training for postgraduate students who teach is provided by the Academic Skills Centre. Our [Guidance on Teaching and Other Work for Schools by PhD Students](#)[△] and [Code of Practice on Consultancy, Teaching and Other Work by PhD Students](#)[△] set out University policy in this area.

Evaluation of our approach to enhancing the postgraduate taught and research student experience

2.5.11 With respect to our priority theme of student engagement, student representation for postgraduates has been a fairly challenging area for us over the years.¹⁰ DUSA has been leading on making improvements for this group of students by having elected SRC members with the specific remit of representing taught postgraduate students and research students. Even with this in place, we have found that this is a particularly hard-to-reach group for representation because of the nature of their studies. Full-time taught postgraduate students are normally with us for a single year so there are some logistical barriers to engaging with elections. There is also the time period for settling in to university life at Dundee before starting to think about engaging with democratic processes. Feedback from taught postgraduate programme leaders also suggests that for some programmes where there is a large international cohort from a single country, there may be cultural sensitivities about having an elected representative. Although part-time taught postgraduate students are often with us for longer, the fact that many are also professionals who are working full-time means that engaging with representation may not be a priority for them. There are also challenges presented by a distance learning format. Research students can often have a stronger relationship with their research group and supervisors than a student cohort and may not feel that there is any compelling reason to engage with representation.

2.5.12 It may be that trying to force fit representation for postgraduates into our existing set-up is not the answer for all students, but rather we should look for other ways to ensure that our postgraduate students have a voice that is heard and listened to. DUSA has recently instigated a postgraduate student society to help develop a community for postgraduates. There is also a successful research student society in the School of Life Sciences. The School has a large number of research students working in related disciplines, and the School's approach is described in the *Focus On* mini case study below.

¹⁰ The Senate Learning and Teaching Committee is responsible for oversight of all aspects of student representation.

Focus On: The Postgraduate Student Experience

The PhD Students' Association of the School of Life Sciences (PiCLS). PiCLS has been successfully running for many years. It runs a variety of professional, social and sports events including an annual PhD retreat, the PiCLS Symposium, pub nights, sports tournaments, monthly Friday social evenings, and an annual ceilidh. These events are organised by the committee and are well attended. For example, 25 students attended the 2017 PhD retreat with nine giving research talks and 10 presenting posters.

PiCLS also organises a PhD student-run symposium, which takes place most years. It is open to all staff and students and hosts a wide range of renowned guest speakers covering a large spectrum of life sciences research. PhD students from the Schools of Life Sciences and Medicine are encouraged to participate in the Symposium by submitting their research for a poster presentation and short talks.

PiCLS committee members are also involved in the following for the benefit of the PhD community:

- Monthly meetings with divisional PhD representatives to discuss upcoming events and to share feedback and new ideas
- Representation of the School of Life Sciences PhD students at Divisional meetings, and on School Board and Research committees
- Working with the School of Life Sciences Research Staff Association to organise public engagement events
- Working with the School of Life Sciences Research Staff Association, to organise seminars and workshops, including presentations by former students, to assist with future career development of PhD students

Although PiCLS is student led, administrative assistance is provided by the School, and the School has started a new project to work with postgraduate research students to develop training for their representatives and PiCLS organisers.

2.5.13 One of the themes that emerged from ELIR 3 was 'Developing a Research Community', and the outcomes from a recent QAA Scotland Focus On event on the research student experience indicated the importance of having dedicated study space for postgraduates. This, along with feedback from our own postgraduate students, was taken on board as part of the library refurbishment in 2017 and three identified research zones, including the [Strawberry Bank Ideas Lab](#)⁷ and the Magdalen Green Postgraduate Suite (Figures 2.2 and 2.3), were developed primarily as space for postgraduates in the main library. We are also actively exploring the feasibility of a University-wide Doctoral Academy under the leadership of the Vice-Principal (Research, Knowledge Exchange and Wider Impact). A decision will be made within the next six months.



Figure 2.2: The Strawberry Bank Ideas Lab.



Figure 2.3: The Magdalen Green Postgraduate Suite.

2.5.14 The comprehensive suite of training opportunities provided by OPD for our research students is highly valued by the students and their supervisors. The training is available through a self-booking administration system and provides a formal record of transferable skills training undertaken throughout the period of the research degree. Workshops are reviewed continually, particularly through participant feedback, and information about research student engagement levels, workshop ratings and highlights are published in the annual [OPD Reports](#)⁶. Some

quotes from research student participants (from a range of workshops) are provided below.

[The facilitator]... 'is very knowledgeable and an enthusiastic speaker which meant for an interesting and thought provoking session.'

'Well presented. Well informed tutor.'

'By the end of the session we'd covered very complex things without too much struggle. It was a great course, and would highly recommend for anyone looking to get to know statistics...'

[This workshop]...'was really helpful in clarifying my approach. Synthesising every thought in your mind when starting a PhD is a bit mind boggling, but this workshop really helped me feel like I could tackle it!'

'I am so pleased that I attended this workshop at the beginning of Year 2. I have found it has given me a boost of confidence and has settled my anxieties about what is required of me. I would definitely recommend it, and will be sure to attend the Year 3 workshop, next year. Many thanks to the facilitator for a great and constructive day.'

'This workshop was constructive and formative confirming good practice and providing ideas for future work.'

'This was a very useful and practice-oriented workshop. I now have a clearer idea of my future communication strategy.'

'Excellent introduction to what it [Nvivo] can do.'

2.5.15 The decision to incorporate the business of the Postgraduate Taught Degrees Subcommittee into the main Senate Committees (Learning and Teaching Committee and Quality and Academic Standards Committee) has meant that taught postgraduate provision is mainstreamed into our approach to quality enhancement. The agendas for the Postgraduate Taught Degrees Committee were often dominated by student recruitment and marketing considerations rather than quality and the student experience, and incorporation of taught postgraduate affairs into the main Senate committees has been an effective way of ensuring that taught postgraduate programmes are considered as an integral part of our teaching provision. Student recruitment and marketing for postgraduate programmes is now the domain of the Student Recruitment and Admissions Committee, which was established in 2013, and the Internationalisation Committee.

2.5.16 Dundee took part as one of the legacy project partners in the [Making the Most of Masters⁷](#) strategic collaboration between universities, employers and enterprise agencies to support engagement with a model of credit-bearing work-based learning projects as an alternative to a traditional Master's dissertation. The School of Art and Design was heavily involved in the project, and two student placements were organised with the McManus Galleries in Dundee. The final outcome of the

placements was made public during the School of Art and Design's Masters show in August 2017. A comment from one of the participating students is provided below.

'I don't think I'd be in the position to be attending [for] interview had I not taken part in the [Making the Most of Masters project]. It was through that project that a lot of things I am following up now became apparent to me.'

2.5.17 The process of organising these placements and their outcomes formed the basis of an Academic Skills Centre Sharing Good Practice event in February 2018, where several more Schools, including Nursing and Health Sciences and Humanities (English) shared their plans for continuing to engage with the concept of Making the Most of Masters. Making the Most of Masters has now become an embedded approach to placement learning and the development of a more flexible curriculum across the institution, with Dundee's work in this area being shared at several conferences across the sector.

2.6 The learning environment

The Library and Learning Centre

2.6.1 A high-quality library and learning infrastructure is a key priority for the University. The [Library and Learning Centre](#)[△] encompasses library facilities (including physical and digital resources for learning and research), support for learning and teaching activities and the Centre for Technology and Innovation in Learning which is described separately below.

2.6.2 The University operates four library sites: a [Main Library](#)[△] at the heart of the University campus; the [Duncan of Jordanstone Library](#)[△], also located within the city campus environment; the [Robertson Trust Medical Library](#)[△] at the Ninewells campus; and the [Fife Campus Library](#)[△]. The libraries are available to all staff and students. We support separate physical library sites in recognition of the importance of convenient environments for study and access to resources which are close to students' teaching environments and where they live.

2.6.3 The libraries are highly popular and efficient learning environments, carefully designed to meet student requirements for both collaborative and private study opportunities. They are well provisioned with extensive functional units to ensure student-led learning is easily facilitated. Library staff are on hand to respond positively and creatively to requests. Support extends to mobile, email and online chat environments to ensure that all student queries can be efficiently addressed on both library and IT matters.

2.6.4 Facilities are appropriately sized to ensure demand does not exceed availability. Particularly popular resources are collaborative study tables and rooms, silent study zones and a café for mixing work with social interactions. The University recently invested approximately £2M in a major refurbishment of the first floor of the Main

Library over the summer of 2017. This involved the creation of new study spaces which were designed in consultation with students and staff, and include postgraduate study areas, more group study rooms with the latest technology and a bookable creative space with flexible furniture. The refurbishment also involved the creation of turnstiles for entry and exit. This allows analysis of footfall which helps with planning for student needs for opening hours and staff resource requirements. It will also be a key data source for our learning analytics project, where we have recently signed an agreement with JISC to begin to build our learning analytics capacity.

- 2.6.5 Over the same period improvements were also made to the Fife Campus Library. These included new flooring, updated comfortable seating, new lockers for students, more power points and desk space, improved WiFi and new touchscreen monitors.
- 2.6.6 Library opening hours are amongst the most extensive in Scotland, with the Ninewells library being available to all students 24 hours a day, seven days a week and 365 days a year, and with the Main Library having 24 hour opening during assessment periods and being open 7.30 a.m. to 2.30 a.m., seven days a week, during the rest of the semester periods. In response to feedback from postgraduate students, the Main Library extended opening hours during the periods outside of the semesters including the Christmas holiday period (when the rest of the University is closed for business). In academic year 2017/18 the Main Library opened on Christmas Day.
- 2.6.7 Academic staff use a reading list management system to ensure continuous alignment between the teaching requirements of modules and the library provision of resources. A sophisticated library management system ensures that usage analytics are available to guide purchase decisions, frequently permitting multiple copies of resources to be licensed ahead of peak demand. It is worth noting that the University's [Policy and Guidance on Reading and Resource Lists](#)[□] was developed as part of a commitment that was agreed in our first [Student Partnership Agreement in 2013](#)[□].
- 2.6.8 In 2015 the Library and Learning Centre and the Academic Skills Centre introduced a [Digital Literacies Framework](#)[□]. The purpose of the Framework is to identify a baseline of skills and behaviours which are considered to be essential in both supporting learning at the University and professional or vocational practice in the workplace. Use of the framework guarantees that basic and advanced literature searching, ethical and legal use of information and critical appraisal skills are all taught within undergraduate and postgraduate curricula. It also seeks to ensure that students are able to derive maximum benefit from the digital resources available to them, and to prepare them to thrive in a digital world after they graduate.

2.6.9 A range of materials has been developed to facilitate the acquisition of digital skills, including a self-assessment exercise to aid student learning through reflection on skills they already possess and those which they should aim to develop. This is underpinned by a set of 'best of breed' learning activities from a variety of sources which help to address underdeveloped skills. The Digital Literacies Framework also seeks to engage with academic staff to help to ensure that digital resources and behaviours are utilised effectively and consistently across the curriculum in teaching, learning and assessment. Evaluation of the effectiveness of our approach to digital literacy has recently been included in our Periodic Programme Review process, and development is supported through promotional and advocacy work from a Digital Literacies Community of Practice which includes representation from across the academic community plus key professional services including the Library and Learning Centre, the Academic Skills Centre, the Careers Service and Disability Services. Examples of initiatives in this area include the [Digital January](#)[△] project in 2017 which showcased a key digital application in the field of learning and teaching every day for that month. Its success prompted the more permanent [Digital Friday](#)[△] initiative, which has been showcasing a new app each week since January 2018. The *Focus On* mini case study shown below provides further details.

Focus On: Digital Literacies

Digital Friday. As part of our efforts to improve digital literacy among staff and students, the University of Dundee's Digital Literacy Community of Practice created *Digital January* to run for a month in January 2017. A new digital application was presented each day, each one aimed at enhancing learning, teaching, research or other professional activities. Applications featured included social media tools (e.g. Twitter, Pinterest, Snapchat), collaborative tools (e.g. Padlet, Slack), presentation tools (e.g. Sway, Prezi) and many others. The site registered over 2000 hits in a month, with many favourable comments from staff and students, and even interest from other HE institutions.

To build on the success of the *Digital January* initiative, a sequel entitled *Digital Friday* was launched in January 2018, following the same approach but this time featuring a weekly rather than daily post. The mix of featured applications was similarly diverse, with a focus on revision and exam preparation tools for students in the lead-up to the 2018 exam diet. Each weekly posting features a description of the app, consideration of its purpose and limitations, information on how it can be obtained and any costs involved, and also a selection of video-based training links to help people understand the app better, and hopefully start using it.

The purpose of the initiative is to raise awareness of the digital landscape among both students and staff, thus ensuring that the recommended applications were set in context for the potential audience - *What will this app help me to do? How can I get started using it? Why might this app be better than others similar to it?* The initiative also supports institutional strategic priorities around the development of a digitally-literate workforce and, in particular, the digitally-literate graduate.

Digital Friday will continue to run as long as there is interest, and we are now starting to receive feedback from our audience along with suggestions for apps to feature in future. It has been fun to explore the changing digital landscape through this project, and hopefully the approach taken will encourage its audience to engage more fully with applications and tools to enhance their study, research and day-to-day work practices.

The Centre for Technology and Innovation in Learning

2.6.10 The [Centre for Technology and Innovation in Learning](#)[□] was developed as part of the University restructuring in 2015. It plays an integral role in providing the digital learning environment for our students as well as supporting staff and students in making the most effective use of technology in teaching and learning. Our ongoing investment in digital components of the learning environment benefit on-campus and distance learning students. Developments are guided by the Digital Strategy Committee which ensures alignment with the pedagogic approaches in use throughout the disciplines.

Information technology

2.6.11 The [Information Technology Directorate](#)[□] (UoDIT) works in close collaboration with the Library and Learning Centre and the Centre for Technology and Innovation in Learning to develop and maintain a first-class digital learning platform for our

students and staff. The Directorate manages the University network and provides IT accounts for students which gives them access to a suite of software applications including Office 365. UoDIT is responsible for maintenance of the IT suites in the libraries and supporting the managed Student Desktop. A recent programme of investment has ensured that students have access to reliable, high speed internet connections and full wireless coverage across the campus including student residences.

- 2.6.12 UoDIT is responsible for the provision of [IT support for disabled students](#)[△] in collaboration with Disability Services. This support is coordinated by the University's Usability and Accessibility Officer who also works closely with the Library and Learning Centre. The role involves: provision of advice and guidance to staff to ensure equal access to communication and IT facilities; evaluation of IT systems to ensure legal compliance; assistive technology training for students and staff; and IT exam support for disabled students.

Learning spaces

- 2.6.13 The physical learning and teaching environment is managed by the [Estates and Buildings](#)[△] unit of the Estates and Campus Services Directorate and includes teaching rooms, lecture theatres, tutorial spaces and laboratory facilities. A regular investment programme ensures that our facilities are maintained to a high standard. Ensuring that our buildings and open spaces are of high quality is seen as a major factor in enhancement of the student experience, and investment in the estate is one of the key action areas in our Strategy to 2022 ([Figure 1.2](#)).
- 2.6.14 The University is committed to an ongoing programme of accessibility improvements to its estate. [Campus accessibility](#)[△] is overseen by the University's Campus Accessibility Group which meets several times a year to discuss accessibility improvements in response to individual disabled people's needs and to progress an ongoing programme of campus accessibility works. In recent years this has included: the installation of pager systems and signs in key University buildings; installation of induction loop systems in main teaching rooms and reception areas; installation of assisted door openers into and within University buildings; provision of wheelchair-accessible rooms and kitchens in student residences; provision of ramps to access University buildings; and provision of detailed accessibility information for all University buildings on the national access register, [DisabledGo](#)⁷.

Evaluation of our approach to enhancing the learning environment

- 2.6.15 The quality and availability of the learning resources for students is reflected in our consistently high satisfaction levels for learning resources in the NSS (Tables 2.11 and 2.12). The results for 2017 are presented separately as the recent changes to the NSS do not permit comparisons with previous years. Over the past five years we have been ranked in the top 20 in the UK for all elements of the learning resources

section, and this suggests that our programme of investment in the learning environment is having a positive impact on the student learning experience.

NSS Question	% Satisfaction (UK ranking*)			
	2013	2014	2015	2016
Learning resources overall	87 (48)	92 (4)	92 (4)	94 (3)
Q 16 The library resources and services are good enough for my needs	88 (36)	92 (13)	93 (10)	94 (4)
Q 17 I have been able to access general IT resources when I needed to	90 (24)	94 (4)	94 (7)	95 (3)
Q 18 I have been able to access specialised equipment, facilities or rooms when I needed to	84 (28)	89 (4)	89 (5)	91 (3)

Table 2.11: NSS results for Learning Resources (2013-2016). *The ranking excludes specialist organisations. Some of the ranks are tied.

NSS Question	% Satisfaction (UK ranking*)
	2017
Learning resources overall	90 (11)
Q 18 The IT resources and facilities provided have supported my learning well	88 (16)
Q 19 The library resources (e.g. books, online services and learning spaces) have supported my learning	90 (19)
Q 20 I have been able to access specialised equipment, facilities or rooms when I needed to	90 (13)

Table 2.12: NSS results for Learning Resources (2017). *The ranking excludes specialist organisations. Some of the ranks are tied.

2.6.16 In recognition of the fact that the NSS predominantly represents the views of full-time, on-campus students, we have less understanding of the satisfaction of distance learning students with their learning environment at the level of the University. When the 2017 NSS scores are broken down by full-time and part-time students (a proportion of whom will be distance learning students) satisfaction is only slightly lower (within 4% for all elements of the learning environment section) for part-time students than the University as a whole. As the number of NSS respondents who are part-time is very low, this data set is unlikely to provide a snapshot of the views of the distance learner student body, the majority of whom are postgraduate students. Enhancing the experience of distance learners is a key area of focus for the Distance Learning Forum, and key members have been working with DUSA and sparqs to enhance representation for distance learners (described in Section 2.2). Other work is being taken forward by individual Schools to pilot different approaches to distance learning representation, including the development of the role of Vice-President for Distance Learners and the use of social media to engage with distance learners.

2.6.17 The Library and Learning Centre has taken steps to ensure that the needs of both on-campus students and students studying at a distance are fully supported. The approach to supporting learners across the globe is described in the *Focus On* mini case study below.

Focus On: Support for Distance Learners

Out-of-hours virtual enquiry service. The out-of-hours virtual enquiry service complements the existing chat service that is supported by Library and Learning Centre staff until 9 p.m. every day including weekends. Cooperative librarians from the U.S. and the U.K. answer live chat enquiries out-of-hours, using a policy page that contains details of our local services and resources. This has proved a valuable and important service to distance learners, and effectively means the Library and Learning Centre at Dundee is available to answer enquiries 24/7 every day of the year across different time zones.

This web-based service is available to students anywhere in the world. Given the strategic priority of internationalisation (which includes the growth of specialised Masters programmes and the creation of new double degree programmes with international partners), the provision of an appropriate method for students to get in touch is vital. It enhances the student experience and gives a sense of connectivity to the home institution.

Enquiries range from getting access to research articles to helping with improving digital literacy skills including performing more advanced literature searches on our academic databases for literature reviews and dissertations. The out-of-hours librarians can quickly provide links to locally produced online guides on literature searching and subject-specific guides. Any enquiries needing more detailed local knowledge are passed on to Library and Learning Centre staff to follow-up the next day.

Examples of feedback from satisfied distance learners are shown below:

'As a distance learner studying while Dundee sleeps, it's difficult to feel a part of things. Simply having this library live chat available at hours when I am [available] helps a great deal. Thank you for offering it.' (Canada)

'I am just really impressed with the service I have just received on live chat. I had no idea it would be so effective and I am particularly happy as I am a distance learner and so this is a crucial service to me. Thanks so much for your help'. (Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire)

2.7 Effectiveness of the approach to enhancing the student learning experience

Good practice identified through reflection and evaluation of our approach to enhancing the student learning experience

2.7.1 **Community and belonging.** Evidence from the NSS and the International Student Barometer suggests that our on-campus students have a strong sense of belonging to the University community.

2.7.2 **Employment and employability.** We have taken deliberate steps over the past five years to improve the employability of our graduates. Evidence from student

engagement with careers modules, participation in Dundee Plus, engagement with the Centre of Entrepreneurship and graduate level employment statistics, shows that our approach is having a positive impact on the student experience and graduate prospects.

