



University of  
St Andrews | FOUNDED  
1413 |

# QAA Enhancement-led Institutional Review 2020



Reflective Analysis

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# SECTION 1

## CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

### 1.1 Evolution of the context

#### *Historic context, core values, and standing*

##### Historic context

- 1 Founded in the early fifteenth century, St Andrews is Scotland's first university and the third oldest in the English-speaking world. Teaching is believed to have been a feature of the community of St Andrews as early as the eleventh century, but the University was formally constituted by the issue of Papal Bulls in 1413. Its Homeric motto expresses the determination of staff and students to move forward with purpose, integrity, and success: Ever to Excel. The University is an ancient yet modern institution, resolutely outward-looking and international with staff and students from over 130 countries and territories and opportunities for students to participate in exciting exchanges or study abroad opportunities across the world.

##### Core values

- 2 The University stands for research and teaching of the highest quality and the pursuit of knowledge for the common good. Our fundamental goal is to attract excellent staff and the most promising students from around the world, and to provide an environment in which they can produce their best work for maximum societal benefit. We aim to make the St Andrews experience unique, to be a beacon for equality, diversity and inclusion as well as social responsibility and to pursue the most effective ways to make a St Andrews education accessible to all who may benefit from it.

##### Standing and reputation

- 3 St Andrews continues to punch above its weight on the world stage. The University was the highest ranking Scottish university in the 2020 Complete University Guide and was judged to be one of the top three in the UK. St Andrews was also the top Scottish University in The Times and Sunday Times University Guide 2020 and was named UK University of the Year. The 2020 Guardian University Guide ranked the University of St Andrews second in the UK. According to the QS University World Rankings 2020 we are placed 100th, marking ten years that St Andrews has featured in the world's top 100 universities.
- 4 Excellence in teaching and learning is an important part of our success. In the National Student Survey 2019, 95% of our students gave the University top marks for the quality of the learning and teaching experience, which was the highest rating of any mainstream multi-faculty institution in the UK. The TEF panel, which conferred the Gold Award on the University in 2017 as part of its assessment of teaching quality and student experience, judged that St Andrews 'delivers consistently outstanding teaching, learning and outcomes for its students. It is of the highest quality found in the UK'. We believe that our success is due, in part, to a continued culture of enhancement embedded in all the student-facing professional service Units and academic Schools supported by evidence-based approaches to robust quality assurance processes. While the various league table positions do not and have never directly driven our actions or policy, they are an external manifestation of aspects of our quality. Part of our ethos is that we cannot be complacent, and therefore we use surveys and additional feedback we obtain directly or through analyses to learn, challenge ourselves and introduce relevant improvements.
- 5 The dynamic relationship between research and teaching is important, and our intellectual life is founded on a strong research culture. The 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF) ranked the University top in Scotland and 14th in the UK for the quality of research publications across Science, the Arts, Divinity and Medicine. 100% of our research is internationally recognised, while 80% is world-leading or internationally excellent. Our commitment and achievement in both research and teaching are most clearly indicated in Figure 1 overleaf.