- 2.7.3 Learning spaces.** The quality of our learning spaces is an important component of the student learning experience, and we have made significant investments to ensure that we provide a first-class learning environment for on-campus students. This includes improvements in our campuses at Ninewells and Kirkcaldy. We are particularly proud of our Library and Learning Centre on the city campus. The Learning and Teaching Spaces Committee prioritises developments within a rolling programme of continuous improvements.
- 2.7.4 Retention and progression.** We take a proactive approach to retention and progression, and the development of our interactive data dashboards for Schools and disciplines to analyse statistics and identify any hotspots is a positive feature. The use of attendance monitoring to identify and support students who may be disengaging has had some technical challenges, but teething troubles aside, this policy is helping Schools in their approach to supporting students to engage with learning and succeed at University.
- 2.7.5 Student partnership agreements.** We were one of the first universities in Scotland to develop student partnership agreements and have been continually refining our approach to ensure that they are meaningful and effective. The partnership agreements have been a driver for enhancement and have resulted in positive changes such as: the development of our reading list policy; improved training for student representatives; an enhanced approach to employability (including the development of Dundee Plus and the instigation of a new SRC role dedicated to employability); improved engagement of students with elections; and enhancement of the Academic Adviser system.
- 2.7.6 Student representation.** Our positive approach to student representation is in the DNA of the University and there is an embedded attitude of working together with our students and their representatives. We are continually striving to enhance our representation system so that it is effective and powerful throughout the University community, and work in close partnership with DUSA to improve its impact and reach.
- 2.7.7 Student support.** We are proud of the support that the University and DUSA provides to our students through our Directorates, Schools and disciplines and DUSA's Hive. There have been considerable investments in centrally-provided support including the Enquiry Centre and the Support Hub. These have contributed to the high levels of satisfaction seen in the International Student Barometer. In addition, the Academic Skills Centre and English for International Students provide first-class study skills and learning support.

2.7.8 Widening access. We have a long-standing commitment to widening access, and this has strengthened over the past 5 years. The evidence presented in the Reflective Analysis demonstrates that commitment and shows the progress that we have made. We are not complacent here and, through an evidence-based approach, are recognising and responding to the challenges faced by disadvantaged students.

Areas for development identified through reflection and evaluation of our approach to enhancing the student learning experience

2.7.9 Academic Advisers. Evidence from the NSS and a recent internal audit suggests that further improvements in this area are required. We have noted that the need for improvement is not uniform across all of the Schools and disciplines and that there are areas of good practice and high levels of student satisfaction in many places. This means that we can tackle this by sharing practice and further policy development.

2.7.10 Assessment and feedback. Although we have made considerable progress with the student experience of assessment and feedback, particularly through our work with the TESTA method and the revision of our Assessment Policy, our NSS scores show that this remains an area for development.

2.7.11 Enhancement of representation for distance learners and postgraduate students. We are taking a proactive approach to driving improvements in this challenging area. This involves working closely with DUSA and sparqs and is work in progress.

2.7.12 Organisation and management (timetabling). Our NSS scores and other stakeholder feedback show that this is an area for development. We anticipate that our new policy on timetabling will have a positive effect when it is implemented in academic year 2018/19.

2.7.13 One Dundee. Although we are making steady progress with a One Dundee approach to enhancing the student learning experience there are still a number of areas for development. These include further improvements to the consistency of the following: approaches to managing mitigating circumstances; the electronic submission of assignments; and approaches to module evaluations.

2.7.14 Work placements and study abroad opportunities. Feedback from the student workshop on ELIR suggests that students would like to see greater opportunities to undertake work placement activities and study abroad. This is a strategic priority for the future, and is described in more detail in Chapter 5.

Forward planning

2.7.15 Action planning for enhancement is embedded in the University Strategy, and the outcomes from the evaluation that we have undertaken as part of this Reflective Analysis will feed into the action plans. Specific actions for the future that relate to enhancement of the student experience include:

- The development of a One Dundee approach to module evaluations (this is currently underway through the development of a standard set of questions in anticipation of procuring a module evaluation system in the future)
- Further development of our learning and teaching policies to improve consistency of practice in areas relating to management of the student learner journey
- The development of a good practice guide on representation for distance learners and enhancing training for postgraduate student representatives
- Improving our use of data to enhance the experience of students with protected characteristics
- Enhancement and expansion of study abroad opportunities
- The promotion of workplace learning opportunities (this work has already begun through the development of our Student Placement Toolkit)
- Reviewing and revising our approach to Academic Advisers
- The development of an Assessment and Feedback Hub (in partnership with DUSA) to provide a focal point for an enhancement-led approach in this area including the sharing of good practice resulting from the work of the TESTA team

3

Strategy and practice
for enhancing learning
and teaching



3. Strategy and practice for enhancing learning and teaching

3.1 Evaluation summary

- 3.1.1 Our approach to developing and implementing strategies has matured over the years and we are confident that our strategic approach to enhancing learning and teaching is effective. Our use of action planning grids and key performance indicators, as well as formal reporting on progress, ensure that strategies are kept alive and relevant. Our strategies for enhancement are supported by a strong staff development programme, recognition and reward of excellence in learning and teaching and fora for disseminating and sharing good practice.

3.2 Strategic approach to enhancement

University Strategy 2012-2017

- 3.2.1 The University Strategy 2012-2017 was underpinned by nine component strategies, with three top-level categories (learning and teaching, research and wider impact), two cross-cutting themes (internationalisation and employability, enterprise and entrepreneurship) and four enabling elements (people, information, estate and financial sustainability). Key performance indicators were developed to measure progress against aims, and annual reports to analyse the progress against the strategic aims were produced for Court, Senate and their relevant committees (e.g. the Learning and Teaching Committee, the Internationalisation Committee and the Research Committee).
- 3.2.2 In order to ensure that quality enhancement was appropriately embedded in University strategy we developed a Quality Enhancement Metastrategy which pulled out all of the aims from each of the component strategies that related to enhancement of the student experience and captured these in a single narrative that was accompanied by an [action planning grid](#)[^]. The creation of the Metastrategy was also informed by our evaluation of practices and policies that we conducted as part of the development of the Reflective Analysis for ELIR 3. The outcomes from ELIR 3 were incorporated into the Metastrategy and associated action planning. The action planning grid included priorities and timeframes and was regularly reviewed at the Learning and Teaching Committee and at the regular informal catch-ups between the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching), the Director of Quality and Academic Standards and the Head of the Academic Skills Centre. We used a RAG approach to measure progress, and found that the action planning grid was a useful mechanism to keep our strategy for quality enhancement alive, relevant and on track.

Approach to quality enhancement within the University Strategy to 2022

3.2.3 The University [Strategy to 2022](#)^o (see also Section 1.1) was launched in September 2017 following a substantive consultation programme which involved staff and students. The new strategy is significantly different to the previous one in that it is a fully integrated strategy, rather than a series of separate component strategies for areas such as Learning and Teaching. The strategy is designed to encompass everything we do, supporting our core purpose, vision and values. It is underpinned by a comprehensive action plan that relates to the action areas described in the outer wheel of the strategy ([Figure 1.2](#)). Each of the actions has been assigned to a Senate or Court Committee, and in the case of enhancement of learning and teaching, actions are primarily owned by the Learning and Teaching Committee. Certain actions may be delegated at an operational level to, for example, the Employability and Enterprise Committee or the Recruitment and Admissions Committee. There may also be some overlap in areas such as internationalisation, where actions would be owned by the Internationalisation Committee. Appendix 6 shows the actions that the Learning and Teaching Committee currently has oversight of. It is worth noting that the action plan is not intended to be static and will be updated and reviewed on a regular basis. Just as for our previous University Strategy 2012–2017, a set of performance measures have been developed for the new strategy in order to measure progress against targets.

Evaluation of our strategic approach to enhancement

3.2.4 With respect to our priority theme of student engagement, engaging students and their representatives with the development and implementation of University strategies has been key to our approach for many years. The DUSA executive team are consistently involved in strategy development and implementation, and consultation takes place with student representatives and the wider student body. This means that strategies for enhancement of learning and teaching are developed through a partnership approach and are fully informed by the student view.

3.2.5 The University Strategy 2012–2017 and its supporting strategies were supplemented by our Quality Enhancement Metastrategy. The Metastrategy had student engagement at its heart and drove strategic initiatives such as TESTA which focuses on the student view of how they experience assessment.

3.2.6 The use of performance indicators and regular monitoring has ensured that our strategies are alive and relevant. Underpinning action plans ensure that the actions to support strategy are taken forward. We are confident that our strategic approach to enhancement has been, and will continue to be, an area of strength.

3.2.7 Internationalisation has been closely aligned with our strategic approach to enhancement for several years, and as part of the University restructuring in the summer of 2015 it was decided to appoint a Vice-Principal to lead on this area, and to develop a central unit (the Educational Partnerships Development Unit) to

support the development of strategic international partnerships (see also Section 5). There is also an international team, which is part of External Relations, who focus on international student recruitment and study abroad opportunities. The Student Services Directorate provides welcome events and support for on-campus international students. The considerable strategic investment, including a dedicated UKVI compliance and visa support team, in our approach to internationalisation made over the past three years is fully interlinked with our strategy to enhance the student learning experience.

3.2.8 Taking a One Dundee approach is at the heart of our new strategy. It is underpinned by a Business Transformation programme (described in Section 1.1) which is underway at the time of writing. We recognise that moving to a One Dundee way of doing things requires the unpicking of many School and discipline procedures and practices as well as cultural change. This comes with challenges and care has to be taken that innovation is not stifled through a drive towards consistency and efficiency. It will be a long process but there is full commitment to ensuring that all students and staff benefit from a more consistent approach to procedures and processes across the University.

3.3 Impact of the national Enhancement Themes and related activity on policy and practice

Engagement with the Enhancement Themes

3.3.1 The University engages with the national Quality Enhancement Themes through a variety of means including:

- The Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee
- Through our institutional team
- Participation in Enhancement Theme-related sectoral projects and initiatives
- Through involvement in Enhancement Theme-related projects, events and conferences

3.3.2 The Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching) is the national lead for the new Theme of Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience, and engagement with the Theme is being led locally by our Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) from the School of Humanities. The University is engaging with the Theme through an action plan which identifies our key priorities as follows:

- To develop and implement a systematic approach to reviewing evidence on the entire student journey to encompass recruitment, retention, attainment and employability
- To support staff and student representatives so they can use data effectively

- To maximise our responsiveness to the student voice for the purpose of enhancement of student learning, teaching and the wider student experience

3.3.3 The previous Theme of Student Transitions was led at the local level by the Head of the Academic Skills Centre, who also acted as deputy leader at the national level. It is too early to assess the value and impact of the new Theme for 2017-2020 so we will focus our discussions here on the previous Themes. 'Student Transitions' has perhaps had the most significant impact out of all of the Enhancement Themes over the years. The focus on transitions had an immediate appeal and resonance with colleagues from across the University including both Professional Services and academic staff. In addition to bringing existing work in this area such as our centre for [Transformative Change: Educational and Life Transitions](#)[△] to a wider audience, highlighting its importance and providing opportunities for collaboration, the Theme also stimulated new work that has become embedded in practice. This has included work to support staff in developing a better understanding of the concept and impact of transitions; the development of credit-bearing modules to support students who are making the transition into their first year of study; and the collaborative creation of an online resource to empower students to engage positively with their transition and to better understand the guidance and support that is available for both academic study and developing life skills. The impact of these activities is discussed below.

Evaluation of the impact of the national Enhancement Themes and related activity on policy and practice

3.3.4 Although further work is required to strengthen the reach and impact of the national Enhancement Themes, they have been a positive driver of enhancement at the University, particularly in the area of student transitions. The development of a Student Transitions topic unit for our academic CPD programme (the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice in Higher Education) for teaching staff has provided colleagues with the opportunity to learn more about both the work of the Themes in general, and to explore the concept of student transitions within their practice. The content of the topic unit has utilised the skills and resources developed under the Student Transitions Theme as a framework for staff to explore transitions within their own context. The topic unit has proved very popular and provided a basis for enhanced scholarship, with several participants going on to present on transitions-related work at the Enhancement Themes annual conference and to have it published within the special issue of the Journal of Perspectives on Advanced Academic Practice that accompanied the Theme's international conference in 2017.

3.3.5 Student Transitions also provided the driver for the establishment of credit-bearing modules for students transitioning into their first year of study. The STEP UP modules aim to support students in understanding more about what they will

experience as they enter higher education and to help with the process of becoming, being and belonging as a valued student at the University of Dundee. This includes consideration of ways of thinking, feeling and acting that we know are critical to student engagement and retention and progression.¹¹ The developing suite of STEP UP modules currently includes the original stand-alone STEP UP module aimed at college students articulating directly into level 2, and a STEP UP to Business module which was developed specifically for Business students and is embedded within the curriculum. Further interest in the embedded STEP UP approach has been expressed by a number of Schools, including consideration of adopting this approach to support transition between levels 2 and 3. The academic skills tutor team who facilitate the STEP UP modules were shortlisted for a Herald Higher Education Award in 2017.

- 3.3.6 The online toolkit that we submitted for the student-facing, multi-media resource in the final year of the Student Transitions Theme, has gone from strength to strength. [LIVE Smart](#)[△] and [LEARN Smart](#)[△] is a collaborative project that directs students to information and further guidance to help them prepare for three key transition points: entering university level study; during their time at the University of Dundee; and thinking about their future career. Between September 2017 and May 2018 the toolkit had a total of 13,030 views, and we will continue to monitor usage to gauge effectiveness. Development of aspects of the toolkit is ongoing, including the provision of additional online resources to enable students to further develop the skills required for self-directed study. This will benefit all students regardless of the mode or stage of learning. Due to the nature of the platform used, content can easily be updated by staff meaning that the toolkit is a 'living document' which is agile and responsive to changing student needs. The resource is also being used as a template for an online student handbook that will be both attractive and user-friendly for students. In addition, it is intended that it will be used as a support toolkit for Academic Advisers.

3.4 Approaches to identifying and sharing good practice

The Academic Skills Centre

- 3.4.1 We take a variety of approaches to promote the identification and sharing of good practice. The Academic Skills Centre plays a leading role in many of these including their [Sharing Good Practice Programme](#)[△], the [Friday Fry-Up](#)[△], annual symposia and the production of our [Highlighter](#)[△] newsletter.
- 3.4.2 The Sharing Good Practice Programme is a series of seminars, workshops and symposia open to all academic and related staff and postgraduates. The seminar

¹¹ Thomas, G. B. and Hanson, J. (2014) Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning **16**, 58-70

series has an annual theme and comprises monthly seminars that are delivered by external and internal speakers. Workshops cover a wide range of topics and most recently have included Writing for Publication, Student Transitions and Supporting Students at Masters Level. Annual symposia relate to priority areas for enhancement of learning and teaching and are often organised in partnership with a particular School. The symposium this year, which has been organised in collaboration with the School of Social Sciences, is the culmination of a year of discussion on the topic of scholarship. A range of sharing good practice seminars has maintained the conversation over the year.

- 3.4.3 The Friday Fry-Up is a lunchtime staff club, led by an academic colleague from the School of Education and Social Work, which provides monthly networking opportunities for academic and related staff. Sessions focus on a particular topic, and colleagues use the forum to share ideas on effective practice in learning and teaching.
- 3.4.4 The Highlighter newsletter, which has been produced on a regular basis since 2008 and is partly funded by the national Enhancement Themes programme, provides a regular opportunity for colleagues to write up short articles on their practice. It also includes a regular column on our Enhancement Theme activities and a feature called 'Digital Dundee' which focuses on technology-enhanced learning and digital literacies. The latest Highlighter edition was a special issue focusing on the new Enhancement Theme. Highlighter is aimed at all staff involved in learning and teaching and student representatives. It has a wide internal and external circulation, with members of University Court having recently been added to the distribution list.

The Learning and Teaching Development Forum

- 3.4.5 A Learning and Teaching Development Forum was established in 2015 to provide regular opportunities for staff and DUSA to get together to share good practice on areas of strategic importance for quality enhancement. The Forum evolved from our annual NSS forum which was started in 2013. It is chaired by the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching) and comprises the School Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching and Quality and Academic Standards), student representatives and relevant Professional Services staff. Topics have included: interdisciplinary learning; embedding enterprise and entrepreneurship in the curriculum; innovations in learning, teaching and assessment; student buddying; engaging students with feedback; retention and progression; advisers of studies; teaching efficiency; the future of Digital in learning and teaching; and teaching spaces. In addition, one Forum each year is dedicated to the NSS. The opportunity for academic and professional services leads and student representatives to get together on a regular basis to exchange ideas and share practice has led to the promotion, communication and sharing of good practice in learning and teaching,

and has strengthened the shared approach to the quality culture at the University of Dundee.

The Distance Learning Forum

3.4.6 The Distance Learning Forum acts as a hub to share and develop practice on distance learning. The forum is led by two academic distance learning champions and there is close collaboration with the Centre for Technology and Innovation in Learning. The [Distance Learning Forum Manifesto](#)[□] sets out the aims of this community of practice.

Learning and teaching awards and the Discovery Days

3.4.7 Learning and teaching awards (described in Section 3.5) provide further opportunities to identify and disseminate good practice. Award winners are invited to speak, along with newly-promoted professors, at the University's annual [Discovery Days](#)[□]. This event is in place to celebrate excellence at the University and is always well attended. Staff, students, members of the University Court, school pupils and the general public are all invited.

University committees

3.4.8 University committees also provide opportunities for the identification and sharing of good practice. The Learning and Teaching Committee and the Quality and Academic Standards Committee both play important, albeit different, roles in quality enhancement. At the Learning and Teaching Committee, Schools, Directorates and DUSA submit reports which identify good practice as well as areas for development. The Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching) also provides an annual synopsis of the outcomes of the meetings with the Schools to discuss their Learning and Teaching Enhancement Reports (see Section 4.2). The Committee is set up to promote discussion and sharing and also provides the opportunity for the Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching) to feed back to their School Learning and Teaching Committees.

3.4.9 The Quality and Academic Standards Committee considers the outcomes from periodic programme reviews and the School responses to review outcomes, and this provides an opportunity to discuss good practice and areas for development (see also Section 4.2). The Associate Deans (Quality and Academic Standards) can share examples of good practice identified in this way with their School Quality and Academic Standards Committees.

Participation in national and international events for sharing practice

3.4.10 University staff and students regularly participate in the QAA Scotland [Focus On](#)⁷ events and over recent years have led sessions on assessment and feedback, the postgraduate research student experience, institution-led review and feedback on assessment. The Focus On events have allowed us to share our own practice as well

as learning from best practice across the sector. There is also good engagement with the Enhancement Themes conferences.

- 3.4.11 The University hosts a new [Teaching Innovation and Learning Enhancement \(TILE\)](#)[△] network. It is a network of academics at universities, teachers at schools, educational developers and science communicators, and comprises a monthly external speaker series which brings people from different disciplines and sectors together to discuss ways to improve education using evidence-based findings.

Evaluation of our approach to identifying and sharing good practice

- 3.4.12 The restructuring of the University has resulted in significant improvements in our approach to identifying and sharing good practice. The development of the School Associate Dean positions for the areas of learning and teaching and quality and academic standards has helped considerably in terms of two-way communication and sharing good practice. Of particular importance are the formal and informal opportunities for the Associate Deans to share practice so that their learning from each other can improve practice in the Schools. In addition to the opportunities for sharing and disseminating good practice at the Learning and Teaching Committee and the Quality and Academic Standards Committee, the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching) convenes regular informal catch-ups with the Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching and Quality and Academic Standards) to promote practice sharing and collective problem solving. Feedback from the Associate Deans suggests that these informal sessions are a valuable way of sharing and disseminating good practice at a local level.
- 3.4.13 The Sharing Good Practice Programme and the Friday Fry-Up led by the Academic Skills Centre are very well received by participants. The challenge here is reaching out to the whole academic community rather than just to those who are already fully engaged with enhancement of learning and teaching. Although it is difficult to evaluate the extent to which participants disseminate the practice learned at these events within their Schools, we are currently developing an approach to more effectively capture feedback from participants who attend our events in order to assess changes to practice and impact on student learning and outcomes. Plans are under development to create a longitudinal approach to feedback where participants will be asked to comment on outcomes and impact six months and then one year after the event. Learning from closing this feedback loop will help to ensure that the Sharing Good Practice Programme is supporting staff effectively in meeting the University's strategic objectives in relation to learning and teaching. The fact that student satisfaction with the quality of their learning and teaching has been consistently high over the past five years (see Section 3.5) suggests that sharing practice events, along with other staff development opportunities, are being effective.

3.4.14 Many Schools have internal conferences, ‘away days’ and retreats to provide opportunities for sharing practice and curriculum development, as well as providing space to explore new ideas for enhancement. The School of Art and Design has established Strategic Thinking Days where staff have the opportunity to share and enhance practice. This is described in the *Focus On* mini case study below.

Focus on: Sharing and Developing Practice

Strategic Thinking Days. In response to our Staff Survey in 2015, The School of Art and Design committed to developing a strategy to ensure that ‘an appropriate amount of time be allocated in the workload for cross-fertilisation of ideas, reflection and creative future planning’. The School took the decision to allocate days within the academic teaching session which would be set aside specifically to allow staff time to think and plan. Two days are identified in both semester one and two and the dates are added into the School calendar to ensure that teaching and committee meetings are not scheduled for these days. Students are set activities to replace any teaching that would normally be scheduled.

Staff may use the Strategic Thinking Days to work individually, in pairs or in small groups to reflect on their teaching, research and associated activities and to develop new initiatives or revisit existing practice. Activities could, for example, include: the development of a new programme or module; the development of a research proposal; expanding an idea for embedding equality and diversity into the culture of the School; enhancement of health and safety; or enhancement of induction of new international students.

The School has now run this for two years and, in the main, staff have elected to work in large groups to brainstorm and develop ideas for taking forward. At least two new collaborative modules and the re-design of a whole programme have been developed as a result of this ‘thinking space’. Staff have indicated that they have highly valued the opportunity to undertake strategic thinking about the future.

3.4.15 The Learning and Teaching Development Forum, including the NSS forum, is an effective way of sharing and disseminating good practice through a mixture of short presentations and discussions. Although we have not formally evaluated the effectiveness of the forum, the sessions are well-attended and generate lively discussions. Practice showcased at the event by one School is frequently adopted by others or the whole University, one such example being the adoption by the whole University of an attendance monitoring policy as a result of the demonstrably effective practice in the School of Life Sciences.

3.4.16 A more recent development for sharing and disseminating good practice is our annual ‘wash-up’ sessions for conveners and secretaries of Boards of Examiners. These sessions have been in place since January 2017 and provide the opportunity for those involved with convening and managing Boards of Examiners to get together to share best practice and discuss any challenges in a solution-focused way. Discussion topics where the sharing of practice has led to enhancements include candidate anonymisation at Boards of Examiners and the running of paperless Boards.

3.5 Engaging, developing and supporting staff

Staff development

- 3.5.1 In recognition of the importance of engaging, developing and supporting staff as key drivers of quality enhancement, the University has a comprehensive programme of development opportunities for all staff. The [Academic Skills Centre](#)[△] is the primary locus for academic skills development for academic staff. As well as providing a comprehensive series of seminars and workshops to support professional practice (the [Sharing Good Practice Programme](#)[△]), it also provides an [Academic Induction Programme](#)[△], a [Learning to Teach in Higher Education](#)[△] programme for postgraduates who teach and an HEA-accredited [Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice in Higher Education](#)[△] (PGCAPHE). The Centre provides tailored workshops for Schools and disciplines, support for institutional engagement with the national Quality Enhancement Themes, support for University, School and Student-Led Teaching Awards and hosts the [Friday Fry-Up Staff Club](#)[△].
- 3.5.2 The PGCAPHE is a professional development programme in academic practice and is based on the UK Professional Standards Framework. It comprises an Associate Module and two Fellowship Modules, and provides staff with an opportunity to gain professional recognition within the HEA Fellowship Framework. All probationary academic staff are required to successfully complete the Associate Module as a condition of their probation. The University actively supports all staff involved in teaching and supporting learning to engage in credit-bearing learning or structured reflective activity to gain professional recognition. The Head of the Academic Skills Centre is the University's first Principal Fellow and is institutional liaison operational contact with the HEA (now incorporated into Advance HE). The Academic Skills Centre also provides a programme of workshops, advice and coaching to support colleagues in attaining Fellowship status at any stage on the Fellowship framework.
- 3.5.3 The work of the Academic Skills Centre is complemented by [Organisational and Professional Development](#)[△] (OPD), which is part of the Human Resources and Organisational Development Directorate. OPD provides a broad range of [training opportunities](#)[△] which fall within the following headings:
- Professional Development
 - Researcher Development
 - Organisational Development
 - Coaching and Mentoring
- 3.5.4 [Professional Development](#)[△] provides training for all members of staff and includes the development of management skills, presentation skills, financial management skills, writing plans and proposals, dealing with change and a significant number of IT training opportunities. The programme has some training opportunities in common with the [Researcher Development](#)[△] programme, which also provides skills

development opportunities for research students. The Researcher Development programme provides training workshops on writing (including thesis writing), research funding, enterprise, presentation skills and career advice. The [Organisational Development](#)[△] arm of OPD works with Schools and Directorates to provide bespoke training sessions that meet specific local needs. This can include team building, change management, executive coaching, resilience and conflict resolution. The [Coaching and Mentoring](#)[△] aspects of OPD looks at the wider culture of the organisation and aligns to the University Strategy on developing high performance communities and enabling our people to flourish. The University runs a number of mentoring schemes for Professional Services staff, academic staff and researchers. There are online resources available to support both mentor and mentees. A number of staff at the University are currently being developed as accredited coaches through the Institute of Leadership and Management and there are a number of workshops on the OPD programme to raise awareness of these pivotal developmental processes. OPD also runs a development programme for Associate Deans which is designed to help develop their strategic leadership skills.

- 3.5.5 With respect to our priority theme of Internationalisation, OPD offers a series of targeted masterclasses with an internationalisation theme as part of their Focus On series of workshops. The masterclasses include: engaging with overseas alumni; introduction to conversion; events organising; promoting exchanges, summer schools and study abroad; understanding student recruitment; setting up a new academic partnership; and managing an international partnership. They are complemented by workshops that include: confident networking; communications and influencing; corporate use of social media; inclusive cultures; and communication with international students. Participation is mandatory for staff representing the University internationally.
- 3.5.6 Staff training and development opportunities are also provided by the Centre for Technology and Innovation in Learning and the Library and Learning Centre. Here, training is provided to staff on digital literacies, reading list software, survey tools, reference management techniques, appropriate use of plagiarism detection software, e-assessment and technology-enhanced learning, where the Centre for Technology and Innovation in Learning supports a series of 'communities of practice'. The Centre also hosts a [Digital Learning Hub](#)[△] which contains an extensive range of resources to support staff in their approach to online learning and assessment.
- 3.5.7 Peer support of teaching is a valuable way of supporting academic staff with their practice. Anecdotal evidence suggests that, whilst there are some areas of excellent practice across the University, there are also areas where the approach is patchy. We recognise that this is an area for development for the University, and it is an outstanding action from our previous Quality Enhancement Metastrategy. The *Focus On* mini case study below shows the approach to peer support of teaching

taken by the School of Education and Social Work, and is an example of good practice.

Focus on: Enhancement of Teaching Practice

Peer support of teaching. During academic year 2013/14 there was recognition in the School of Education and Social Work that the approach to peer support of teaching had become somewhat ad hoc. The then Associate Dean of Student Experience (now Quality and Academic Standards) led the development of a systematic approach to enable the School to evidence that it was promoting professional dialogue between colleagues around aspects of teaching, observing and learning other effective teaching strategies and hence an enhanced student experience.

To support implementation from academic year 2014/15, an allocation of five hours from the workload allocation colleagues receive for 'valuing people' was provided. A list of staff pairings is provided annually by the Associate Dean (Quality and Academic Standards). A record, noting only dates of the initial meeting, dates of the observed teaching and dates of feedback sessions, is held in a shared file. The five hours allocated include an hour for initial meetings between pairs of colleagues to discuss and arrange observations and feedback sessions, an hour for teaching observations and an hour for feedback discussion for each person. Staff are encouraged to use the feedback as part of their annual Objective Setting and Review, and their annual Professional Update record where appropriate (e.g. for staff registered with the General Teaching Council of Scotland).

Flexibility was built into the system to reflect the different teaching loads and research focus of staff and the fact that there is a high proportion of distance learners in the School. Guidance to staff is as follows:

- Colleagues may wish to consider peer observation pairings which are cross-discipline or within discipline.
- Teaching activities may include: PhD feedback and support to doctoral students; shadowing colleagues when assessing professional practice placements; or shadowing colleagues when they are involved in online tutoring/support.
- Feedback is both constructive and reflective and the ethos is one of professional support.
- There is a light touch with respect to recording the peer observations.
- The pairings are mutually acceptable.

The Associate Dean (Quality and Academic Standards) has oversight of the process, including the staff pairings. Staff may indicate, in confidence and without justification, if there are any individuals who they would prefer not to be paired with. This helps to ensure that the experience is a positive one. To ensure that staff observe a range of teaching and feedback strategies the list of pairings is amended every two years. The Associate Dean (Quality and Academic Standards) monitors the shared spreadsheet throughout the academic session and, if required, sends reminders to colleagues that they have still to update their peer observation record. Feedback from staff is that they welcome receiving constructive comments from their peers and seeing others' approaches to teaching.

Recognition and reward of excellence in learning and teaching

3.5.8 A key aim of the University's 2012-17 Learning and Teaching Strategy was to 'recognise and reward our academic excellence in learning and teaching publicly

and through promotion'. A strategic aim of the Strategy to 2022 is to 'recognise excellent performance and outcomes'.

- 3.5.9 In 2013/14 a radically new [academic promotion system and procedure](#)[△] was developed and further refined in 2016. The previous system had created a binary divide between research and teaching, with research as the key driver of academic promotion (such that staff who wished to highlight teaching excellence as grounds for promotion were required to complete an additional section of the application form, promotion to Reader was exclusively reserved for staff demonstrating excellence in research, and promotion to Chair was heavily weighted towards excellence in research). The new system removes that binary divide between teaching and research entirely, with the words 'research' and 'teaching' no longer being mentioned at all in the criteria for promotion for any grade. Rather the onus is on the candidate to make the case for promotion under 3 headings aligned with the University's values: 'excellent academic practice', 'valuing people and working together' (which encompasses effective leadership), and 'making a difference'. Sitting alongside the promotions criteria are 'Indicators of Excellence' which provide guidance to candidates on what constitutes outstanding performance in learning and teaching and scholarship, research, wider impact, and valuing people and working together.
- 3.5.10 In order to monitor progress in achieving the aim of recognising academic excellence in teaching and learning through promotion, the University's Strategy 2012-2017 had a performance indicator monitoring the numbers of applicants on Teaching and Scholarship contracts applying for and being awarded promotion. This showed a step change in the numbers of staff on Teaching and Scholarship contracts coming forward for and achieving promotion.
- 3.5.11 In addition to promotion as a recognition of excellence, there are also a series of teaching awards and celebratory events. DUSA has been running student-led teaching awards since 2011. Students nominate academic and Professional Services staff for a variety of award categories including: Best Adviser or Personal Tutor; Best for Assessment and Feedback; Best Postgraduate Supervisor; Innovation in Teaching; Most Inspirational Teaching; Outstanding Commitment to Student Welfare; and Outstanding Enhancement of the Student Experience (non-teaching). The judging is carried out by a panel of students and there is an annual dinner to announce and celebrate the awards. There is recognition of winners and all those nominated through posters displayed throughout the University campuses.
- 3.5.12 The University also confers a number of awards for teaching. The most prestigious of these is the University's Chancellor's Award for Outstanding Contribution to Teaching which recognises outstanding contributions to learning and teaching over a sustained period and is conferred on up to 4 staff per year. The award is given as part of our graduation ceremonies and the recipients are invited to speak, along

with newly-promoted professors, at the University's annual [Discovery Days](#)[△]. This University-wide event was originally conceived as fulfilling the function of inaugural lectures for newly-appointed or promoted professors and was initially heavily focused on research. The inclusion of talks by teaching award recipients, along with the increasing prevalence of promotions to professor for staff on Teaching and Scholarship contracts, ensures that this key event in the University calendar is now as strongly focused on teaching as research and thereby serves to embed a culture of recognition of excellent teaching across the University. We also have an annual University Honorary Graduates' Award for Inclusive Practice (see Section 2.3) and several Schools have in place their own teaching awards to recognise excellent and innovative teaching.

3.5.13 We have been involved in the [Athena SWAN Charter Mark programme](#)[△] for a number of years and the University and several of our Schools hold Bronze Awards. Our commitment to Athena SWAN is supported by an action plan that includes taking deliberate steps to support female staff with their career progression.

Evaluation of our approach to engaging, developing and supporting staff

3.5.14 The University has been conducting a comprehensive staff survey every two years since 2013. The survey is run by Capita and the results provide a useful barometer to gauge the effectiveness of our approach to engaging, developing and supporting staff. In 2017, 91% of staff agreed with the statement, 'the University is a good place to work', which is an improvement from 84% in 2015. Capita advises that a positive response to this statement strongly correlates with employee engagement. Our result compares with the median figure of 87% for all higher education institutions surveyed, where the University is ranked ninth out of 48. The 2017 survey showed that 73% of all staff were satisfied with their current level of training and development, and 78% said they had received sufficient training to enable them to do their job well. 71% agreed that overall training and development had helped them to do their job more effectively. The survey also showed that 87% of staff felt valued by colleagues and 81% felt valued by students (with 93% of academic staff feeling valued by students). We are currently conducting a series of focus groups to engage staff in identifying how the University might continue to improve. Since 2015 all Schools and Directorates are required to produce action plans in response to the survey and then formally review their progress against the action plans. Oversight is provided by the People and Organisational Development Committee.

3.5.15 Staff feedback on the development activities delivered by the Academic Skills Centre and OPD is generally very positive. Examples of feedback are provided below.

Academic Skills Centre

'I don't think I would have got as much out of my first year as a lecturer without input from [the Academic Skills Centre] and attendance at the seminar series has been a key part of my personal development. It's always a friendly and welcoming environment and I am beginning to make new connections with different professionals who I might not have met so readily.'

'I felt much more confident about marking my first master's dissertations (using rubrics) after attending the rubrics workshop.'

'I recently enrolled in a sharing good practices writing for publication workshop. Having not published for some time I was lacking in confidence in my writing abilities and in up to date knowledge of the writing for publication process. Attending the excellent workshop presented by Rowena Murray has impacted greatly on my writing. I have not only grown in confidence but have been regularly writing on a weekly basis. I have also submit[ed] a funding application to undertake service evaluation with the view to publishing my findings.'

OPD

'Very insightful and will help to shape our own strategy going forward.'

'Enjoyable course [...] I feel that the course covered a good range of techniques, so that there will be something suitable for everyone. I feel positive that the techniques could improve my confidence at work.'

'This was a very practical workshop and I found the illustration of the language difficulties international students face as well as how to deal with them very helpful.'

'I have suggested this course to other colleagues. The course content and workshops were excellent, well presented and relevant.'

'Workshop was very well prepared and facilitator was knowledgeable and engaging.'

3.5.16 Peer support of academic practice remains an area for development for us. Work is already being taken forward here by the Academic Skills Centre, who recently invited colleagues from the Scottish Higher Education Developers' network to talk about their work in this area. The session highlighted a number of areas for further exploration including expanding the focus beyond face-to-face teaching to include looking at teaching materials and work in the online environment. Future plans also include engaging with the work of Mark Huxham and colleagues from Edinburgh Napier University, whose Students as Colleagues project has students involved in teaching observations. This area will be progressed by the Academic Skills Centre as part of their development programme for academic staff.

3.5.17 A proxy indicator of our approach to academic staff development is our NSS scores for the quality of teaching (Tables 3.1 and 3.2). We have consistently high levels of satisfaction with the quality of our teaching and have been ranked in the top 10 in the UK for the overall satisfaction with teaching over the past 5 years. The

Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey also demonstrates high levels of student satisfaction with the quality of our teaching.

NSS Question	% Satisfaction (UK ranking*)			
	2013	2014	2015	2016
The teaching on my course overall	89 (32)	91 (7)	92 (4)	92 (4)
Q 1 Staff are good at explaining things	92 (27)	94 (7)	93 (17)	95 (4)
Q 2 Staff have made the subject interesting	86 (27)	88 (12)	91 (1)	90 (4)
Q 3 Staff are enthusiastic about what they are teaching	89 (40)	92 (7)	93 (4)	94 (2)
Q 4 The course is intellectually stimulating	88 (35)	90 (14)	90 (15)	90 (19)

Table 3.1: NSS results for Teaching (2013-2016). *The ranking excludes specialist organisations. Some of the ranks are tied.

NSS Question	% Satisfaction (UK ranking*)
	2017
The teaching on my course overall	89 (7)
Q 1 Staff are good at explaining things	93 (8)
Q 2 Staff have made the subject interesting	90 (5)
Q 3 The course is intellectually stimulating	90 (13)
Q 4 My course has challenged me to achieve my best work	85 (13)

Table 3.2: NSS results for Teaching (2017). *The ranking excludes specialist organisations. Some of the ranks are tied.

3.6 Effectiveness of the approach to implementing institutional strategies and enhancing learning and teaching

Good practice identified through reflection and evaluation of our approach to implementing institutional strategies and enhancing learning and teaching

3.6.1 Action planning grids. Our use of action planning grids, which include action owners and timescales, evolved from our Quality Enhancement Metastrategy that was part of our Strategy to 2017. Regular review of the grids means that most actions are fully implemented. The action plans are deliberately not viewed as static in recognition of the fact that changes in the national landscape and available resources can cause priorities to change.

3.6.2 Commitment to University strategies. Staff are encouraged to relate activities and all investment proposals to the University Strategy. The Strategy to 2022 was deliberately constructed to ensure relevance to all parts of the University so that activities can be clearly related to Strategy.

3.6.3 Sharing practice. The restructuring of the University in 2015 provided an opportunity for a step-change in improvement to our approach to sharing practice through the creation of the Associate Dean positions with responsibility for learning

and teaching and quality and academic standards. This has resulted in effective communication of practice through the Learning and Teaching Committee, the Quality and Academic Standards Committee and other fora.

3.6.4 Staff development. The staff development programme provided by the Academic Skills Centre, the Centre for Technology and Innovation in Learning, the Library and Learning Centre and OPD is comprehensive and well received by staff. We have an annual Objective Setting and Review Process where individuals have a discussion with their line manager following the completion of a form that requires identification of staff development requirements. This means that there is good staff engagement with training and development opportunities.

3.6.5 Support for postgraduates who teach. This was identified as an area for development in the outcome from ELIR 3. The training has been further developed and is now mandatory. There has been good engagement with the programme and student feedback is positive.

Areas for development identified through reflection and evaluation of our approach to implementing institutional strategies and enhancing learning and teaching

3.6.6 Peer support of academic practice. This is an area where there are examples of excellent practice in parts of the University. Practice for peer support is not consistent across all Schools and disciplines. We recognise the need to refresh University policy and practice here to provide a better framework for staff to work within.

3.6.7 Strengthening the reach and impact of the national Enhancement Themes. Although the national Enhancement Themes have been a positive driver of enhancement, there is still work to be done in raising awareness with a wider body of staff and students. There are many individuals who engage purposefully and with good effect and there are others who will have a limited knowledge of the Themes. That said, most staff will have knowledge of the impact even if they do not identify activities with the Themes. As we have adopted a strategy of effective use of evidence to drive enhancement for a number of years we are optimistic that we can strengthen the reach and impact for the current Theme.

Forward planning

3.6.8 A core aim of our Strategy to 2022 is to enable our people to flourish. There is a commitment to ensure that appropriate frameworks are in place so that our staff and students can be the best they can be. Specific actions for the future that relate to enhancement of learning and teaching include:

- The development of a framework for peer support of academic practice
- The instigation of an Annual Review of Teaching and Scholarship to sit alongside the Annual Review of Research and inform the Objective Setting and Review process

4

Academic standards and quality processes



4. Academic standards and quality processes

4.1 Evaluation summary

- 4.1.1 Our quality framework is mature and fit for purpose. Mapping of our policies and procedures to the UK Quality Code demonstrates good alignment with the expectations and indicators of sound practice set out in the Code. The restructuring of the University in 2015 provided opportunities for enhancement and we are confident that the structural changes have been beneficial, particularly around the development of the Quality and Academic Standards Committee and the Associate Dean positions with responsibility for quality and academic standards.
- 4.1.2 We strive to ensure that our students are involved in quality processes and are proud of the high levels of student engagement. We are not complacent here, and recognise that there are areas for development. The close working relationship between staff and student representatives means that the views of students have a strong influence on the development of all of our policies and procedures relating to quality assurance and enhancement.

4.2 Key features of the University's approach to managing quality and setting, maintaining, reviewing and assessing academic standards

Organisational structures for the management of quality and academic standards.

- 4.2.1 The restructuring of the University in 2015 resulted in significant changes to our approach to the management of quality and academic standards. Under the previous structure, oversight of quality and standards primarily rested with the four Colleges which reported directly to Senate on quality matters. The Colleges worked within the framework of policies and processes set out in the University-wide [Quality Framework](#)[□], and each College had a Head of Learning and Teaching and a Head of Quality Enhancement who were responsible for ensuring that activities were aligned with the Quality Framework.
- 4.2.2 When the Colleges were dissolved in the summer of 2015 and replaced by nine Schools, it was decided that oversight of quality and standards should rest with a central University committee that would take over some of the previous functions of the old College Boards. This resulted in the development of the Senate [Quality and Academic Standards Committee](#)[□]. The purpose of the Quality and Academic Standards Committee is to provide leadership and make decisions on all areas that relate to quality and academic standards across the University. Its remit is as follows:
- To make decisions (on behalf of Senate) on the approval of new taught provision, the revalidation of existing programmes, changes to taught provision (including the withdrawal or suspension of programmes), the academic approval and review of collaborative taught provision,

consideration of proposals for the accreditation of taught provision from bodies without degree awarding powers, the approval of degree regulations and the approval of any exceptions to University academic policies

- To provide 'light touch' oversight of certificated non-credit bearing taught provision
- To be responsible for the development, review and revision of the University's Quality Framework and to ensure that University policies and practices are aligned with national expectations and local priorities
- To provide oversight of the approaches to quality and academic standards within the Schools
- To have oversight of external examining for the University
- To have primary responsibility for the development and implementation of University-wide academic policies and regulations, and for providing an appropriate governance framework to support, promote and enhance quality in learning and teaching
- To have responsibility for the monitoring of student progression, retention and achievement and to develop action plans, policies and procedures to promote improvement in these areas

4.2.3 At the same time as the development of the Quality and Academic Standards Committee, it was agreed that each School should have an Associate Dean with responsibility for quality and academic standards, and these individuals make up the core membership of the Quality and Academic Standards Committee along with the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching) as convener, and other key members of Professional Services staff. The role profile of the Associate Dean (Quality and Academic Standards) is provided in [Appendix 7](#).