Figure 1: Research and Teaching Performance

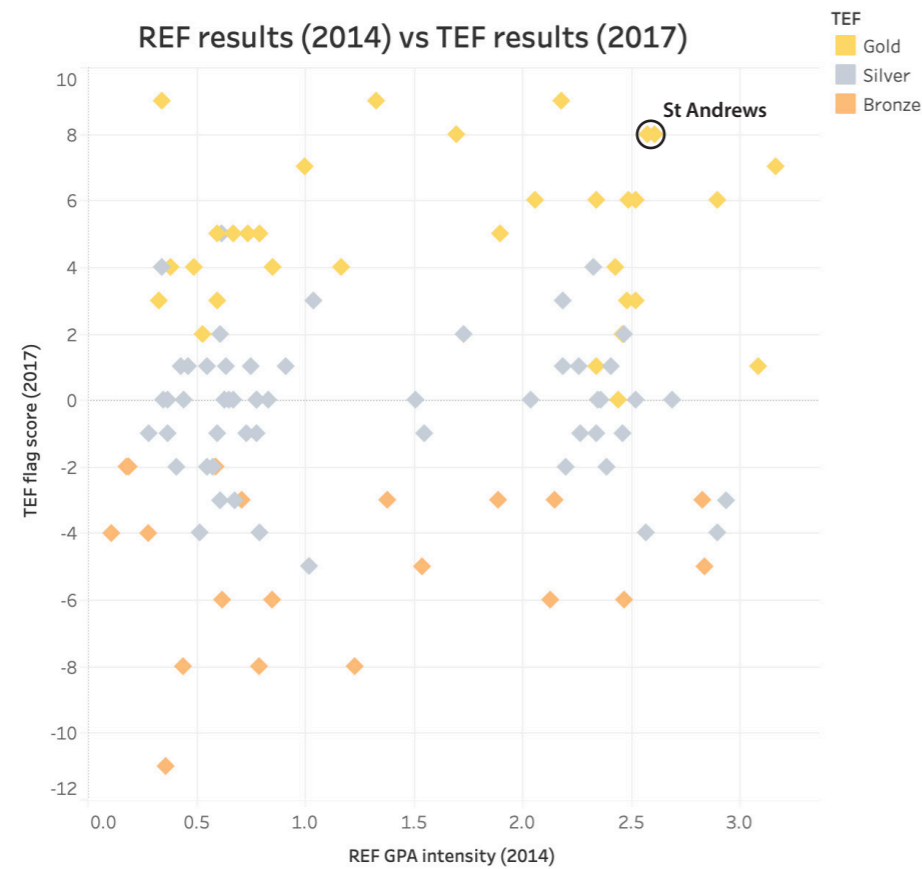


Figure source: [wonkhe.com/blogs/tef-results-how-do-ref-and-tef-results-compare](https://www.wonkhe.com/blogs/tef-results-how-do-ref-and-tef-results-compare/)<sup>1</sup>

### Current context

- 6 The University occupies historic and modern buildings across the town: most of the Arts and Social Science Schools, library and administrative buildings are based in the town whilst most of the Science Schools are based in the North Haugh. There is no single University campus, instead University buildings are distributed across four principal sites: the town centre, North Haugh, East Sands, and also (from 2020) the [Eden campus](#)<sup>2</sup> in Guardbridge. In term-time over 47% of the town's population is either a staff member or student of the University.
- 7 Since the last ELIR in 2015 the University has developed and expanded the Sports Centre, and several new residences have been established. Work has advanced apace to prepare Eden campus for the relocation of around 450 professional services staff whose departure from the town centre will free up precious space for academic activities. The Scottish Oceans Institute, a new centre for the study of ocean and marine biology, opened in Summer 2019; the brand new Laidlaw Music Centre will open in April 2020; and an extension to the recently re-named Wardlaw Museum (formerly Museum of the University of St Andrews) is nearing completion. Following a comprehensive review, we have also created a number of innovative learning and teaching spaces across our Schools and we are currently training staff in their use.
- 8 To address our strategic ambitions, we plan to make significant further investments in our estate over the next ten years and a number of significant projects are already underway or in preparation. These include the refurbishment of the Younger Hall to offer modern teaching facilities; the creation of a new learning commons in the vicinity of the Library (which will itself see an increase in the number of study places); and the establishment of a postgraduate hub for St Leonard's Postgraduate College and the Graduate School for Interdisciplinary Studies with study spaces, seminar rooms and social space in the Old Burgh School. Projects at the conceptual design stage include development of the town centre site currently occupied by the secondary school Madras College which has been acquired by the University through an excambion agreement. It will become available for refurbishment and development in two to three years' time when the school moves to its new premises, giving the University a once-in-a-

generation opportunity to establish a new hub for teaching and research in the Social Sciences and, by re-housing three of our Schools, release the space necessary to decant and relocate other Departments during a thorough programme of refurbishment across the town centre estate. At the same time, plans to support STEM research and education at the North Haugh are being refined following a major fire in our Biomolecular Sciences building in February 2019, which has presented us with both a significant challenge and an opportunity to think differently.