4.2.4 The Quality and Academic Standards Committee reports directly to Senate and also has delegated authority from Senate to take decisions on quality assurance matters such as the approval of new taught provision, changes to taught provision, approval of degree regulations, approval of external examiner appointments and revalidation of taught programmes.

4.2.5 Operational management and leadership in the development of approaches to quality assurance and the setting and maintaining of academic standards is provided by the Quality and Academic Standards Office. The Office was set up at the same time as the Colleges were dissolved and has resulted in a more centralised approach to quality management. The past two-three years have seen significant changes to policies and practices to reflect the new structure. We will not describe all of the changes but rather pull out key features of our approach to managing quality and setting, maintaining, reviewing and assessing academic standards in the sections below.

Annual review of taught provision

- 4.2.6 There was a substantive revision of the annual review process in 2013 to ensure an enhancement-led approach, with further revisions in 2016 to reflect feedback from staff as well as the new University structures. The [review process](#)[△] involves module reviews which feed into programme reviews, which in turn inform the development of annual School Learning and Teaching Enhancement Reports. The last forms the basis of annual discussions between relevant members of School Executive Groups and the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching) and the Director of Quality and Academic Standards. In order to ensure robust linkages between quality enhancement and strategic and operational planning, the Vice-Principal (Provost) or the Director of Strategic Planning is now invited to the annual enhancement meetings. We also encourage School Presidents or Vice-Presidents to participate in the meetings. We piloted this for the first time last year and found that student participation resulted in even richer discussions.
- 4.2.7 As well as being focused on enhancement, the review process also requires appropriate consideration of academic standards and indicators of quality at the level of module, programme and School. The remit of the School Associate Deans (Quality and Academic Standards) includes a requirement 'to work, as required, with programme leaders to ensure high-quality annual programme review reports' ([Appendix 7](#)). Annual programme review reports are considered by School Quality and Academic Standards Committees.
- 4.2.8 **Annual module and programme reviews.** Reflection on the quality of modules and forward planning are captured in [Annual Module Quality Enhancement Reports](#)[△] which feed into the annual review of programmes. Programme leaders produce [Annual Programme Quality Enhancement Reports](#)[△] which inform the development of [Annual School Learning and Teaching Enhancement Reports](#)[△].
- 4.2.9 **Annual School learning and teaching enhancement reports.** Schools are expected to reflect on the learning and teaching activities and outcomes of quality processes from the previous academic year and provide a short report that covers:
- Quality assurance matters (including confirmation that: all taught programmes have been subject to formal annual review; the School has considered the outcomes of periodic programme reviews; and the School has had appropriate oversight of external examiners' reports)
 - Actions following on from the previous report
 - Student retention, progression and achievement
 - Student and staff feedback
 - Curriculum development
 - Assessment and feedback
 - Employment and employability
 - Innovation

- Engagement with Professional Services
- Inclusiveness
- Teaching collaborations
- Externality
- Staff development

4.2.10 The reports are not designed to be a synthesis of the outcomes of annual programme reviews, but rather to form the basis for the annual discussions with the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching). Schools are strongly encouraged to be open and frank in the narrative, to avoid boilerplate statements and to avoid repeating statements made in previous years. The annual discussions are also supported by data that are available to Schools in the Learning and Teaching Information area of My Dundee. The data sets include: student survey outcomes (NSS, International Student Barometer, Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey, Postgraduate Research Experience Survey); graduate employment data; league table data; student achievement data; module enrolment data; and data on retention and progression, and ensures that the reports and the discussions are evidence-based.

4.2.11 The formal annual face-to-face dialogue between the School leadership teams and the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching) forms the basis for an effective framework for consideration of bottom-up and top-down strategic matters relating to the enhancement of learning and teaching and the student experience. A synopsis of the annual discussions is presented as an oral report by the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching) to the Learning and Teaching Committee every year. From academic year 2017/18 the annual enhancement meetings have been supported by the Quality and Academic Standards Office, who produce a note of each meeting. A synthesis of the meeting outcomes is provided to the Learning and Teaching Committee to supplement the Vice-Principal's oral report. The School Learning and Teaching Enhancement Reports are all available to members of the Learning and Teaching Committee and the Quality and Academic Standards Committee. Key themes arising from the annual discussions may also be developed as themes for discussion by the Learning and Teaching Development Forum.

Periodic review of taught provision

4.2.12 [Periodic Programme Review](#)[△] is one of the primary instruments for assuring quality and standards as well as for promoting enhancement. We undertook a light-touch review of the process during academic year 2013/14 followed by a root-and-branch review during academic year 2016/17. The review involved consultation with staff and student representatives, and resulted in a fundamental overhaul of the method to streamline the process and provide more detailed guidance on the production of a [Reflective Analysis](#)[△] as part of the evaluation process. Feedback from staff suggested that too much time and effort were being spent on gathering data from different parts of the University, so the changes also included the direct provision

of relevant data from Registry to programme teams at an appropriate stage of the process. In addition, following on from a QAA Focus On event on Institution-Led Review where we learned from sparqs and from experiences elsewhere, we ensured that more prominence was given to involving students in the evaluation of the programme(s).

4.2.13 The Periodic Programme Review method involves an evaluation of the effectiveness of the programme(s), consideration of how the programme(s) could be improved for the future and the development of a forward plan for implementing any changes. This is captured in a Reflective Analysis which is considered by an external board (the Periodic Programme Review Board) which then meets with a group of students and graduates, the teaching staff and programme administrators, and the School Executive Group. The Periodic Programme Review Board provides a report to the School which contains a formal recommendation regarding the future operation of the programme(s). The report is also considered by the Quality and Academic Standards Committee which considers the outcomes with a view to sharing and disseminating good practice, and making a decision on the revalidation of the programme(s). Schools are required to provide the Quality and Academic Standards Committee with a year-on response to the outcome of the review.

4.2.14 At the time of writing, only a small number of programmes have been reviewed under the revised method. Anecdotal evidence from staff suggests that it has been well received, particularly with regard to the provision of centrally-held data to programme teams, the inclusion of 'a critical friend' in the process and the change of format to the Review event where the Board now meets with students first, before meeting the teaching team and School Executive Group members. There has also been positive feedback from the General Teaching Council for Scotland on the quality of the review documentation under the revised method (see below).

'The documentation provided by the university in advance of the accreditation has been first-class in that it has supported the GTCS accreditation panel in navigating its way through what is detailed and complex documentation. The structure and organisation of the materials and in particular the bespoke summary document allows the accreditation team to be confident in both its understanding of the programme and asking pertinent questions. There is no doubt that this approach is one which merits recognition as an area of good practice.'

Ellen Doherty

Director of Education, Registration and Professional Learning
General Teaching Council for Scotland

Accreditation of programmes by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies

4.2.15 Many of our programmes are accredited by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs). Accreditation occurs by a variety of mechanisms, many of which require cyclical accreditation events which involve inspection visits by the PSRB and procedures that are similar to our own periodic programme review method. In order to avoid duplication of work we encourage programme teams to engage with PSRBs to explore the possibility of a joint process that satisfies the requirements of the University and the PSRB. Several programmes are able to conduct their periodic programme reviews in partnership with the relevant PSRB so that the joint review process fulfils the requirements of both parties. Examples include Law, Education, Social Work, Psychology, Engineering and Nursing. Where it is not possible to hold joint events, we try to make sure that our periodic programme review process informs or is informed by the approach to PSRB accreditation. The University [Quality Framework](#)[□] provides further details on our approach to PSRB accreditation and a [register of programmes](#)[□] that are accredited by PSRBs.

Approval of new taught provision

4.2.16 The process for [approval of new taught provision](#)[□] was reviewed and significantly revised during academic year 2015/16. Approval of new taught programmes requires separate consideration of the business case and the proposal that sets out the detailed programme and module specifications and supporting information. The business case is considered first by the Educational Business Development Oversight Group or its subgroup (which is currently being established) depending on the level of risk and investment required. A green light is then given for the subsequent detailed development of the programme.

4.2.17 Once the business case has been approved Schools can concentrate efforts on refining the curriculum details, consulting with Professional Services and developing the programme specification and supporting information for initial consideration by a scrutiny panel that comprises reviewers who are external to the School, including a student reviewer. Following feedback from the scrutiny panel and any further formative feedback from key individuals and services from the subsequent University posting process, a draft of the proposal is considered by the School Quality and Academic Standards Committee before the final draft is reviewed for approval by the University Quality and Academic Standards Committee on behalf of Senate. Figure 4.1 shows a depiction of the process for new programme approval.

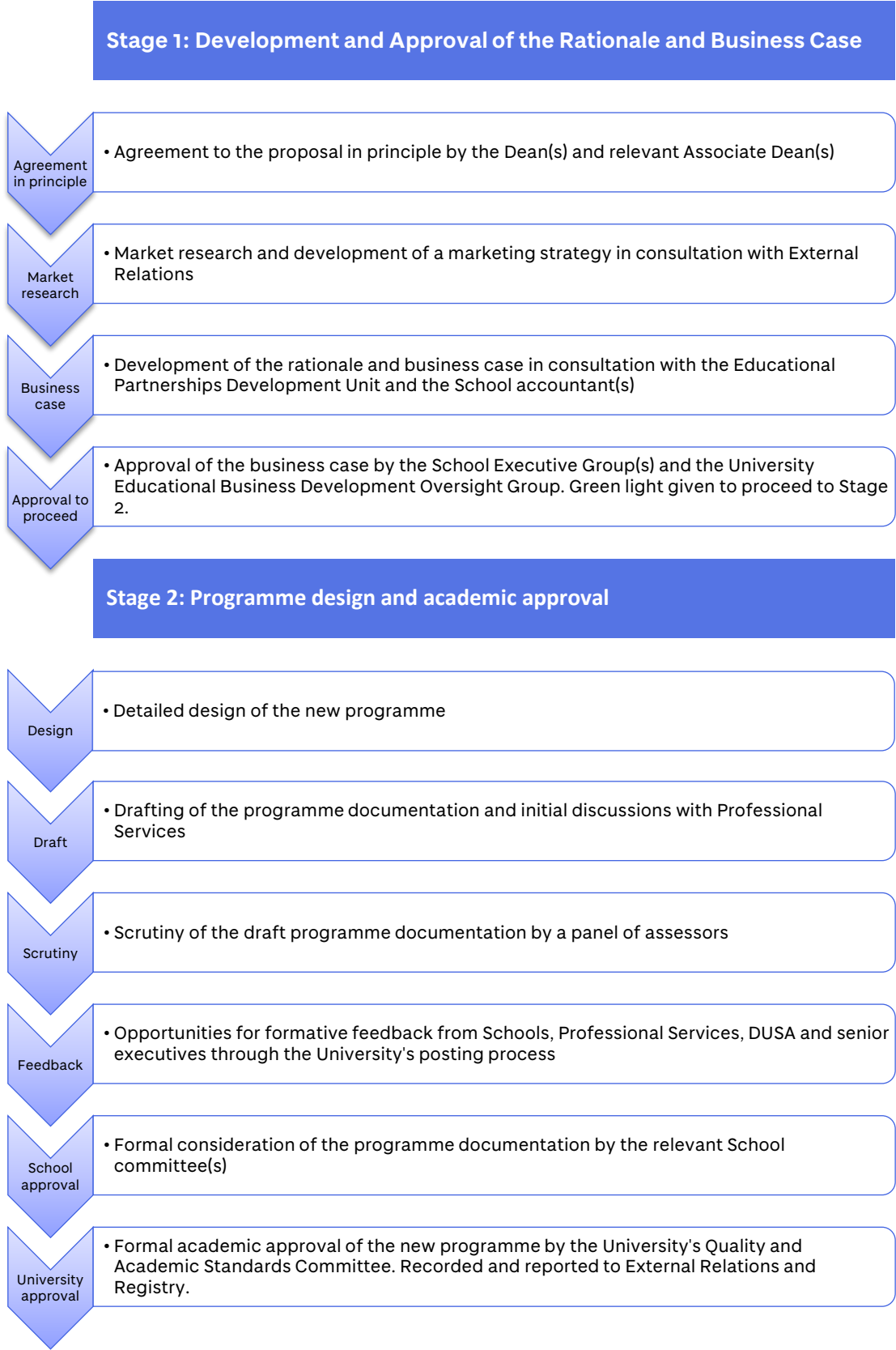


Figure 4.1: Approval of new taught programmes.

4.2.18 Responsibility for consideration of the approval of new modules lies with the Schools. Whilst the Quality and Academic Standards Committee has responsibility

for ratification of the decisions made by the School, it is expected that the detailed considerations about the approval of new modules will be carried out at the level of the School through its Quality and Academic Standards Committee. Figure 4.2 shows a depiction of the process for new module approval.

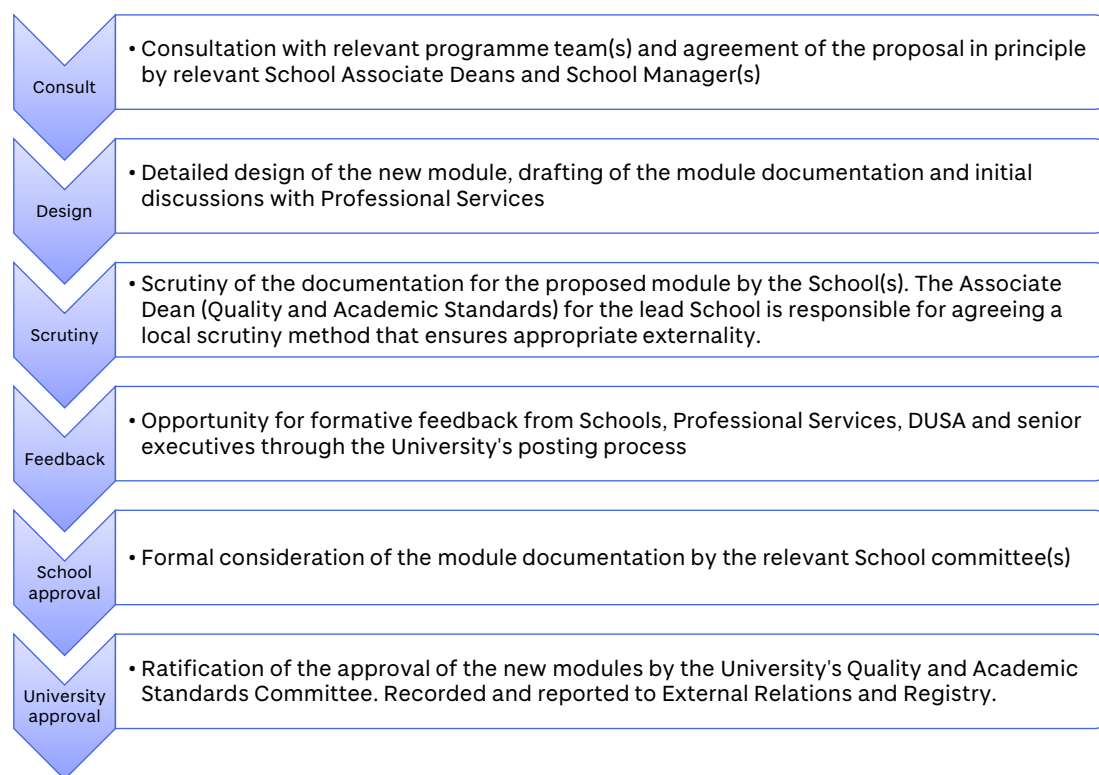


Figure 4.2: Approval of new modules.

Changes to taught provision

4.2.19 Our process for managing [changes to taught provision](#)[□] was subject to review and revision in academic year 2015/16 following the publication of advice to higher education providers from the Competition and Markets Authority (March 2015) on consumer protection law. Figure 4.3 outlines the process for approving proposals for substantive changes to programmes and Figure 4.4 shows the process for substantive changes to modules. Figure 4.5 shows the process for approving proposals to withdraw or suspend programmes or modules.

Academic standards and quality processes

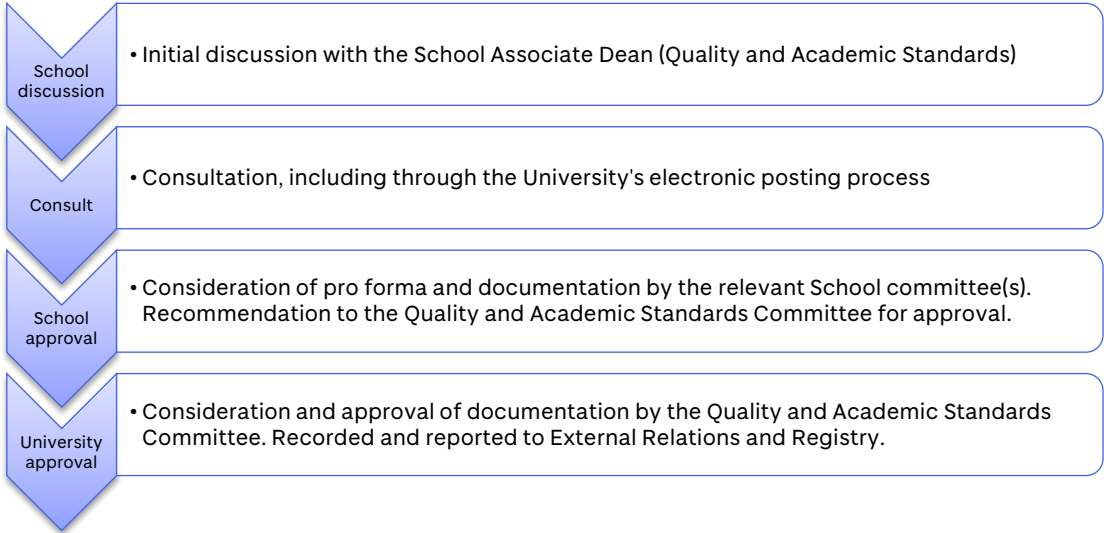


Figure 4.3: Approval of substantive changes to programmes.

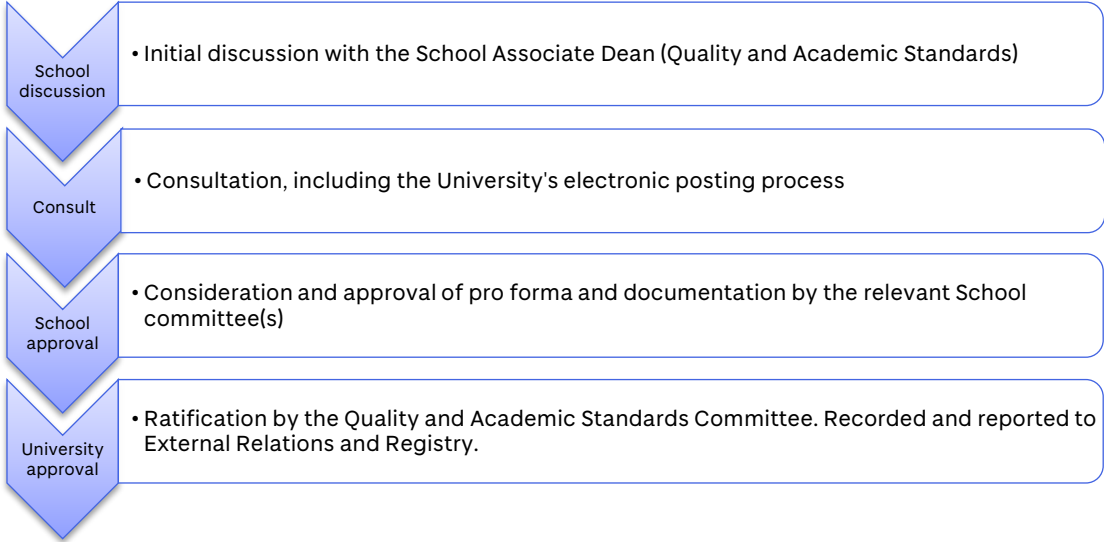


Figure 4.4: Approval of substantive changes to modules.