- 9 The University's strategic objective is to grow to 10,000 students by 2025, supporting a community of broadly 80% undergraduate and 20% postgraduate students. The 2018/19 total student intake sits at just under 9,000 – as a rough estimate therefore we still require around 800 more undergraduates and 200 more postgraduate students to reach that target. Such growth requires investment in the estate with a planned series of refurbishments and new builds to create additional capacity while, at the same time, ensuing there is no significant disruption to learning, teaching, and the student experience. The task of planning and prioritisation is led by the Master of the United College and Deputy Principal who chairs the Strategic Student Growth Group, which looks at the approach to targeted and balanced growth of student numbers in future years. The Master also chairs the Space and Asset Management Group, which coordinates space refurbishment and growth plans, thus ensuring coherence and coordination between the two groups.
- 10 The planned estate reconfiguration includes investment in facilities and technologies to enable 'smart working' for staff as well as students across all parts of our estate. To help inform this work, the University has employed architectural design firms to review our learning and teaching space requirements and to advise on the diverse types of space needed for our students and staff. The University is investing £24m in the Eden campus to relocate some of our library collections, along with around 450 of our professional services staff, enabling academic expansion in the town centre. In addition, up to a further £26.5m via the Tay Cities Deal, with funding from both the UK and Scottish Governments, will be invested in the Eden campus to support power upgrades, and a clean energy centre along with a regional enterprise and innovation hub. The upgraded Music, Sports and Museum facilities as well as the Byre Theatre and Scottish Oceans Institute outreach area demonstrate the University's investment in cultural and public engagement facilities that benefit wider society.

### Strategic framework

- 11 The University launched a new five-year [Strategy](#)<sup>3</sup> in October 2018. It addresses how we will act on our core qualities and key ambitions to grow in size, scale, and impact, and to consolidate our strengths in ways which respect and support our people, our values, the communities with which we engage and our environment. It expresses our ambitions across four distinct themes: World-leading St Andrews, Diverse St Andrews, Global St Andrews, and Entrepreneurial St Andrews. The Strategy provides purpose, direction, and a broad decision-making framework for development in the next five years.
- 12 Importantly, we have placed social responsibility at the heart of our strategic plan. Social responsibility is a deep-woven thread which already runs through much of our work. Within the Strategy we commit to acting ethically, transparently, sustainably, and for the wider public benefit at all times and to reflect these values in our curriculum and graduate attributes. In 2019, a new post of Community Engagement and Social Responsibility Officer, reporting directly to the Principal, was created in order to provide a focus for the University's social responsibility activities.
- 13 We encourage in our students and staff a culture of civic engagement and volunteering. Last year our students' Charities Campaign raised £87,000, with Save the Children, the Scottish Refugee Council, and Families First all benefiting from the proceeds. The Campaign was Highly Commended for the National Student Fundraising Award 2018. Of the 160+ student societies affiliated with our Students' Association most of them partake in fundraising events, volunteering or charitable activities throughout the year.
- 14 The first steps to implement the Strategy have been taken. Each of the strategic themes is led and championed by a member of the Principal's Office, which is made up of the senior management of the University. Within each of the themes there are priority areas and streams of activity which will inform the strategic planning processes of Schools and Units. Delivery of the University Strategy will be

made possible by the development of five new enabling strategies: accommodation, estate, finance, digital, and people. These enabling strategies will be underpinned by a number of new supporting strategies including a new Education Strategy which will replace the [current strategies](#)<sup>4</sup> for: Learning and Teaching; Quality Enhancement; Employability; Study Abroad; Student Experience; and Technology Enhanced Learning. The enabling strategies will be approved by the end of the calendar year 2019 and the supporting strategies will be developed during academic year 2019/20. The University Strategy and the enabling and supporting strategies will each have a framework to highlight progress and relevant performance indicators developed for monitoring and reporting. Plans also include the production of an annual report on the progress of the strategies which will be available to the whole community.

## 1.2 Contextualised themes for the review

### *Diverse St Andrews*

- 15 The Diverse St Andrews theme in the Strategy sets out a clear commitment to creating an inclusive, welcoming environment that supports equality of opportunity and fairness for all. The Strategy states that 'We aim to make the St Andrews experience unique, to differentiate this University from all others, to be a beacon for diversity and social responsibility, and to pursue the most effective ways to make a St Andrews education accessible to all who may benefit from it.'
- 16 The Principal established inclusivity and fairness as two of the three guiding values for the University. An important step in assuring leadership and focus was the appointment of an Assistant Vice-Principal for Diversity early in 2019. Support for the [Athena SWAN scheme](#)<sup>5</sup> at St Andrews has also been at the heart of the Principal's values since she took up office. In addition to our 16 Athena SWAN awards recognising progress on gender, the University's support of LGBT+ is also gaining recognition. We are the only Scottish university to have achieved LGBT Charter recognition, and we were shortlisted in the Public Sector Equality category for the 2018 Pink News awards; Pink News is the main site for news for the LGBT+ community.
- 17 We have a very active Students' Association with over 160 student societies including groups such as the Afro-Caribbean Society, Feminist Society, Hindu Jain Sikh Society and a number of societies representing countries around the world. Saints LGBT+ is a Students' Association sub-committee and has hosted the annual Glitterball since 2013 with approximately 1,000 guests each year. St Andrews PRIDE, which is Fife's longest-running LGBT+ Pride event brings together the whole St Andrews community, inviting students, residents, schools, businesses and charities to march through town sending a clear message that LGBT+ people are supported and welcomed in this environment. The event has grown year on year, and the rainbow flag on St Salvator's Chapel makes a clear statement about equality and diversity in St Andrews.
- 18 The University hosts a number of centres and institutes, and events that link directly to equality, diversity and inclusion and provide an academic context for staff and student discussion. During academic year 2018/19, the Centre for Research into Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (CREDI) hosted six equality, diversity and inclusion-linked academic presentations for staff and students, and the new St Andrews Institute for Gender Studies has also hosted numerous events for the whole University. In academic year 2019/20 CREDI will host a series of six events specifically exploring equality, diversity and inclusion issues in higher education including those focused on ethnicity and gender within the student body and in Spring 2020 there will be a two-day workshop on Race in HE organised by the School of International Relations. The Centre for Minorities Research in the Department of Social Anthropology has also hosted events for staff and students, including an inaugural event in 2018 with a keynote lecture by Professor Philomena Essed (Antioch University), 'Beyond Race and Ethnicity: Are We All Intersectional Now?'
- 19 The University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Research Fund (which has two request cycles a year) has funded a number of initiatives designed to improve the student experience, and teaching and learning from a diversity perspective. Successful projects include: 'Who takes unpaid internships in science?', 'Communicating psychological sex differences', and 'Male and female participation in the MPhys year'. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Research Conference in 2018 had several presentations on research findings and a keynote speech from Professor Iyola Solanke (University of Leeds) on 'Where are the

black female professors in the UK?'. The University also held a series called Beyond Belief hosted by the Chaplaincy team with Buddhist, Christian, Humanist, Pagan, Quaker, Das Haram, Hindu and Sikh representation.

- 20 To support a fairer and more diverse Scotland, the University is actively engaged in and leading national inclusion agendas, including Scottish government initiatives on widening access. The Principal chairs the Universities Scotland working group on widening access and the University has delivered and exceeded widening access targets. In response to the SFC Commission for Widening Access, the University contributed to the work of the Access Data Group in identifying additional markers of socio-economic disadvantage and ensuring that, given the deficiencies of SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) as a marker of socio-economic disadvantage, others who require equivalent support are not left out. Although we are proud of the depth and breadth of our outreach and access programmes, our intent is to support the national ambition to see equity of access to higher education across the country, regardless of socio-economic background.
- 21 We believe that equality and excellence are entirely compatible, and we aim to attract those who can flourish at St Andrews regardless of their background. To facilitate social mobility, we work with our partners in Scotland to ensure that at St Andrews the experience of students who come from challenged circumstances matches that of any other student. We acknowledge that a priority for us in the next phase must be greater racial and ethnic diversity. While we already attract a greater diversity of students than is typical of Scottish society, we seek to improve the experience of people from black, asian and minority ethnic communities at all levels of the University. In this regard, we intend to make meaningful interventions in recruitment, representation, and curriculum reform.