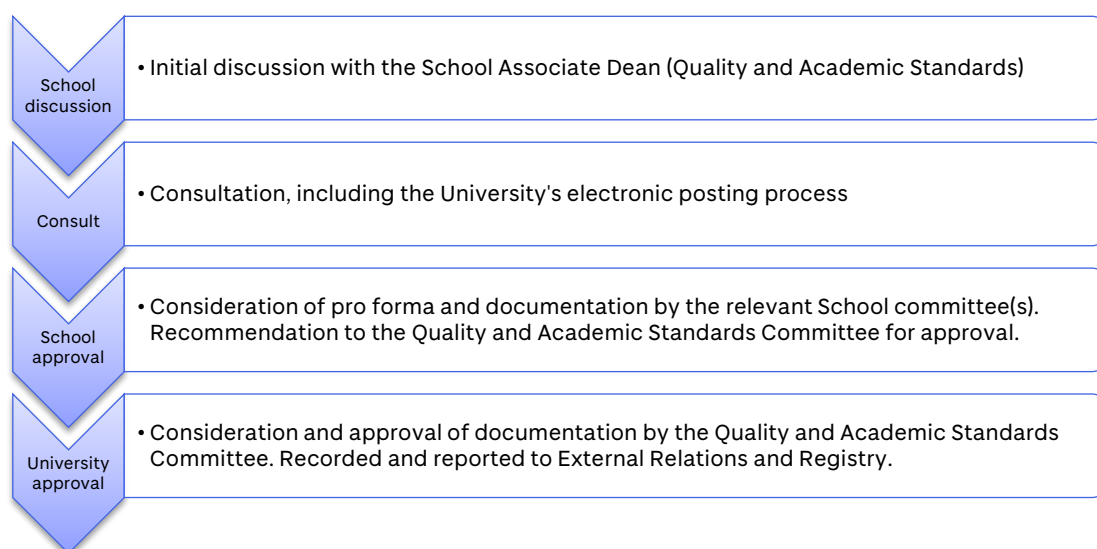


Figure 4.5: Approval of withdrawal of programmes or modules.

Management of assessment

4.2.20 Following on from ELIR 3, where there was a recommendation to improve consistency of practice across the University, we undertook a root-and-branch review of our [Assessment Policy](#)[□] during academic year 2014/15 which resulted in a major overhaul of our approach to management of assessment. Some of the changes were so far reaching (e.g. a different approach to the classification of honours degrees) that they have to be implemented in a phased way (see the Assessment Policy 2015 [implementation plan and guidance notes](#)[□]). Others, including the streamlining of processes for the consideration of mitigating circumstances, applying penalties for late submission of coursework and the granting of extensions to assessment deadlines, were applied to all cohorts from academic year 2015/16 onwards.

4.2.21 There was a one-year-on review of the revised Policy which resulted in some minor changes, mainly to provide clarity. Separate guidelines for students and staff on the [consideration of mitigating circumstances](#)[□] were also produced. There have been some additional clarification changes since to promote consistency of practice.

4.2.22 Policy statements on the conduct of Boards of Examiners are included in the revised assessment policy and, in response to feedback from staff, a separate [Guidance on the Conduct of Boards of Examiners](#)[□] was produced during academic year 2016/17 to ensure a more consistent approach. We also now run annual 'wash-up' sessions for Board conveners and secretaries. These sessions are chaired by the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching) and they provide an opportunity to share practice and resolve any issues (see also Section 3.4). For example, Schools that were finding candidate anonymisation at Boards of Examiners challenging were guided by the experience of others where this was normal practice.

- 4.2.23 A further recommendation from ELIR 3 was to review our approach to recognition of prior learning. Our published policy had been out of date and required significant revision, so a working group met over several months to develop a new policy which was approved by Senate at the end of 2014. The [Policy and Guidance on the Recognition of Prior Learning](#)⁶ sets out our commitment to flexible entry to higher education and describes processes for recognition of prior formal (certified) learning and recognition of prior informal (experiential) learning.
- 4.2.24 We also carried out a substantive review of our Code of Practice on Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty during 2017, and this has now been replaced by a [Code of Practice on Academic Misconduct by Students](#)⁶ which will come into effect at the beginning of academic year 2018/19. The revised policy has a greater emphasis on training and prevention, and is accompanied by a [video for students](#)⁷ made by DUSA and the Centre for Technology and Innovation in Learning.
- 4.2.25 A University [policy for student handbooks](#)⁶ was introduced in 2010 (revised 2014) so that there is clear and consistent communication to students about their programme of study, and how it is assessed. In relation to assessment and feedback, the policy requires that handbooks should include: information about academic dishonesty; descriptive marking criteria; details of assessments; details of the mark aggregation process; details of exam procedures; guidance on how and where to submit coursework; guidance on how to access past exam papers; the learning outcomes at the appropriate levels; opportunities to receive formative feedback; procedures for return of coursework; information about resits; the scheduling and submission dates for assessments and coursework; and information on penalties for late submission.
- 4.2.26 Responsibility for ensuring that programme and module handbooks are aligned with University policy lies with the Schools. A repository of student handbooks (available to staff and students) is held on the Quality Framework website so that good practice in the approach to setting out handbooks can be shared. The quality of information provided in the handbooks is normally reviewed as part of the periodic programme review process. The Quality and Academic Standards Office has also evaluated the content of the handbooks during 2017/18 to ensure that mandatory elements are included. The outcome of this exercise suggested that there would be value in creating a handbook template to ensure that key areas are not inadvertently omitted. This is an area for development during academic year 2018/19.

External examining

- 4.2.27 Since the restructuring of the University in 2015 considerable work has been done to enhance procedures relating to [external examining](#)⁶. The outcomes from ELIR 3 highlighted quality assurance processes, including our approach to external examining, as an area of positive practice. The University restructuring provided

opportunities to make further improvements, with responsibility for management of key processes relating to external examining now lying with the University [Quality and Academic Standards Office](#)[△] rather than the Colleges.

4.2.28 As part of the developments we have produced a [Handbook for External Examiners](#)[△] and a [Handbook for Schools about External Examining](#)[△]. We have also updated the [External Examiner Report Form](#)[△] to encourage a more consistent quality of external examiner reports. The revised report form is aligned with the guidance provided in the UK Quality Code, Chapter B7.

4.2.29 Outcomes of reports and discussions at meetings of Boards of Examiners are considered directly by Schools and reflected upon within annual module and programme reviews. The Director of Quality and Academic Standards reads all of the external examiner reports and provides a commentary for Schools/disciplines to guide the responses to the reports. Any specific issues raised are normally dealt with by the Schools and disciplines although the Director of Quality and Academic Standards will respond directly to external examiners if any serious issues are raised or if the external examiner has raised an issue that relates to the University as a whole. Any serious issues would also be flagged to the Director of Academic and Corporate Governance and the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching). The Director of Quality and Academic Standards undertakes an annual evaluation of external examiners' feedback across the University. The annual review is submitted to the Learning and Teaching Committee and the Quality and Academic Standards Committee for consideration of any problematic areas as well as to highlight and share good practice.

Evaluation of our approach to managing quality and setting, maintaining, reviewing and assessing academic standards

4.2.30 With respect to our priority theme of student engagement, the strong relationship between DUSA and the University and the fact that there is student representation on every University and School committee that is relevant to the student experience, means that student representatives have the opportunity to be fully engaged with all policy decisions that involve academic standards and quality assurance. DUSA executive team members ensure that policy proposals from the University are subject to consultation with the SRC. Motions proposed by the SRC are also transmitted to the relevant University committee(s) for consideration and action. An example of the latter is a recent SRC motion to ask the University to reconsider its policy on not normally allowing resits for final honours year modules. A short-life working group comprising academic staff, Professional Services staff and DUSA representation has been convened during academic year 2017/18 to consider all aspects and implications. The work here is ongoing, and is involving full engagement with DUSA and the SRC.

- 4.2.31 Looking back over the past five years (and further), we are confident that our student representatives are fully involved with decision making about policy decisions that relate to academic standards and quality assurance arrangements. This is evidenced through minutes of the Learning and Teaching Committee and the Quality and Academic Standards Committee, and subsequent actions. Examples, in relation to academic standards and quality assurance, include student engagement with the development of the Policy and Guidance of Recognition of Prior Learning (2014), the revised Policy and Guidance for Changes to Taught Provision (2015), the revised Assessment Policy (2015), the revised Policy and Guidance on Periodic Programme Review (2016) and the Code of Practice on Academic Misconduct (2018). For the revised Code of Practice on Academic Misconduct, DUSA also took the initiative to develop a video to help students understand academic misconduct in the context of University policy, including the penalties that may be applied.
- 4.2.32 As members of School Quality and Academic Standards Committees, student representatives have the opportunity to provide feedback on proposed developments such as new taught provision, changes to taught provision and changes to degree regulations. The challenge here is to ensure that student representatives take up the opportunity to engage with quality matters, as the subject matter is often perceived as being rather dry. This is being addressed by the student representative training provided by DUSA, which brings out the importance of the student representative role in shaping the student learning experience.
- 4.2.33 We expect Schools/disciplines to provide student representatives with an appropriate forum to discuss and engage with annual reports from external examiners. This expectation has been made clear in our [Policy and Code of Practice on External Examining of Taught Programmes](#)[□] since 2012 and is now made explicit in the [Handbook for Schools on External Examining](#)[□]. It is also set out in our [Joint Agreement on Student Representation](#)[□]. We made the decision not to publish our external examiners' annual reports but rather to encourage students to engage with the reports in a contextualised setting. The reasons for this were twofold. Firstly, we were concerned that if external examiners' written reports were public documents this practice could potentially result in less candid reporting and secondly (and more importantly) we felt that it was essential that students could consider the reports with a full understanding of the external examiner system and the context of the comments made. Feedback from the annual meetings between the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching) and Schools to discuss the Annual School Learning and Teaching Enhancement Reports suggests that this is still an area of challenge for some Schools/disciplines. For example, there is sometimes a level of unease about sharing the whole report with student representatives, and in some areas of the University the students have been provided with extracts rather than the whole report. This is an area that we are actively addressing, including through

improving our induction and guidance for external examiners to ensure that individual staff members and students are not mentioned by name in the reports.

- 4.2.34 The restructuring of the University in 2015 has provided considerable benefits in terms of consistency and quality of practice for the conduct of Periodic Programme Reviews, particularly around the conduct and reporting of Periodic Programme Review events. Events were managed at the level of Colleges before academic year 2015/16, but now they are managed by the Quality and Academic Standards Office in collaboration with the Schools. Each Periodic Programme Review event is now supported by one of the University's Quality and Academic Standards Officers who guide the process and assist conveners with writing the reports.
- 4.2.35 Periodic Programme Review Boards are convened by an Associate Dean (Quality and Academic Standards) from a different School and this ensures externality and impartiality, as well as ensuring an enhancement-led approach. The Associate Deans (Quality and Academic Standards) share experiences at the Quality and Academic Standards Committee and informally with each other. As conveners of review events they are also present at the Quality and Academic Standards Committee when responses from Schools are considered. This, along with a standardised reporting template, helps to ensure that all points have been addressed.
- 4.2.36 At the beginning of the life of the Quality and Academic Standards Committee and associated developments, the new Associate Deans (Quality and Academic Standards) shadowed more experienced Review Board conveners (who had previously held quality enhancement roles in the Colleges) in order to gain an understanding of the best approaches. Over the past two-three years a collective wealth of experience has been developed which has helped to improve the experience of programme teams and Review Board members.
- 4.2.37 As part of our review of the periodic programme review process in 2016 we considered whether to start conducting reviews at a higher subject level rather than at the level of the programme or cognate groups of programmes (as we have been doing for many years). For us, the main advantage of taking a subject-level approach would have been to include research degrees as part of the reviews as we have found it challenging to develop a University-wide, meaningful process for periodic review of research degree programmes. A decision was made to continue with periodic review at the programme level to retain the level of granularity that we have found to be beneficial. The Research Degrees Subcommittee has been leading on the development of a separate University-wide process for periodic review for research degree programmes, and discussions are ongoing about whether the Quality and Academic Standards Committee and the Quality and Academic Standards Office should have a greater level of involvement in the quality assurance of research degree programmes.

- 4.2.38 In 2013, we piloted a process for periodic review of our student support environment which was based on similar principles to the periodic programme review process, involving critical self-reflection and an external review board. Whilst the review process had considerable value, and led to the development of the University's first-stop-shop Enquiry Centre, feedback from participants suggested that the process was clumsy and that a different approach should be used in the future. We have decided to develop a thematic review approach which will be taken forward in academic year 2018/19.
- 4.2.39 Our revised approach to the approval of new taught provision has brought both benefits and challenges. The benefits include a more consistent approach to academic scrutiny and approval. The challenges include the timeline constraints by having a two-stage process for the approval of new programmes. The gatekeeper role of the Educational Business Development Oversight Group is in place to provide the initial view on the strategic importance and financial implications of the proposal before programme teams invest considerable effort in working up the programme details. Despite the articulation and communication of the two-stage process, we have found that the business case is often created at the same time as the detailed work on programme development, which means that work can be wasted if the business case is not approved. We recognise that there is still work to be done to develop the programme approval process to ensure that our portfolio of taught programmes is fully aligned with University strategy. The [Educational Partnerships Development Unit](#)[△] will play a key role in future developments as its remit has been extended more broadly to include business development in learning and teaching.
- 4.2.40 With regard to our new process for making changes to taught provision, this has proven to be effective but we are still having some challenges with the requirement to plan any changes well in advance. This is partly down to communication and culture, but also relates to our research-led approach to teaching and breadth of module choice in several disciplines. This means that unexpected staff changes can sometimes result in changes to modules at short notice. Whilst this causes difficulties in terms of consumer protection law it also has a knock-on impact on timetabling. The latter is an area where we are striving to improve and a new Policy on Timetabling was approved by the Senate in March 2018 (see Section 2.4).
- 4.2.41 Although we are confident that our approach to setting and maintaining academic standards is robust and fit-for-purpose, our data (as well as the published HESA data for first degrees) show that there has been a significant rise in the number of good honours degrees over the past five years ([Figure 1.11](#)). This reflects national trends, and although there are a number of reasons for grade improvements including higher entry tariffs, it is an area that the Quality and Academic Standards Committee is keeping a close eye on. Initial proposals to address this include the development of more detailed University-wide grade descriptors and

School/discipline level calibration events. The School of Life Sciences has developed a module grade calibration method which is described in the *Focus On* mini case study below. The method was presented to the Quality and Academic Standards Committee in 2018 and it was agreed that it could be further developed for wider use across the University. This is being taken forward by Registry in consultation with the method developer.

Focus On: Assessment

Ensuring consistent marking of assessments. The School of Life Sciences' research-led curriculum, especially at levels 3 and 4 (SCQF levels 9 and 10), brings in a large number of research-focused academics to deliver and assess the specialist content. There is a large number of optional modules with relatively small numbers of students and a few core modules with large numbers of students. The School uses small group workshop or tutorial-type activities, often led by different staff in larger modules, to facilitate feedback and turnaround of assessments within the three-week window.

Use of rubrics and overarching moderation go some way towards ensuring parity of grading by individuals but a more transparent, objective method is required to guard against instances of too lenient or too harsh grading. In the approach used by the School, grades are plotted in a boxplot (a method for depicting numerical data by quartiles) by marker, and are arranged from the lowest median to the highest median grade. Where there is evidence to suggest that a marker is grading too high (or too low) with respect to the whole cohort this marker (or markers) is/are sent the plot (with marker names removed) and informed which boxplot corresponds to them. They are then asked to revisit their grades bearing in mind the overall distribution.

The smaller modules are more straightforward to assess by individuals, but it is not easy to know if/when someone happens to have a class with very strong students or is simply grading too leniently. It is therefore important to assess whether module markers are consistently over- or under-grading students, to avoid the distorting effects this has on overall student performance, including potential degree inflation. We have developed a method of looking at the performance of every student on a module and comparing it to their performance in all of their other modules. The difference in grade is positive if the student performed better in the module in question and negative if they performed worse than in the rest of their modules. Statistical analysis of these differences allows us to identify entire modules that appear overly harsh or lenient in their grading and to effect changes in assessment where required to redress this in subsequent sessions.

4.3 Use of external reference points in quality processes

- 4.3.1 In common with other Scottish institutions, the University primarily uses the [Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland](#)⁷ (which is based on the [Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework](#)⁷) and [QAA subject benchmark statements](#)⁷ to develop and assess learning outcomes.
- 4.3.2 Our process for programme approval has a specific requirement that the intended learning outcomes of the proposed new programme should be written to reflect the level of the intended final qualification through the level descriptors provided by

the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) and the Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland (FQHEIS), and that relevant QAA subject benchmarks and requirements of PSRBs should be taken into account (see the [Guidance for Completing Programme Specification and Supporting Information Templates](#)[△]). Credit rating is mapped to the European Credit Transfer System. Development of new programmes includes consultation with employers.

4.3.3 Annual programme review asks for reflection on external examiners' comments, PSRB reports (where relevant) and any changes to QAA subject benchmarks and/or PSRB requirements and how these are being addressed (see [Guidance for Completing Annual Programme Quality Enhancement Reports](#)[△]).

4.3.4 The [Periodic Programme Review](#)[△] process requires the development of a reflective analysis which includes full consideration of the programme and intended learning outcomes in the context of the SCQF, the FQHEIS, subject benchmarks and PSRB requirements. Consideration of external examiner reports is also part of the reflective analysis. The Periodic Programme Review Board considers the appropriateness of the credit rating and reference to the SCQF, QAA subject benchmarks and PSRB criteria and the approach to external examining.

Evaluation of our use of external reference points in quality processes

4.3.5 We are confident that external reference points are appropriately embedded in our quality processes and that academic scrutiny of programme documentation during approval and review processes pays due regard to the FQHEIS, the SCQF and subject benchmark statements. External examiners are also asked to confirm that: the stated programme/module aims, content and intended learning outcomes are appropriate to the subject matter and national subject benchmark statements (where applicable); the stated programme/module aims and intended learning outcomes are aligned with the relevant qualification descriptor(s) set out in the FQHEIS; the content and structure of the programme/module is appropriate with regard to the stated SCQF level and volume of credit; and the stated programme/module aims, content and intended learning outcomes are aligned with PSRB requirements.

4.4 Summary of actions since ELIR 3

4.4.1 The University restructuring in 2015 means that there has been a considerable amount of change to the way we approach quality and academic standards. Some of the changes are relatively minor updates to procedures to reflect the absence of the Colleges. The key areas where there have been fundamental changes are listed below:

- Development of the Senate Quality and Academic Standards Committee
- Development of a central Quality and Academic Standards Office

- Appointment of an Associate Dean (Quality and Academic Standards) for each School
- Review and revision of the Assessment Policy for Taught Provision
- Development of the Policy and Guidance on the Recognition of Prior Learning
- Enhancement of our approach to the management of external examining
- Review and revision of the Code of Practice on Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty (now known as the Code of Practice on Academic Misconduct by Students)
- Review and revision of our programme approval process
- Review and revision of our Periodic Programme Review process
- Development of the Quality Framework for Collaborative Taught Provision (see also Chapter 5)

4.5 Approach to using data to inform decision-making and evaluation

Summary of our approach to using data to inform decision-making and evaluation

4.5.1 Over the past 5 years the University has strengthened considerably its approach to providing and using internal and external data to inform decision-making. Of particular note is the development of our Learning and Teaching Information area in My Dundee, where all staff have access to self-service, interactive data dashboards with information derived from the student management system. These include programme and module information relating to retention, progression and attainment and are used for annual programme and module evaluation, periodic programme reviews and Boards of Examiners. Other data sets include enrolment data, the results of student surveys (NSS, International Student Barometer, Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey and Postgraduate Research Experience Survey), student achievement benchmarking data, employment statistics (Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education record) and league table data. For Periodic Programme Review, programme teams are now provided with much of the data that they will require to evaluate the programme at an early stage of the process to reduce the time and effort spent in gathering student data.

4.5.2 The University uses HESA data from other universities to benchmark its performance, and this benchmarking was part of our approach to analysing our performance in the previous University strategy 2012-2017. Annual reports, that contained benchmarked data on NSS scores, student retention, student achievement, entry qualifications, widening access, research income and overheads, income from industry and other sources, graduate employment, quality of the estate and financial sustainability, were provided to Court, Senate and the relevant committees. The reports also analysed performance over time, and the final report from the strategy 2012-2017 was provided to Court in December 2017.

The approach to self-evaluation using performance measures will also be adopted for the Strategy to 2022.

- 4.5.3 In addition to the above, we undertake annual audits of our performance in areas of strategic importance agreed by the Court Audit Committee using independent internal auditors such as KPMG, PWC and Scott-Moncrieff. This includes a regular audit exercise that focuses on the student experience, and since academic year 2008/9 audits have been undertaken of DUSA, DUSA support services, Student Services, student records management, student recruitment, the Library and Learning Centre, centralised timetabling, workload planning and student partnership agreements. The audit for 2016/17 was about the experience of distance learners and the outcome has been invaluable in informing our approach to enhancement of the experience of distance learners, particularly around the areas of student feedback and student representation. We are currently working with DUSA to develop a more consistent framework for students to provide feedback and to explore options for enhancement of student representation. The topic for the 2017/18 audit was the effectiveness of our system for academic advisers (see Section 2.4) as this was aligned with the commitments set out in our Student Partnership Agreement for academic year 2017/18.

4.6 Effectiveness of the arrangements for quality assurance and securing academic standards

Good practice identified through reflection and evaluation of our approach to quality assurance and securing academic standards

- 4.6.1 **Associate Deans for Learning and Teaching and Quality and Academic Standards.** These positions, which were developed in 2015 as part of the University restructuring, have been exceptionally effective in developing, sharing and enhancing practice across the University.
- 4.6.2 **Comprehensive quality assurance processes and academic policies.** Our mapping of our policies and practices to the UK Quality Code shows good alignment with the expectations and indicators of sound practice. The Quality and Academic Standards Committee and the Learning and Teaching Committee both play key roles in ensuring that policies and procedures are fit for purpose and meet national expectations.
- 4.6.3 **Quality and Academic Standards Committee.** This committee provides effective Institutional oversight of quality and academic standards and is also a forum for sharing and developing practice. The Director of Quality and Academic Standards produces an annual report on its activities to the Governance and Nominations Committee of Court so that the University Court can be assured that its

responsibilities for quality and academic standards are being discharged effectively.¹²

4.6.4 Student engagement with quality processes. We have effective student engagement with quality processes which is enhanced by our close working relationship with DUSA and the training that they provide student representatives.

Areas for development identified through reflection and evaluation of our approach to quality assurance and securing academic standards

4.6.5 Grade improvement. In common with most of the higher education sector in Scotland, we have seen a rise in the numbers of students graduating with upper-second and first-class honours degrees. Although the rise can partly be explained by our move from being a recruiting university to primarily a selecting one, it is an area that we are keeping a close eye on and taking steps to minimise the possibility of any grade improvement that does not reflect the abilities of our students and the quality of our teaching.

4.6.6 Burden of administration. We recognise the challenge of a paperwork burden potentially being an unintended consequence of aiming for a gold-standard approach to quality assurance and enhancement. Although our processes have been developed to provide a framework for academic staff to approach quality enhancement in a structured way, we realise that a requirement to fill out forms and templates has a habit of growing so that the work associated with this becomes counterproductive and over burdensome for all parties involved. This an area for review in the future.

4.6.7 Plain English. Feedback from our students suggests that some of our policies are somewhat dense and impenetrable, especially for students for whom English is not their first language. This will be addressed by producing additional student-facing guidance where necessary.

4.6.8 Recognition of prior learning. Following on from the redevelopment of our Policy and Guidance on Recognition of Prior Learning, we realise that there is still work to be done here, particularly in ensuring that our processes for applicants are clearly signposted at the level of the University admissions pages rather than on School-specific pages. We also need to ensure that structured training opportunities are available.

¹² The Scottish Funding Council requires that governing bodies provide an annual formal statement of assurance to the Council.

Forward planning

4.6.9 Core aims of the Strategy to 2022 include a commitment to enhance University performance and reputation and to embrace a One Dundee approach. With those key aims in mind our forward planning includes:

- The provision of enhanced data from Registry to Schools to allow them to calibrate grading on modules to help guard against grade inflation
- Exploring the development of more detailed University-wide criteria for grading assessments
- The development of plain English guides for students, particularly in the areas of assessment and academic misconduct
- Enhancement of our approach to induction of external examiners
- The production of a template for student handbooks
- A review of our policy on recognition of prior learning and full implementation of the revised policy
- Reviewing our quality assurance processes with a view to reducing the burden of administration. This will be aligned with the introduction of the new student management system

4.7 Effectiveness of the University's approach to self-evaluation, including the effective use of data to inform decision-making

Good practice identified through reflection and evaluation of our approach to self-evaluation, including the effective use of data to inform decision-making

4.7.1 **Annual reports from Strategic Planning.** The annual reports from Strategic Planning provide Institutional-level statistics relating to our performance measures which are benchmarked against other universities (where relevant). This provides a healthy level of transparency as the data sets and performance measures are considered by the relevant committees of Senate, and by Senate and Court as well as the University Executive Group. They are accompanied by a RAG analysis so that areas for development are highlighted and interventions can be made if necessary. The annual reports have been an extremely effective way for the University to review performance in key areas and a similar approach will be taken to support the new Strategy to 2022.

4.7.2 **Data dashboards.** We have made considerable progress in our approach to using data to inform decision-making and evaluation and are confident that the interactive data dashboards provided to staff through the Learning and Teaching Information section on My Dundee represent a step-change in improvement. Previously, data sets were provided by Registry on request and this resulted in a level of staff frustration if there were delays. Importantly, the data sets now contain benchmarking tools which allow Schools/disciplines to benchmark performance in certain areas against national statistics. A recent development for 2018 is the provision of School Managers (and other key individuals) with bronze-level access

to Heidi Plus, which has an interactive tool to analyse HESA data and benchmark with other organisations. This development has not yet been subject to any formal evaluation, but early indicators suggest that this will be a valuable self-service resource for Schools and Directorates.

4.7.3 Internal audits. Our approach to internal audit of areas relating to the student experience has also been highly effective and has been a positive driver of enhancement. Examples where we have used evidence from the audits to enhance the student experience include: positive changes to the way we approach our student partnership agreements; our ongoing work to support distance learner representation; and enhancement of the Academic Advisers system.

4.7.4 Evidence-based enhancement. We make good use of our data, including student feedback data, employment statistics and retention, progression and attainment data, to drive enhancement of the student experience. The consideration of data sets is an integral part of our annual enhancement meetings between the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching) and Schools, and Schools analyse the data dashboards on the Learning and Teaching Information section of My Dundee on a routine basis as part of their ongoing approach to quality enhancement. We also make effective use of external examiner reports and ensure that they form a core element of our approach to evidence-based enhancement.

Areas for development identified through reflection and evaluation of our approach to self-evaluation, including the effective use of data to inform decision-making

4.7.5 Consistent approach to module evaluations. At present, each School/discipline has its own way of conducting module evaluations by students with separately-designed questionnaires. Oversight of student feedback is at the level of the module or programme, and programme leaders and Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching, Quality and Academic Standards) sometimes find it challenging to pull the outcomes from student feedback together into manageable data sets. This is being addressed by the development of a defined set of module evaluation questions and the anticipated procurement of a module evaluation system.

4.7.6 Consistent use of centrally-held data. Although we have made significant progress over the past few years in developing centrally-held data sets that can be accessed and used easily by Schools on a self-service basis, there is still a tendency for Schools to hold their own separate data sets for certain purposes. This is an area for development that is being addressed by the Business Transformation project described in Section 1.

Forward planning

4.7.7 Aligned with our strategic priority of embracing a One Dundee approach, our future plans include:

- The development of a new student management system as part of the Business Transformation project

- The further development and use of our data dashboards
- The procurement and use of a University-wide system for module evaluations
- The continuation of our use of performance measures as part of our Strategy to 2022
- The development of learning analytics to enhance the student learning experience

5

Collaborative provision



5. Collaborative provision

5.1 Evaluation summary

5.1.1 Over the past five years, the University has moved from a position where we undertook very little substantive collaborative activity to one where we are taking deliberate steps to increase our collaborative activity, particularly with international organisations. This strategic change in direction resulted in the instigation of a structured framework, including the establishment of an international collaborations development unit and investment in an expanded legal team, to help with the development and review of collaborative programmes. It has been a steep learning curve for the University and there have been lessons learned about the challenges of working with international partners, particularly around operational and legal risks, contingency planning, communication and shared understanding. There have also been many positives, including the opportunity for our academic staff to engage with teaching in international organisations. We are gaining experience and confidence in the area of international collaborations, but recognise the distance still to be travelled.

5.2 Key features of the University's strategic approach to collaborative provision

Background and recent changes to our strategic approach

5.2.1 Historically, the University has been cautious in its approach to collaborative activity, particularly with international partners. At the time of writing the Reflective Analysis for ELIR 3 our collaborative activities were mainly focused on articulation arrangements and student exchange schemes and included two validation arrangements, one franchise-type arrangement, a legacy joint degree arrangement with the University of Aberdeen and a small number of joint research degree arrangements. Since then there has been a significant change to our approach. The development of taught joint/double/dual programmes with international partners and broadening the scope of our collaborative activity has been (and continues to be) a key strategic priority. The University Strategy to 2017 (and its underpinning learning and teaching and internationalisation strategies) was explicit in its commitment to develop collaborations and partnerships. The [University Strategy to 2022](#)[□] sets out a commitment to grow and diversify our student community as one of its central themes, with the ambition to grow international recruitment, partnerships and income as a key strategic aim ([Figure 1.2](#)).

5.2.2 In order to support the strategic direction of the University, and in response to an internal audit of our approach to international collaborations during academic year 2014/15, the [Educational Partnerships Development Unit](#)[□] was set up in 2015 to provide professional support for the development and management of key educational partnerships. The Educational Partnerships Development Unit provides

support and expertise to assess potential projects, develop business plans and negotiate contracts (in conjunction with the legal team) on behalf of the University. It also maintains the register of collaborative agreements and publishes a summary list of [our partners](#)[□]. The Unit is co-located with [Quality and Academic Standards](#)[□] and [Legal](#)[□] so that there is appropriate dialogue and communication around the key considerations, risk management and the development of the legal agreements. The Educational Partnerships Development Unit has developed a [Collaborations Toolkit](#)[□] to provide a structured framework for academic and professional services staff to develop and manage partnership arrangements. The toolkit is aligned with the [Quality Framework for Teaching Collaborations](#)[□] and associated [policies and guidance](#)[□] which were developed in tandem with the toolkit.

5.2.3 Each School has an Associate Dean (International) to support and enhance its international activity. Responsibilities include: facilitation and leadership of the school International strategy and plan; leadership of international student recruitment for the school; leadership and facilitation of external engagement for the school; and being the main point of contact, internally and externally, for significant matters relating to international activity.

5.2.4 [Student exchanges and study abroad arrangements](#)[□] are managed by Global Programmes which is part of [Student Recruitment and Admissions](#)[□] (External Relations). Global Programmes works with the academic Schools to develop and maintain study abroad arrangements, including [Erasmus+](#)[□]. The University has a [Code of Practice on Student Placements and Exchanges](#)[□] to provide a good practice framework to support study abroad and placement activities. There is an accompanying [toolkit](#)[□] to help staff with the development of work placement opportunities.

Current scope of collaborative arrangements

5.2.5 The University still has a significant number of articulation agreements, a validation agreement with Ballyfermot College of Further Education and a franchise-type agreement with Belfast Metropolitan College. We are also the lead University for the joint delivery of an MSc in Psychological Therapy in Primary Care with the University of Stirling and NHS Education for Scotland. We now have a double degree arrangement with Wuhan University and have recently signed a joint degree agreement with the National University of Singapore (starting academic year 2018/19) and a dual degree agreement with the China University of Petroleum, Beijing (starting academic year 2019/20). We have also recently entered into a collaborative arrangement with our neighbouring university in St Andrews to jointly deliver a graduate entry medical programme (starting academic year 2018/19). A summary of our collaborative activity is provided in [Appendix 8](#).

5.2.6 We also currently deliver a small number of our programmes through a blended flying faculty model. These arrangements include taught postgraduate

programmes in dental education (Egypt) and diabetes care and education (Kuwait). At the time of writing, we are in the process of closing out our teaching programmes with the collaborative partner in Egypt. A new arrangement for academic year 2018/19 is the blended delivery of a BSc Nursing and Health in Singapore in collaboration with the [CSM Academy International Pte Ltd](#)⁷. The programme has recently been approved by the Singapore Nursing Board.

- 5.2.7 The last cohort of students on our blended learning nursing programmes in Eritrea have recently graduated and there are currently no new students on the programmes. Discussions about the continuation of the arrangement are ongoing. The success of the programmes resonates with our core mission of Transforming Lives and a flavour of the impact is given in the *Focus On* mini case study below.

Focus On: Transforming Lives

Bringing Dundee to the world. The University of Dundee has worked in partnership with the Eritrean Ministry of Health for 14 years to help build capacity for health care provision. More than 150 students, studying at a distance in Eritrea, have successfully completed their Bachelor of Nursing from the University of Dundee. In 2013, the Ministry of Health and the University agreed to further progress this capacity building, and recruited a cohort of 23 students to MSc distance learning programmes in Global Health and Wellbeing, Nursing and Mental Health. Students from this cohort graduated in January 2018.

The programmes were delivered at a distance to promote inclusiveness, providing access to education for individuals who would not be able to travel abroad to complete their studies. Online learning was supported with in-country teaching visits twice a year which provided additional face to face learning opportunities and peer support. The objective was to increase the capacity and capability of students, providing them with the skills and knowledge to be able to drive forward service development that would help the Ministry of Health rebuild a health system that had been seriously damaged by prolonged conflict.

Several of our graduates have been promoted to positions where they can influence the development of services as a result of their studies and research projects. For example, one student completed the Bachelor of Nursing, went on to gain the MSc Advanced Practice Nursing award and is now Director of Reproductive Services. The dissertation study of this student has been used to develop a national strategy for the prevention and treatment of obstetric fistulae.

Delivery of an online programme in a country where internet connectivity is poor and power cuts are frequent has been challenging. The in-country teaching visits were critical in minimising the impact of this and were highly valued by the students, some of whom would travel for several days from the remote regions to attend classes. Students quickly formed a strong alliance as a group, providing peer support for each other. It was also challenging for staff to work in an environment where they initially felt vulnerable. They quickly adapted and staff who took part have said how much they enjoyed learning about a different culture with unique health challenges. Data gathered from staff indicates how their cultural sensitivity, awareness and competence have developed and in turn enriched their teaching to students in the UK.

In addition to developing academic skills, students engaged in a process of self-development and confidence building which they perceived as beneficial in being able to have a positive impact on the delivery and development of health services. The initial results of this study have been published and can be found at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v18i5.3128>.

5.2.8 A new development for us in academic year 2017/18 was a partnership with the private education provider [Oxford International](#)⁷ to set up the [International College Dundee](#)⁸. International students can enter into two types of degree programme:

- The [International Incorporated Bachelors](#)⁹ programme for undergraduate students
- The [International Incorporated Masters](#)¹⁰ programme for postgraduate students

- 5.2.9 The undergraduate route involves students beginning their studies with the International Stage One programme delivered by the International College, where they can choose from a range of pathways including Art and Design, Life and Biomedical Sciences, Engineering and Physical Sciences and Social Studies. English language support is provided by the College throughout the year-long programme. Students then progress into second year of a specific degree programme delivered by the University. Postgraduate students study a series of modules containing English language and graduate study skills. These currently have a business studies focus and feed into a range of business-orientated masters programmes. The International College is based on the University's city campus and students are registered with the University from day one. This approach was designed so that International College students felt part of the University from the start.
- 5.2.10 Quality assurance arrangements for the International College are dealt with through the School of Social Sciences. Having a designated academic School to oversee the quality assurance of credit-bearing taught provision that is not affiliated with a particular School/discipline is our preferred approach for dealing with arrangements where there is not a natural lead School. This helps to ensure that quality assurance arrangements are robustly considered and reported within an appropriate academic environment.
- 5.2.11 In addition to growing our international activities we are also continuing to work with local FE colleges to promote pathways to University study at SCQF levels 8 and 9. This is aligned with our strategic commitment to widening access. We have articulation arrangements with Dundee and Angus College where we have developed a co-curriculum route to support transition from college to university. Here students are enrolled at the University whilst spending their first year at College. They undertake a bespoke transitions module ([STEP UP](#)) before joining the University and are supported by our Transitions Officer who provides individual support and guidance.
- 5.2.12 Another new venture for us in academic year 2017/18 was the launch of [graduate apprenticeship](#) awards in the fields of [IT Management for Business](#), [IT Software Development](#), [Engineering Design and Manufacture](#) and [Civil Engineering](#). This is part of the major new programme of [Graduate Apprenticeships](#) launched by Skills Development Scotland. At the time of writing, our new graduate apprenticeship degree programmes are in the first year of operation with 30 apprentices recruited to the new programmes. Our student apprentice numbers for 2018/19 will increase through the continuation of the existing programmes, developing the Civil Engineering programme into an honours degree programme and developing new programmes.
- 5.2.13 We partnered with [Futurelearn](#) in 2014 and delivered our first MOOCs in 2015. Since then the University has developed and delivered six MOOCs: Antimicrobial

Stewardship; Identifying the Dead; Compassionate Care: Getting it Right; The Diabetes Epidemic; Tackling Inequalities; and Citizen Science: Soil to the Sky. We are continuing to develop MOOCs in areas that are aligned with our existing and future online postgraduate and CPD provision. Our Psychology Division (School of Social Sciences) is also planning to run an Effective Learning for Students MOOC which is primarily being developed for our own students to help them develop evidence-based learning skills. There are plans to develop a follow-up course for lecturers on designing effective learning and teaching.

Strategy and plans for future developments

- 5.2.14 Since its instigation in 2015, the Educational Partnerships Development Unit, with strategic direction from the Vice-Principal (International), has played a critical role in the development of strategy and policy relating to international collaborations. The unit was established with the aim of supporting the development of scalable international degree collaborations, but it also deals with UK partnership activity and the development of business proposals for new programmes. It is led by a Director and comprises seven members of staff with a range of responsibilities. The unit works with the Schools to identify potential opportunities that will contribute to the strategic aims of the University, including financial sustainability.
- 5.2.15 The role of the Educational Partnerships Development Unit covers a mix of business development, governance, development of business processes, risk management, financial modelling and partner relationship management. It was also instrumental in the development of a collaborations toolkit so that there is a structured process for the approval and review of collaborative arrangements.
- 5.2.16 The overall strategy and direction of travel for international collaborations and other international activities is overseen by the Senate [Internationalisation Committee](#)[□], chaired by the Vice-Principal (International). This committee comprises the DUSA President and Vice-President Academia, the Director of the Educational Partnerships Unit, the Director of External Relations, the Director of Finance, the Head of International Operations, the Director of Strategic Planning, the School Deans and the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching). Operational matters are overseen by the International Deans Operating Committee, which comprises the Associate Deans (International) and relevant Professional Services staff. Their work is informed by four regional groups which report on activities annually. The regional groups cover China, India, the Middle East and North Africa and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Each group is led by a dedicated regional lead who works across the Schools and Professional Services to ensure a coordinated and strategic approach to activities in the regions.
- 5.2.17 Strategic priorities for the future include increasing our collaborative arrangements with China (particularly in the areas of Life Sciences, Engineering and Health Sciences), expanding opportunities in business and health care disciplines, and the

further development of partnerships in new territories for the University. At the time of writing there are several collaborative arrangements under active development, but with the institution-to-institution agreements yet to be finalised. This means that it is not possible to provide details at this stage.

5.2.18 There is also a strategic priority to increase the number of students who study abroad as part of student exchange agreements or other study abroad arrangements. In 2017 the University signed the Universities UK International's [Go International: Stand Out](#)⁷ campaign charter to double the number of students taking part in a study abroad experience during their undergraduate study by 2020. In academic year 2016/17 8% of our full time undergraduate student population participated in study abroad activities, so our goal is to increase this to 16% by 2020. In order to help realise this goal an International Exchange Working Group met during academic year 2016/17 to consider ways to enhance our approach to providing opportunities for our students to experience study overseas. The work of the Group encompassed a review of the volume and effectiveness of ongoing activities and concluded with a series of recommendations to the Internationalisation Committee. These included a need to: rationalise the number of exchange agreements; focus on strategic partners; redevelop the academic exchange coordinator role; increase the staff resource to support activities; set targets in Schools; and actively promote study abroad opportunities. The recommendations are being taken forward by the International Exchange Working Group which has been reconvened for this purpose. An illustration of recent activities to promote outward mobility is provided in the *Focus On* mini case study below.

Focus On: Study Abroad

Growing participation in outward mobility. Research indicates that students who spend time abroad working, studying or volunteering achieve better degrees and get better jobs. Disadvantaged groups are significantly underrepresented in international opportunities due to barriers such as lack of funds, external commitments and lack of awareness.

To attempt to overcome this inequality, we ran a pilot programme in 2016 which involved twenty-five of our students taking part in an intensive and immersive experience in Kuala Lumpur. The programme was organised through the global charity Common Purpose and sought to develop an international outlook as well as confidence, leadership skills and employability.

A steering group including members of the Careers Service, the International Office and DUSA developed the programme to minimize barriers to participation. This included keeping the trip short (five days) and outside of term time, and obtaining full funding with additional discretionary help available for costs like passport renewal and immunisations. The group chose to offer the opportunity to all students but designed the application process to focus on the potential to benefit, and specifically invited students with high contextual admission scores to apply. This approach resulted in 15 of the 25 successful applicants coming from MD40 or MD20 categories, with participants commenting positively on the mix of students.

All of the participants reported that the trip had been a good use of their time and 95% indicated that they intend to take part in work, study or volunteering abroad in the future. Students also stated that the trip had provided valuable opportunities for networking, with one student securing an internship as a result.

Building on this success, the programme ran again in December 2017 in Dubai. Our focus was on trying to achieve economy of scale so we took an increased cohort of 43. Following feedback from last year's participants, many of whom had never been abroad before, we also increased pre-departure support. Sessions were held covering the programme agenda, cultural norms and health and travel advice. Participants were given training to take on extra responsibilities during the trip by acting as a team leader or social media champion, and have now taken on 'Global Ambassador' roles post-trip involving working with international and home students to promote cultural awareness.