### *Entrepreneurial St Andrews*

- 22 The exceptional quality of the research carried out at the University means that we see further opportunities for our work to have an impact on society and the economy. The Entrepreneurial St Andrews theme will drive a culture shift to strengthen our engagement with industry, business and government by increasing our capacity for innovation and value creation, and mirroring this engagement in our educational activities.
- 23 Work-related and transferable skills of our students will be brought into focus through learning and internship opportunities so that they are prepared to play a productive role in the economy and society and also strengthen our engagement with business. ScotGEM, a graduate-entry programme for Medicine, devised as a response by the universities of Dundee and St Andrews to current pressures on the health service in Scotland, provides an example of this.
- 24 Since 2018, the University has also undertaken a range of entrepreneurial education activities including holding an [Academic Forum](#)<sup>6</sup>; developing a set of enterprise education capabilities; setting up an enterprise education network; developing case studies of enterprise education modules; and establishing an Enterprising Mind of the Year Award for students.
- 25 The Eden campus in Guardbridge provides an outstanding opportunity to develop a new facility to bring together internal and external expertise in an environment for experimentation with the aim of promoting the development of new approaches and ideas. As it develops, Entrepreneurial St Andrews will share the approach catalysed at Eden campus to embed an innovative model of engagement across the University, by providing integrative training, support and space for aspiring entrepreneurs in the staff and student community.