Evaluation of our approach to managing collaborative provision

5.2.19 Our validated programmes with Ballyfermot College of Further Education were recently reviewed as part of the [QAA Review of Transnational Education in the Republic of Ireland](#)⁷. Whilst certain areas for development were identified (see Section 2.4) the outcome report noted several positive features including our collaborations toolkit, the approach of the link coordinators and Ballyfermot College's strong creative industry links. The report also noted that academic standards are maintained and that quality assurance processes are effective. With respect to developing, agreeing and managing arrangements, the review team concluded that 'the University has developed a culture of robust critical self-evaluation, evidenced through appropriate due diligence and monitoring processes that are consistent with University quality assurance procedures and the

requirements of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Chapter B10: Managing Higher Education Provision with Others’.

- 5.2.20** This was the first time that the University has been asked to participate in a full Transnational Education Review, and whilst the administrative burden was significant during a period where we were undertaking early preparations for ELIR 4, it provided a very valuable learning experience. It also provided an opportunity to communicate to the academic community (via the Internationalisation Committee and the Quality and Academic Standards Committee) about the evidence required to be produced as part of a Transnational Education Review. This is important because staff involved in collaborative initiatives often view the policies and processes associated with the development and maintenance of collaborative provision as bureaucratic and an unnecessary workload burden.
- 5.2.21** Other than our longstanding validation arrangement with Ballyfermot College of Further Education (where there is a shared language and alignment with the principles set out in the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area), our first substantive collaboration with an overseas higher education provider was our double degree arrangement in Architectural Studies with Wuhan University. This programme involves four years of study at Wuhan University, with 1/3 being taught by University of Dundee staff, and a final year of study at the University of Dundee. It was initiated during 2013 and although there were some significant challenges during the early stages of the arrangement, particularly around communication and shared understanding, we have worked to overcome the difficulties and have learned from the experience. The legal agreement with Wuhan University was revised during academic year 2015/16 to help to deal with the initial challenges relating to a shared understanding of the responsibilities of each partner, including the in-country teaching arrangements and the roles and responsibilities of the oversight boards.
- 5.2.22** The programme with Wuhan University now has a dedicated programme administrator who supports the academic programme lead and engages with the students throughout their period of study. The students are registered as associate students with the University of Dundee and are provided with assistance with their visa applications for their final year in Dundee. They are also provided with University of Dundee matriculation cards from year one. Students on the home Architecture programme visit Wuhan to meet the students and share experiences to further encourage a sense of belonging to Dundee. The first cohort from Wuhan arrived at the University in academic year 2017/18, and several have expressed a wish to stay on to undertake Masters level study which suggests that their experience has been a positive one.
- 5.2.23** The strategic decision to develop a dedicated unit to manage our increasing volume of collaborative activity means that some of the initial challenges that we have

experienced are now mitigated. The Educational Partnerships Development Unit developed a toolkit to provide a framework for the approval and review of all teaching collaborations. The toolkit contains templates and guidance for the approval of teaching collaborations, and there are separate processes depending on the nature of the collaboration. There is a core 'Stage One Proposal Form' which asks for outline information about a proposed collaboration so that a decision to proceed to the next stage can be made. The Educational Partnerships Development Unit will then provide advice and support on the next stage(s).

- 5.2.24 Substantive teaching collaborations, such as proposals for joint, double/multiple or dual degrees, require approval of a business case, a risk action plan and a due diligence checklist by our Educational Business Development Oversight Group. The Group is chaired by the Director of the Educational Partnerships Development Unit and comprises: the Vice-Principal (International); the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching); the Vice-Principal (Provost); the Director of Finance; the Director of Legal; and the Director of Quality and Academic Standards. This Group considers the strategic fit, the financial plan and the risks associated with the proposal. The gatekeeper role of the Group means that any substantive collaboration proposals do not get too far into development before there has been full consideration of the risks and benefits at a senior University level. Decisions are guided by the University's [Risk Appetite Statement](#)[□] and medium to high risk projects are also considered by the University Executive Group and sometimes Court for approval. Once a project has been given a green light to proceed there is a formal academic approval stage which, for collaborative degrees, is similar to the process for approving a new programme but includes a requirement to review the quality of the proposed partner organisation (see the [Code of Practice on Taught Joint, Double/Multiple or Dual Qualifications](#)[□]).
- 5.2.25 As with our staged process for the approval of new programmes, we have experienced some challenges with a staged process for teaching collaborations. The collaborations toolkit was recently revised to streamline the process and to try and ensure that information was being requested only once. The rationale and business case for joint, double/multiple or dual awards was also slimmed down so that the academic quality and learning environment of the partner organisation is now considered as part of the academic approval rather than as part of the business case. There have been a limited number of proposals that have been considered under the revised process so it is too early to fully evaluate whether staff find it manageable and straightforward.
- 5.2.26 The development of the Educational Partnerships Development Unit provided the platform for a step change in our approach to dealing with collaboration proposals. Its instigation coincided with the development of a centralised Quality and Academic Standards Office and the Quality and Academic Standards Committee. At the same time the Associate Dean positions with responsibility for

internationalisation, learning and teaching and quality and academic standards were put in place in the Schools. There was also an expansion of capacity within the legal team, who developed new templates for collaborative agreements to standardise the terms and conditions under which the University contracts with international partners. Collectively, this meant that we had an appropriate framework to grow and develop our collaborative teaching provision. There is still work to be done to ensure that the right people are involved at the right time and to streamline procedures, but we are confident that the appropriate checks and balances are in place to ensure that our academic standards are secure and that our students have a high-quality learning experience.

5.3 Effectiveness of the approach to managing collaborative provision

Good practice identified through reflection and evaluation of our approach to managing collaborative provision

- 5.3.1 **Annual review.** Schools are required to formally review the effectiveness of their teaching collaborations through completion of a *pro forma* followed by annual discussions between the Associate Dean (International), School international leads, the Director of the Educational Partnerships Development Unit and relevant partnerships development managers. The reviews and the required data are proportionate to the scale, complexity and risk of the activities. The annual discussions are an effective way to ensure that reviews of activity do not become a box-ticking exercise.
- 5.3.2 **Associate student status.** Students on our validated programme with Ballyfermot College of Further Education, our co-curriculum programme with Dundee and Angus College and our programme with International College Dundee all have associate student status which provides access to Dundee learning resources and helps to ensure that the students feel part of the University of Dundee. Students on our double degree programme with Wuhan University also have associate student status with the University of Dundee when they are studying in Wuhan, although we are currently reviewing this arrangement with a view to the students being fully matriculated at Dundee while in Wuhan.
- 5.3.3 **The Educational Partnerships Development Unit's toolkit for teaching collaborations.** The structured process for the approval and review of collaborative taught provision means that programme developers have an appropriate framework to work within and professional support throughout the journey. It also provides the means for appropriate institutional oversight of teaching collaborations.

Areas for development identified through reflection and evaluation of our approach to managing collaborative provision

- 5.3.4 **Agility.** The challenge with a staged process is the ability to be agile in response to time-limited opportunities. Colleagues also sometimes underestimate the time

required to move from idea to formal approval. We will continue to review and refine our approval process. This includes strong encouragement for staff to contact the Educational Partnerships Development Unit at the earliest possible stage.

5.3.5 Resourcing. The instigation of the Educational Partnerships Development Unit means that there are new collaborative programmes about to start and other agreements in the pipeline. We realise the importance of ensuring that Professional Services support is not front loaded only at the business development side and that an appropriate staff resource is required to support a high-quality student experience and ensure that academic standards are secure. Professional Services support is now factored into all new business plans and we will continue to ensure that all arrangements are appropriately resourced.

Forward planning

5.3.6 Central aims of our Strategy to 2022 are to intensify our impact locally and globally and to grow and diversify our student community. Taking the strategy forward means expanding our collaborative activity with a particular focus on international collaborations. Specific actions for the future that relate to collaborative provision include:

- Expansion of collaborative provision in China (including the further development of Joint Education Programmes and consideration of a Joint Education Institute)
- Expansion of partnership working in the rest of the world with a key focus on establishing new partnerships in emerging territories
- Further developing our approach to business and financial planning for taught provision
- Reviewing the scope of activities and the remit of the Educational Partnerships Development Unit
- Taking a systematic approach to increasing and streamlining study abroad opportunities (with a focus on strategic partners) for our students

6

Appendices



Abbreviations

ACES	Access to Creative Education in Scotland
AGCAS	Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DUAL	Dundee University Access to Learning
DUSA	Dundee University Students' Association
ELIR	Enhancement-Led Institutional Review
FPE	Full Person Equivalent
FQHEIS	Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland
HEA	Higher Education Academy
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
JISC	Joint Information Systems Committee
MD	Shorthand for Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NSS	National Student Survey
OPD	Organisational and Professional Development
PGCAPHE	Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice in Higher Education
PSRB	Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
RAG	Red, Amber, Green
RLF	Royal Literary Fund
SCQF	Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework
SIMD	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
SITS	Strategic Information Technology Systems (Tribal Group student management software)
SRC	Student Representative Council
STEP UP	Student Transition Enhancement Programme for University Progression
TESTA	Transforming the Experience of Students Through Assessment
UCAS	Universities and Colleges Admissions Service
UKVI	UK Visas and Immigration
UoDIT	University of Dundee Information Technology

Hyperlinks

Internal links

Academic Adjustments Policy

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/disabilityservices/resources/policy/>

Academic Advisers

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/quality/documents/details/report-of-the-joint-university--dusa-working-group-on-advisers-of-studies-and-personal-tutors.php>

Academic and Corporate Governance

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/governance/about/>

Academic Induction Programme

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/academic-skills/for-staff/academic-induction-programme/>

Academic Misconduct (Code of Practice)

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/quality-and-academic-standards/assessment/academic-misconduct/>

Academic Misconduct (Video for Students)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=2&v=iXTHnEtCvwY

Academic Promotion System and Procedure

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/hr/policiesprocedures/academic/>

Academic Schools

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/main/schools/>

Academic Skills Centre

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/academic-skills/>

Academic Skills for Students

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/academic-skills/for-students/>

Academic Skills for Students - Modules and Workshops

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/academic-skills/for-students/modules/>

ACCESS Centre

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/disabilityservices/access-centre/>

Accommodation

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/accommodation/>

ACES

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/study/widening-access/in-demand/aces/>

Action planning grid (quality enhancement)

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/quality/documents/details/quality-enhancement-metastrategy-action-planning-grid-university-strategy-2012-17.php>

Alternative Formats Service

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/disabilityservices/services/alternativeformats/>

Annual Reports (Disability Services)

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/disabilityservices/resources/annualreports/>

Annual Module Quality Enhancement Reports

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/quality/documents/details/annual-module-review-report-template-and-guidance.php>

Annual Programme Quality Enhancement Reports

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/quality/documents/details/annual-programme-review-report-template-and-guidance.php>

Annual Review of Taught Provision

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/quality-and-academic-standards/quality-assurance-processes/annual-review-of-taught-provision/>

Annual School Learning and Teaching Enhancement Reports

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/quality/documents/details/annual-school-learning-and-teaching-enhancement-report-template-and-guidance.php>

Applicant Dashboard

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/study/applicants/>

Assessment Policy

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/quality-and-academic-standards/assessment/assessment-policy-for-taught-provision-policy/>

Assessment Policy Implementation Plan

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/quality/documents/details/assessment-policy-2015-implementation-plan-and-guidance-notes.php>

Athena SWAN

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/equality-diversity/athenaswan/>

Attendance Monitoring (Policy)

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/quality/documents/details/policy-on-attendance-monitoring.php>

Boards of Examiners (Guidance on Conduct)

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/quality-and-academic-standards/assessment/boards-of-examiners/>

Business Transformation

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/business-transformation/>

Campus Accessibility

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/estates/facilities/dda/>

Campus Visits

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/study/visitus/campus-visits/>

Careers Service

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/careers/>

Care Experienced/Care Leaver Students

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/student-services/student-community/careexperiencedstudents/>

Appendices

Centre for Technology and Innovation in Learning
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/library/ctil/>

Centre for Transformative Change: Educational and Life Transitions
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/tcelt/>

Centre of Entrepreneurship
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/entrepreneurship/>

Changes to Taught Provision
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/documents/details/policy-and-guidance-on-changes-to-taught-provision-including-withdrawal-and-suspension-of-programmes-and-modules.php>

Chaplaincy
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/chaplaincy/>

Citizens Advice Bureau
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/student-services/citizens-advice-bureau/>

Coaching and Mentoring
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/opd/otheropportunities/mentoringschemes/>

Collaborations Toolkit
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/international/epdu/collaborationstoolkit/>

Consultancy, Teaching and Other Work by PhD Students (Code of Practice)
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/documents/details/code-of-practice-on-consultancy-teaching-and-other-work-by-phd-students.php>

Contextual Admissions Policy
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/study/widening-access/in-context/>

Counselling
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/student-services/counselling/>

Digital Friday
<https://libguides.dundee.ac.uk/digitalfriday>

Digital January
<https://libguides.dundee.ac.uk/digitaljanuary>

Digital Learning Hub
<https://learningspaces.dundee.ac.uk/ctil/>

Digital Literacies
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/academic-skills/for-students/digital-literacies/>

Digital Literacies Framework
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/media/dundeewebsite/academicskillscentre/documents/Digital-literacies-framework-at-dundee-university-october-2016.pdf>

Disability Services
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/disabilityservices/>

Discovering Degrees for Schools
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/study/widening-access/bridging-courses/discoveringdegrees/>

Discover Learning at Dundee
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/study/widening-access/bridging-courses/discoverlearningatdundee/>

Discovery Days
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/revealingresearch/newsandevents/discoverydays/index.php>

Distance Learning Manifesto
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/learning-and-teaching/distance-learning/>

Duncan of Jordanstone Library
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/library/services/libraries/dojlibrary/>

Dundee Plus
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/careers/dundeeplus/>

Dundee University Access to Learning (DUAL)
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/study/widening-access/bridging-courses/dualsummerschool/>

Early Dispute Resolution
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/governance/edr/>

Educational Partnerships Development Unit
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/international/epdu/>

ELIR outcome report 2014
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/documents/details/university-of-dundee-elir-outcome-report-2014.php>

ELIR technical report 2014
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/documents/details/university-of-dundee-elir-technical-report-2014.php>

Employability and Enterprise Committee
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/governance/governance/senate/senate-committees/employability/>

English for International Students
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/study/english-international-students/>

Enquiry Centre
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/student-services/>

Enterprising Skills
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/entrepreneurship/ourmission/enterprisingskills/>

Erasmus+
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/studyingabroad/outgoing/erasmus/>

Estates and Buildings
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/estates/>

External Examining (Guidance, Policy and Procedures)
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/quality-and-academic-standards/assessment/external-examining/>

External Examining (Handbook for External Examiners)
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/documents/details/handbook-for-external-examiners.php>

External Examining (Handbook for Schools about External Examining)
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/documents/details/handbook-for-schools-about-external-examining.php>

External Examining (Policy and Code of Practice)
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/documents/details/policy-and-code-of-practice-on-external-examining.php>

Appendices

External Examining (Report Form)

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/documents/details/external-examiner-report-form.php>

Fife Campus Library

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/library/services/libraries/fife/>

Friday Fry-Up

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/academic-skills/for-staff/friday-fry-up/>

Gender Action Plan

<https://uod.app.box.com/s/ywl12fgr2xhrtxxkjos2kzhfm0oc3e0>

Global Health Challenge

<https://sites.dundee.ac.uk/dundeeghc/tag/global-health-challenge/>

Global Room

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/student-services/globalroom/>

Graduate Apprenticeships

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/industry/graduateapprenticeships/>

Health Service

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/student-services/health/>

Highlighter newsletter

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/academic-skills/resources/>

Immigration Compliance

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/student-services/compliance/>

Implementation of the Education Act 1994 - Provisions Relating to Student's Unions (Code of Practice)

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/media/dundeewebsite/pola/documents/policies/Students-Association-Code-of-Practice.pdf>

Inclusive Curriculum Checklist

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/documents/details/inclusive-curriculum-checklist-guidance-and-good-practice-example.php>

Inclusive Practice Showcase

<https://blog.dundee.ac.uk/inclusivepractice/>

Information Technology (UoDIT)

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/it/>

Institute of Sport and Exercise

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/ise/>

International Advice Service

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/international/support/>

International College Dundee

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/international-college-dundee/>

International Incorporated Bachelors Programme

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/international-college-dundee/iib/>

International Incorporated Masters Programme

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/international-college-dundee/iim/>

International Partners (Collaborative Provision)

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/international/epdu/ourpartners/>

Internationalisation Committee

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/governance/governance/senate/senate-committees/internationalisation/>

IT Support for Disabled Students

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/it/guide/details/extra-it-support-for-exams.php>

Joint Agreement on Student Representation

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/documents/details/joint-agreement-on-student-representation.php>

Joint, Double/Multiple or Dual Qualifications (Code of Practice)

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/documents/details/code-of-practice-on-taught-joint-doublemultiple-or-dual-qualifications.php>

LEARN Smart

<http://libguides.dundee.ac.uk/learnsmart>

Learning to Teach in Higher Education Programme

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/academic-skills/for-staff/lthe/>

Legal

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/governance/legal-services/>

Library and Learning Centre

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/library/>

LIVE Smart

<http://libguides.dundee.ac.uk/livesmart>

Lynda.com (Mapping to the Vitae Framework)

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/opd/resources/lyndacom/>

Main Library

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/library/services/libraries/main/>

Memorandum of Understanding between DUSA and the University of Dundee

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/student-engagement/dusa-universitymou/>

Mental Health

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/student-services/health/mental-health/>

Mitigating Circumstances

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/quality-and-academic-standards/assessment/mitigating-circumstances/>

MyCareerPlan

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/careers/staff/mycareerplan/>

New Taught Provision

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/quality-and-academic-standards/quality-assurance-processes/new-taught-provision/>

Nightline

<https://dundeeuni.nightline.ac.uk/>

Nursery

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/childcare/>

Appendices

Online Summer School

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/study/widening-access/bridging-courses/dualsummerschool/onlinesummerschool/>

Open Days

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/study/visitus/opendays/>

Ordinances

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/media/dundeewebsite/pola/documents/calendar/Ordinances.pdf>

Organisational Development

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/opd/about-opd/organisational-development/>

Organisational and Professional Development

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/opd/>

Organisational and Professional Development Reports

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/opd/policiesandreports/reports/>

Organisational and Professional Development Workshops

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/opd/workshops/>

Peer Connections

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/student-services/peer-connections/>

People and Organisational Development Committee

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/governance/governance/court/court-committees/human-resources/>

Periodic Programme Review

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/quality-and-academic-standards/quality-assurance-processes/periodic-programme-review/>

Policies and Statutory Publications Relating to the Equality Act

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/equality-diversity/publications-policy/>

Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice in Higher Education

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/academic-skills/for-staff/pgcaphe/>

Professional Development

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/opd/about-opd/professional-development/>

Professional Services

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/main/services/>

Programmes accredited by professional, statutory and regulatory bodies

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/documents/details/programmes-accredited-by-professional-statutory-and-regulatory-bodies.php>

Programme Specification and Supporting Information (Templates and Guidance)

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/quality-and-academic-standards/quality-assurance-processes/new-taught-provision/>

Quality and Academic Standards

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/contacts/>

Quality and Academic Standards Committee

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/governance/governance/senate/senate-committees/qasc/#d.en.191371>

Quality Framework

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/>

Reach Tayside

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/study/widening-access/in-demand/reach/>

Reading and Resource Lists (Policy and Guidance)

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/documents/details/policy-and-guidance-on-reading-and-resource-lists.php>

Recognition of Prior Learning (Policy and Guidance)

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/documents/details/policy-and-guidance-on-recognition-of-prior-learning.php>

Reflective Analysis for Periodic Programme Review

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/documents/details/guidance-on-the-development-of-the-reflective-analysis.php>

Research Degrees Quality Code

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/documents/details/research-degrees-quality-code.php>

Research Degrees Subcommittee

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/governance/governance/senate/senate-committees/research-degrees/>

Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/governance/governance/senate/senate-committees/research/>

Researcher Development

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/opd/about-opd/researcher-development/>

Researcher Development Policy

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/research/researcherdevelopment/researcherdevelopmentpolicy/>

Retention and Progression Strategy

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/documents/details/retention-and-progression-strategy.php>

Risk Management

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/governance/risk-management/guidanceonriskmanagement/>

Robertson Trust Medical Library

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/library/services/libraries/robertson/>

School Tutoring Programme

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/careers/stp/>

Senatus Academicus (Senate)

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/governance/governance/senate/>

Sharing Good Practice Programme

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/academic-skills/for-staff/sharing-good-practice/>

Staff Development (Disability Services)

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/disabilityservices/staff/staffdevelopment/>

Appendices

Statutes

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/media/dundeewebsite/pola/documents/calendar/Statutes.pdf>

Statutory Duties Publications (Equality Act)

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/equality-diversity/publications-policy/publications/>

Stay on Course

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/student-services/stay-on-course/>

STEP UP

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/academic-skills/for-students/modules/>