### 1.3 Organisational structure and staffing

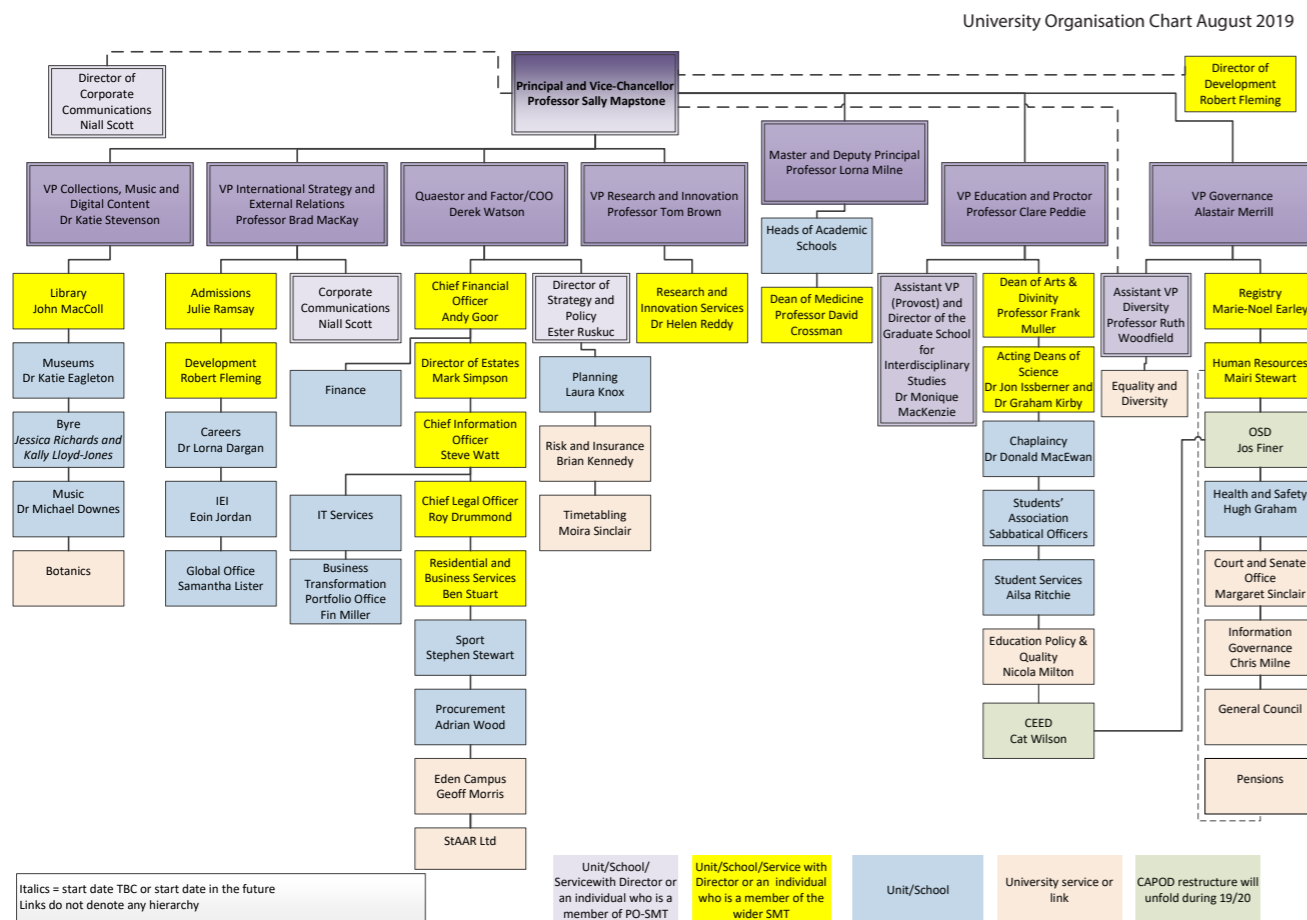
#### Management

26 In September 2016 Professor Sally Mapstone took up office as Principal and Vice-Chancellor. The Principal is supported by the [Principal's Office](#)<sup>7</sup> and Senior Management Team of the University. Since the last ELIR, a number of new posts have been created:

- Vice-Principal (Collections, Music and Digital Content)
- Vice-Principal (International Strategy and External Relations)
- Assistant Vice-Principal (Provost)
- Assistant Vice-Principal (Diversity)
- Director of Strategy and Policy

27 The organisational structure of the Principal's senior team is provided in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Principal's Office and Senior Management Team



#### Governance

28 The [University Court](#)<sup>8</sup> is the governing body of the University and has responsibility for all aspects of strategic planning and the management of resources – financial, human and physical. Court has a number of standing committees including the Audit and Risk Committee to which the Academic Assurance Group (AAG) reports. At the time of writing, Court is presided over by the Rector who is elected every three years by the student body. Court selects one of its lay (external) members as Senior Governor to serve as chair of Court. The University's transparent and inclusive governance structure ensures that all voices at the University are consulted and have the opportunity to take an active role in University governance.

29 The [University Senate](#)<sup>9</sup> is the supreme academic body under the leadership of the Principal. It consists of all professors, various members of the senior management team, the Deans, Heads of Schools, a number of elected non-professorial members of staff and representative student members. The Senate is responsible for all academic matters within the University, in particular for regulating the teaching of the University and supervising student discipline. The Senate also approves all degrees to be conferred by the University, and graduation ceremonies are officially a meeting of the Senate.

30 The majority of the Senate's non-ceremonial business is delegated to the Academic Council, which has two standing committees: the [Learning and Teaching Committee \(LTC\)](#)<sup>10</sup>, and the [Postgraduate Research Committee \(PGRC\)](#)<sup>11</sup>. LTC advises Academic Council on matters relating to learning and teaching policy and practice at undergraduate as well as taught postgraduate level, in support of the University's Strategy. PGRC has the same role but in relation to postgraduate research educational matters.

#### Academic organisation

31 The University comprises 20 Schools organised into four Faculties (Arts, Divinity, Medicine and Science). Each is led by a Head of School who is supported by a number of academic and professional staff. The Master of the United College and Deputy Principal is line manager to the Heads of School and oversees the strategic planning of Schools in relation to academic appointments, space and resource allocation. The Schools are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Academic Schools

- Art History
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Classics
- Computer Science
- Divinity
- Earth & Environmental Sciences
- Economics & Finance
- English
- Geography & Sustainable Development
- History
- International Education Institute
- International Relations
- Management
- Mathematics & Statistics
- Medicine
- Modern Languages
- Philosophical, Anthropological & Film Studies
- Physics & Astronomy
- Psychology & Neuroscience

- 32 All Schools have Directors of Teaching with delegated responsibility for all aspects of learning, teaching and assessment in the modules delivered by their Schools. Schools are also supported by Directors of Postgraduate Studies (Taught) and Directors of Postgraduate (Research); in some smaller Schools both these roles are held by one individual.
- 33 Learning and teaching are also delivered in the Laidlaw Music Centre, in the Centre for Educational Enhancement and Development and in the International Education Institute. In addition, in academic year 2016/17, a new Graduate School for Interdisciplinary Studies was established to provide a governance structure and 'home' for new, interdisciplinary taught Masters programmes, support outreach and engagement with prospective Masters students and possible partner institutions, and support growth in the taught postgraduate cohort.
- 34 The Graduate School for Interdisciplinary Studies is intended to facilitate the development of the University's postgraduate curriculum and improved forms of postgraduate support that, ultimately, can be adopted by other schools to the benefit of the overall postgraduate student experience. Work so far has included structured orientation programmes and enhanced pre-arrival support; the use of integrated training programmes within Masters degrees that connect academic learning with the development of professional competencies; and innovative models of end of degree project submissions including multi-media portfolios and policy-based exercises.
- 35 Currently the Director of the [Graduate School for Interdisciplinary Studies](#)<sup>12</sup> also holds the position of the Provost of St Leonard's College and is responsible for the postgraduate student experience and the development of the College. She works closely with the Vice-Principal Research and Innovation and Vice-Principal Education (Proctor). The Provost also chairs the Postgraduate Research Committee. In 2020, the Graduate School for Interdisciplinary Studies and St Leonard's Postgraduate College will move into the Old Burgh School, which will provide postgraduate study, seminar and social space for all postgraduate students.

### **Professional services**

- 36 Both academic and extracurricular aspects of a St Andrews education are supported by excellent student-facing professional service Units and Departments, the majority of which are represented on the Student Experience Committee. Units are generally led by a Director who is line managed by a member of the Principal's Office. The Quaestor and Factor (Chief Operating Officer) oversees the strategic planning of Units in relation to resource allocation. A list of all Units is provided in Table 2.

*Table 2: Professional Service Units and Departments*

Admissions  
 Business Transformation Portfolio Office  
 Byre Theatre  
 Centre for Educational Enhancement and Development  
 Careers Centre  
 Chaplaincy  
 Corporate Communications  
 Development  
 Environmental, Health and Safety Services  
 Estates  
 Finance  
 Global Office  
 Human Resources  
 IT Services  
 Library  
 Museums and Collections  
 Laidlaw Music Centre  
 Planning  
 Procurement  
 Registry  
 Research and Innovation Services  
 Residential and Business Services  
 Department of Sport and Exercise  
 Student Services