Strategy to 2022

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/strategy/>

Student Funding

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/student-services/student-funding/>

Student Handbooks (Policy)

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/documents/details/module-and-programme-handbook-policy-and-guidelines.php>

Student Partnership Agreements

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/student-engagement/student-partnership-agreement/>

Student Placements and Exchanges (Code of Practice)

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/documents/details/code-of-practice-on-student-placements-and-exchanges.php>

Student Placement Toolkit

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/documents/details/staff-audit-toolkit-for-student-placements-.php>

Student Recruitment and Admissions

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/externalrelations/admissions/>

Student Services

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/student-services/>

Student Voice Publication

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/documents/details/the-student-voice.php>

Studying Abroad

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/studyingabroad/>

Teaching Collaborations (Policies and Guidance)

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/quality-and-academic-standards/collaborative-taught-provision/>

Teaching Collaborations (Quality Framework)

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/documents/details/quality-framework-for-teaching-collaborations.php>

Teaching Innovation and Learning Enhancement (TILE)

<https://learningspaces.dundee.ac.uk/tile/>

Teaching and Other Work for Schools by PhD Students (Guidance)

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/documents/details/guidance-on-teaching-and-other-work-for-schools-by-phd-students.php>

Timetabling and Room Bookings

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/roombookings/centraltimetabling/>

Transformative Change: Education and Life Transitions

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/tcelt/>

University Court

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/governance/governance/court/>

University Executive Group

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/about/people-vision/executive-group/>

University Vision

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/transform/>

Venture Competition

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/entrepreneurship/venture2018/>

Widening Access

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/study/widening-access/>

External links

AGCAS (award for research-informed practice)

<http://www.agcas.org.uk/Latest/dundee-wins-agcas-award-for-research-and-informed-practice-2017/182297>

AGCAS (award for technology)

<http://www.agcas.org.uk/Latest/dundee-wins-agcas-award-for-technology-2017/182301>

British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2015/11/contents/enacted>

Career Development Institute (award for research undertaken by a careers professional)

<http://www.thecdi.net/2018-Winning-Entries>

CSM Academy International Pte Ltd

<https://csmacademy.edu.sg/>

DisabledGo

<https://www.disabledgo.com/organisations/university-of-dundee/university-of-dundee>

DUSA

<https://www.dusa.co.uk/>

DUSA Bye Laws

<https://www.dusa.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Bye-Laws-approved-December-2017-1.docx>

Elevator

<http://www.elevatoruk.com/>

Engaging students in online distance learning

<https://www.sparqs.ac.uk/resource-item.php?item=250>

Focus On

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/scotland/focus-on>

Follow-up report to ELIR 3

http://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/reports/university-of-dundee-elir-fr-15.pdf?sfvrsn=2d4cf581_6

Framework for qualifications of higher education institutions in Scotland

http://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/fqheis-june-2014.pdf?sfvrsn=bc4af981_10

Futurelearn

<https://www.futurelearn.com/>

Go International: Stand Out

<https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/International/go-international/stand-out/Pages/about.aspx>

Graduate Apprenticeships

<https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/what-we-do/apprenticeships/graduate-apprenticeships/>

Hive (DUSA)

<https://www.dusa.co.uk/advice/>

Making the Most of Masters

<http://www.makingthemostofmasters.ac.uk/>

Outcome Agreement

<http://www.sfc.ac.uk/funding/outcome-agreements/outcome-agreements-2017-18/university-dundee-0a201718.aspx>

Oxford International Education Group

<https://www.oxfordinternational.com/>

Review of Transnational Education in the Republic of Ireland

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/international/transnational-education-review/review-of-tne-in-the-republic-of-ireland>

Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

<http://scqf.org.uk/>

SRC Online

<https://www.dusa.co.uk/get-involved/src-online/>

Strawberry Bank Ideas Lab

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=33&v=F2JHDO_o_vo

Student Crowd (Careers Service Winners)

<https://www.studentcrowd.com/article/20-best-universities-for-career-services-2017>

Student Representative Council

<https://www.dusa.co.uk/get-involved/your-src/>

Student Societies

<https://www.dusa.co.uk/get-involved/societies/>

Subject Benchmark Statements

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements>

SUMS Consulting

<http://www.sums.org.uk/>

Teachability

<http://www.teachability.strath.ac.uk/>

TESTA

<https://www.testa.ac.uk/>

Training for Class Representatives

<https://www.dusa.co.uk/get-involved/class-reps/class-rep-training/>

Training for School Presidents and Vice-Presidents

<https://www.dusa.co.uk/get-involved/school-vice-presidents/training/>

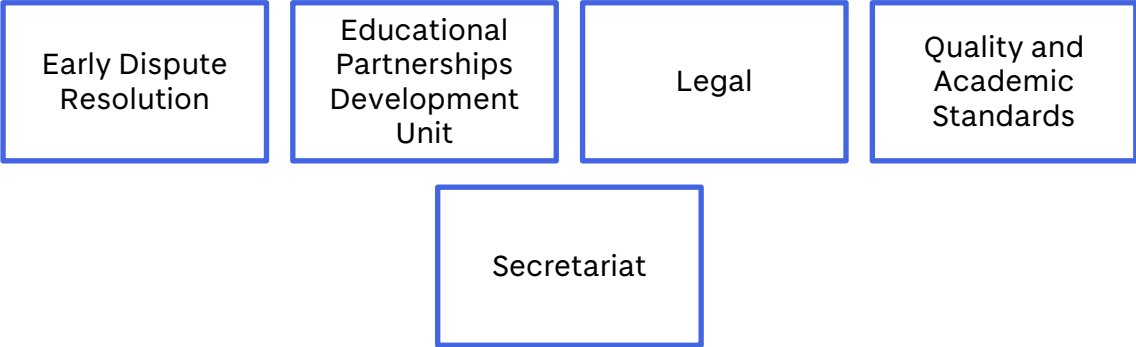
Vitae Researcher Development Framework

<https://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers-professional-development/about-the-vitae-researcher-development-framework>

Zero Tolerance Policy (DUSA)

<https://www.dusa.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Zero-Tolerance-Policy.docx>

Units within key Professional Services directorates



The Directorate of Academic and Corporate Governance.



The Directorate of Student Services.

Committees of Court and Senate

Audit	Finance and Policy	Governance and Nominations
People and Organisational Development	Remuneration	Welfare and Ethical Use of Animals

University Court Committees.

Academic Misconduct	Honorary Degrees	Internationalisation
Learning and Teaching	Postgraduate Appeals	Quality and Academic Standards
Research and Knowledge Exchange	Senate Business	Termination of Studies (Appeals)
Undergraduate Appeals		

University Senate Committees. There are subcommittees for Employability and Enterprise, Learning and Teaching Spaces, Retention and Progression, and Recruitment and Admissions which report to the Learning and Teaching Committee. The Retention and Progression Committee also reports to the Quality and Academic Standards Committee. There are subcommittees for Research Degrees and Research Governance and Policy which report to the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee.

Programmes delivered by online distance learning

Academic Skills Centre

Academic Practice in Higher Education (PGCert)

School of Education and Social Work

Teaching Qualification Further Education (UK Applicants) (PGCert)

Teaching Qualification Further Education (International Applicants) (PGCert)

Childhood Practice (BA)

Education (MEd/PGDip/PGCert)

Childhood Practice

Developing Mathematical Thinking

Inclusion and Learner Support

International Education

Into Headship

Leading, Learning and Teaching

Nursery/Early Education

Strategic Educational Leadership

Childhood Studies (BA)

Community Learning and Development (MSc)

School of Humanities

Archival Studies (PGCert)

Archives and Records Management (MLitt/MSc)

Digital Record Keeping (PGCert)

Records Management (PGCert)

Records Management and Digital Preservation (MSc)

Records Management and Information Rights (MSc)

Scottish History (MLitt)

Family and Local History (MLitt)

Languages by Distance Learning (French/German/Spanish) (GradDip)

School of Medicine

Medical Education (MEd)

Motion Analysis (MSc/PGDip/PGCert)

Orthopaedic Science (MSc)

Certificate in Urgent Care (PGCert)

Clinical Audit and Research for Healthcare Professionals (PGCert)

School of Nursing and Health Sciences

Midwifery (BSc)

Midwifery/Maternal and Infant Health (MSc)

Nursing MSc/PGDip/PGCert)/BSc including named awards

Clinical Practice (MSc/PGDip/PGCert)
Leadership, Quality and Governance (MSc/PGDip/PGCert)
Long-term Conditions (MSc/PGDip/PGCert)
Older Persons (MSc/PGDip/PGCert)
Research (MSc/PGDip/PGCert)
Health Studies (MSc/PGDip/PGCert)
Leadership, Quality and Governance (MSc/PGCert/PGDip)
Physiotherapy (MSc/PGDip/PGCert)
Clinical Practice (MSc/PGDip/PGCert)
Leadership, Quality and Governance (MSc/PGDip/PGCert)
Long Term Conditions (MSc/PGDip/PGCert)
Older Person (MSc/PGDip/PGCert)
Research (MSc/PGDip/PGCert)
Infection: Prevention and Control (MSc/PGDip/PGCert)
Infection: Prevention and Control (Top Up) (BSc)
Health Sciences (PGDip/BSc)

School of Social Sciences

International Mineral Resources Management (MBA)
International Oil and Gas Management (MBA)
Oil and Gas Management (MBA)
Mineral Law and Policy (LLM)
Natural Resources Law and Policy (LLM)
Oil and Gas Law and Policy (LLM)
Petroleum Taxation and Finance (LLM)
Energy Studies (MSc)
Healthcare Law and Ethics (LLM)
Energy Law and Policy (LLM)

Strategy action plan: Learning and Teaching Committee

Theme	Key Action Area	Action Descriptor
Enable our people to flourish	Enhance digital readiness in our community	Embed digital literacies framework in the curricula
		Review curricula to ensure that they remain relevant and lead to good graduate outcomes in an era of artificial intelligence
		Introduce Annual Review of Teaching and Scholarship
		Increase proportion of academic staff with teaching qualifications/Fellowship of HEA or equivalent
	Enhance performance in learning and teaching	Systematise collection of feedback from students to enhance teaching performance
		Develop student achievement module dashboards and improve modules with low student achievement to maximise student achievement
		Develop a data-led individualised and cohort approach to the student journey to maximise student retention, progression and achievement
Enhance health and wellbeing	Enhance student resilience and mental wellbeing, in partnership with DUSA	
Advance our values	Recognise excellent performance	Raise visibility and prestige of all teaching prizes
	Recognise student extracurricular achievement	Roll out open badges
Embed interdisciplinary research and teaching	Enhanced interdisciplinary opportunities for students	Greater interdisciplinary opportunities in the curriculum
		Building on Global Health Challenge pilot develop a series of student challenges linked to University themes that offer extracurricular interdisciplinary learning opportunities at scale
Grow and diversify our student community	Diversify our student community	Increase flexibility of learner journey, including expansion of accelerated provision
Deliver sustainable ambition	Financial performance	Grow income from distance learning, including leveraging relationship with FutureLearn
		Embed sustainability review into periodic programme review
Embrace One Dundee approach	Enhance culture of belonging to drive retention	Continue actions under retention strategy, including systematic attendance monitoring and follow-up

Appendices

Enhance University reputation and performance	Enhance reputation for student experience	Systematically focus on areas for improvement in learning and teaching metrics in the UK league tables
		Full engagement with national Quality Enhancement Theme 2017-2020 - evidence-based enhancement
		Establish Assessment and Feedback Hub to drive further enhancement of assessment

The role descriptor for Associate Deans (Quality and Academic Standards)

Role Descriptor

Associate Dean (Quality and Academic Standards)

Time allocation: To be determined in discussion with the Dean

Duration: 3 years (renewable)

Reports to: Dean

Purpose: To provide the Dean with information and guidance on areas relating to the quality and academic standards of taught programmes and modules provided by the School; to work closely with the School's Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) to ensure that local practices and policies support an excellent student experience; to ensure that the School's approach to quality and the setting and maintaining of academic standards is aligned with University policies and strategies; to convene the School's Quality and Academic Standards Committee; and to be an active member of the University team with responsibility for the institutional oversight of quality and academic standards.

Main duties at the level of the School:

- To develop and implement a strategic approach to academic quality for the School, ensuring that it aligns with the University's quality enhancement strategy
- To ensure that School practices and policies relating to quality and academic standards are in alignment with the University's Quality Framework and related policies, liaising as necessary with the University's Director of Quality and Academic Standards
- To provide guidance to School staff on matters relating to quality and academic standards
- To work, as required, with programme leaders to ensure high quality annual programme review reports
- To liaise with administrative and support staff in ensuring the efficient and effective administration of School quality assurance activity
- To lead, manage and provide direction for the School's Quality and Academic Standards Committee
- To convene School programme approval events
- To monitor the quality assurance activities of the School and provide reports to the School Board and Management Team
- To work with the School's Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) in the development of the School's Annual Learning and Teaching Enhancement Report, and to participate in the annual discussions with the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching) and the Director of Quality and Academic Standards
- To work with the School's Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) to promote best practice in assessment and feedback across the School

- To identify and share innovative and good practices with colleagues across the School
- To be a member of the School Management Team and School Board and ensure robust communication on areas relating to quality and standards between the School and the relevant Senate committees and sub-committees
- To undertake any other activities relating to quality and academic standards as specified by the School

Main duties at the level of the University:

- To act as convener for periodic programme reviews across the University and to contribute to staff development so that there is sharing of good practice and a One Dundee approach to periodic programme reviews
- To be an active member of the University's Quality and Academic Standards Committee, where activities will include:
 - Contributing to the analysis, review and approval of new programmes from across the University
 - The academic approval and review of collaborative taught provision
 - The revalidation of existing programmes (and reporting of outcomes and recommendations)
 - Changes to taught programmes
 - The approval and oversight of degree regulations
 - Oversight of external examiner's reports
 - The development of academic policies
 - Approving any exceptions to University policies
 - Any other areas that fall within the remit of the Quality and Academic Standards Committee
- To be part of the University's academic team that will support the approach to improving assessment and feedback as the follow on from TESTA
- To be part of the University working group to support the development of the reflective analysis and advance information sets (or equivalent) for ELIR 4
- To convene University subcommittees and working groups as requested by the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching)
- To liaise with the University's Director of Quality and Academic Standards and the other School Associate Deans (Quality and Academic Standards) to ensure synergies and understanding of roles across the Schools and the University

Summary of collaborative arrangements¹³

Country	Organisation	Collaboration Type
Australia	University of Technology Sydney	Data Transfer Agreement
Australia	University of Technology Sydney	Joint PhD
Australia	University of Technology Sydney	MOU
Brazil	Amazona State University	MOU
Brazil	Rio de Janeiro State University	MOU
Brazil	Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina	MOU
Canada	Dawson College	MOU
China	Beijing Institute of Technology, School of Management and Economics	Articulation agreement
China	Central South University	Articulation agreements
China	Central South University	Letter of intent
China	Central South University	MOU
China	China University of Petroleum - Beijing	Articulation agreement
China	China University of Petroleum - Beijing	Dual award
China	China University of Petroleum - Beijing	Letter of intent
China	China University of Petroleum - Beijing	MOUs
China	East China University of Science and Technology	Articulation agreement
China	East China University of Science and Technology	MOU
China	East China University of Science and Technology	Summer School
China	EduGlobal China	Data Transfer Agreement
China	EduGlobal China	Service
China	Guangdong University of Technology	Articulation agreements
China	Guangdong University of Technology	MOU
China	Hebei University of Technology	Articulation agreement
China	Hohai University	Articulation agreement
China	Huazhong Agricultural University	MOU
China	Hunan University	Articulation agreement
China	Hunan University	MOU
China	Nanjing Medical University	MOU
China	National University of Defence Technology	Articulation agreement

¹³ Excluding student exchange and scholarship agreements.

Appendices

China	North Eastern University	Articulation agreements
China	North Eastern University	Letter of intent
China	North Eastern University	MOU
China	North Eastern University at Qinhuangdao	Articulation agreement
China	Shandong University	Articulation agreements
China	Shanghai Institute of Visual Art, Fudan University	Articulation agreement
China	Sichuan Fine Arts Institute	Articulation agreement
China	Sichuan Fine Arts Institute	MOUs
China	South China Agriculture University	Articulation agreement
China	South China Agriculture University	MOU
China	South East University	Articulation agreement
China	South West University of Political Science and Law	MOU
China	Tianjin Medical University	Articulation agreement
China	Tianjin Medical University	MOU
China	Tianjin Polytechnic University	Articulation agreement
China	Tianjin University	Articulation agreement
China	University of Science and Technology Beijing	Articulation agreements
China	University of Science and Technology Beijing	Collaborations office
China	University of Science and Technology Beijing	MOU
China	Wuhan University	Articulation agreements
China	Wuhan University	Double award
China	Wuhan University	MOU
China	Wuhan University of Technology	Articulation agreement
China	Xiamen University	MOU/
China	Zhejiang University of Technology	Articulation agreement
Colombia	Pontificia Universidad Javeriana	MOU
Colombia	Universidad Externado de Colombia	MOU
Egypt	Arab Society for Continuous Dental Education	MOU
Egypt	Arab Society for Continuous Dental Education	Service agreements (flying faculty arrangements)
Egypt	Cairo University	MOU
Egypt	Zagazig University	MOU
France	University of Cergy-Pontoise	Articulation agreement
France	EPF École D'Ingénieurs	Articulation agreement
France	University of Toulouse 1 Capitole	Articulation agreement
France	Institut National des Sciences Appliquées	Articulation agreement
Germany	University of Passau	Articulation agreement

Appendices

Germany	Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences	Articulation agreement
Germany	European Molecular Biology Laboratory	Joint PhD
Hong Kong	Chinese University of Hong Kong	MOU
India	SRM University	Articulation agreement
India	VIT University	MOU
India	BMS College of Engineering	MOU
India	Anand International College of Engineering	MOU
India	Bangalore Bio-Cluster	MOU
Indonesia	Padjadjaran University	MOU
Ireland	Ballyfermot College of Further Education	Validation agreement
Italy	University of Parma	Articulation agreement
Italy	University of Bergamo	Articulation agreement
Italy	University of Bergamo	MOU
Italy	University of Modena and Reggio Emilia	Visiting PhD student agreement
Japan	Kobe University	MOU
Kuwait	Life Sciences Academy	MOU
Kuwait	Dasman Diabetes Institute	Service agreement (flying faculty)
Malaysia	International Medical University	Articulation agreement
Malaysia	Taylor's University	MOU
Malaysia	Taylor's University	Internship agreement
Mexico	Bank of Mexico (Fund for Human Resource Development)	Admission agreement
Netherlands	HAN University of Applied Sciences	MOU
Norway	University of Bergen Law School	Articulation agreement
Norway	University of Tromsø Law School	Articulation agreement
Norway	Aalesund Art College	Articulation agreement
Norway	Aalesund Art College	MOU
Saudi Arabia	Saudi Arabian Cultural Bureau of London	Admission agreement
Saudi Arabia	Saudi Arabian Cultural Bureau of London	Admission agreement
Saudi Arabia	Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University	MOU
Saudi Arabia	Ministry of Health, Saudi Arabia	MOU
Singapore	National University of Singapore	Joint degree
Singapore	National University of Singapore	MOU

Appendices

Singapore	CSM Academy International	MOU
Singapore	CSM Academy International	Flying faculty arrangement
Spain	Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport of Spain	Service agreement
Switzerland	International Baccalaureate Organisation	Framework agreement
Taiwan	Taipei Medical University, College of Oral Medicine	MOU
Thailand	Thammasat University	Articulation agreement
Thailand	Thammasat University	MOU
UK	Aberdeen College	MOU
UK	Al-Maktoum College of Higher Education	Delivery of modules
UK	Anglia Ruskin University Higher Education Corporation	Service agreement
UK	Arts Institute KEASS	MOU
UK	Belfast Metropolitan College (BELMET)	MOU
UK	Belfast Metropolitan College (BELMET)	Service agreement (franchise-type arrangement)
UK	Chevening Scholarships Secretariat	MOU
UK	Dundee and Angus College	Articulation agreement
UK	Dundee and Angus College	Co-Curriculum agreement
UK	Edinburgh College	MOU
UK	Fife College	Articulation agreement
UK	Glasgow Clyde College (now Glasgow College)	MOU
UK	NHS Education for Scotland and the University of Stirling	Joint delivery of taught programme
UK	The Renfrewshire Council	Service agreement
UK	Scottish Qualifications Association	Admission agreement
UK	Univation	Service agreement
UK	University of St Andrews	MOU
UK	University of St Andrews	Joint PhD agreement
UK	University of St Andrews and University of the Highlands and Islands (graduate entry medical programme)	MOU
UK	University of Glasgow	Service agreement
UK	University Technical College Bolton	MOU
United Arab Emirates	Stafford Associates	Service agreement
USA	California State University Monterey Bay	MOU
USA	Hastings College, Nebraska	MOU
USA	Keene State College	MOU

Appendices

USA	Montclair State University New Jersey	MOU
USA	State University of New York at New Paltz	Articulation agreement
USA	University of Montana	MOU



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