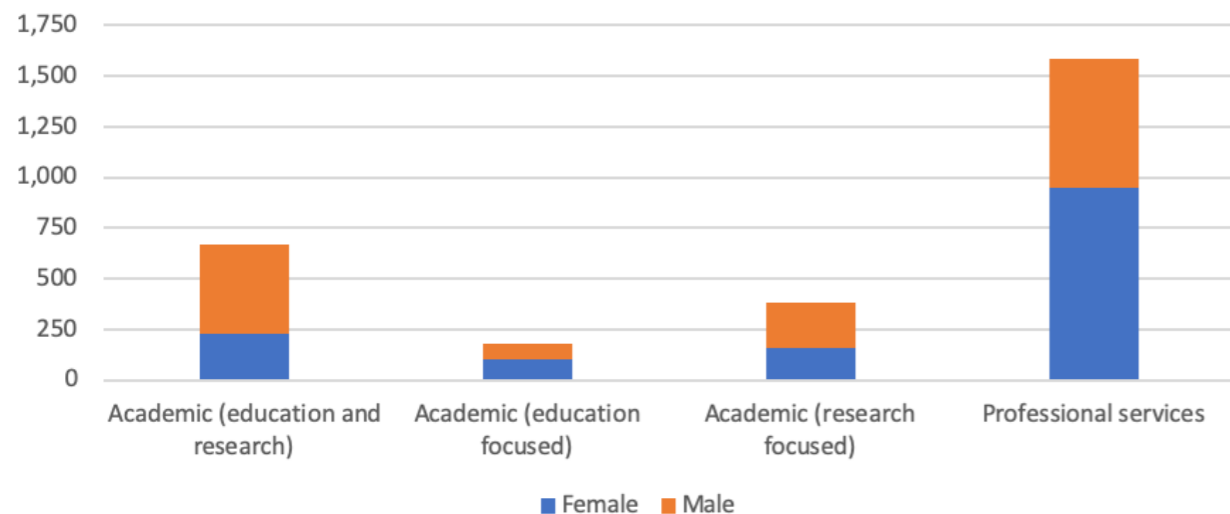
- 37 In August 2019, the University established a new Global Office to support the strategic theme of Global St Andrews. This new office was formed from the Collaborations and Study Abroad team (CSA) which moved out of Registry. The team continues to manage study abroad and collaborative programmes, but also has wider responsibility for the University's strategic partnerships, and the provision of co-ordinated support for international activities which enhance student experience, academic reputation and research connectivity.
- 38 During academic year 2019/20, the Centre for Academic, Professional and Organisational Development (CAPOD) which currently provides learning and professional development services to all staff and students, will enter a transition phase to facilitate the alignment of the organisational and professional development function of CAPOD with Human Resources. During this time the University will establish a new Centre for Educational Enhancement and Development (CEED). Reporting to the Vice-Principal Education (Proctor), CEED will perform the following current functions of CAPOD:
- Development of the teaching, academic skills and qualifications of postgraduate research students and academic staff who teach.
  - Development of Technology Enhanced Learning.

- Support for the development of academic learning skills in students at all levels of study.
- Facilitation of the development of pedagogical research skills in staff and pedagogical research through the St Andrews Learning and Teaching Initiative (SALTI).
- Research into higher education in the wider sense through the Centre for Higher Education Research (CHER).

### Staff overview

39 The following Figure gives a breakdown of the current total staff population at the University:

Figure 3: University staff



40 Of the total population of staff, 2,135 work full time (958 women and 1,177 men) and 677 work part time (474 women and 203 men).

### Office of the Vice-Principal Education (Proctor)

41 Overall responsibility for learning, teaching, and student business (including student experience, welfare and discipline) is vested in the role of Vice-Principal Education (Proctor). All educational and student experience matters are led by the Proctor's Office Education Strategic Management Group which comprises the Proctor, the Faculty Deans, the Provost, the Director of CEED, the Director of Education from the Students' Association, two School representatives and the Head of Education Policy and Quality. The Group is responsible for discussing and responding to external initiatives and educational issues raised by Schools and students. It also considers educational policies prior to formal submission to the University's Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC), and Postgraduate Research Committee (PGRC).

42 The portfolio of the Vice-Principal Education (Proctor) includes the Department of Sport and Exercise, Student Services and the Chaplaincy, and is the Principal's Office liaison point for the Students' Association and Athletic Union. The pastoral aspects of the Proctor's responsibilities are largely devolved to relevant service Units but are collaboratively managed through a Pastoral Management Group which comprises the Vice-Principal Education (Proctor), the Director of Student Services and the University Chaplain.

43 The Vice-Principal Education (Proctor) chairs the Learning and Teaching Committee, the Academic Assurance Group, and the Student Experience Committee. The [Academic Monitoring Group \(AMG\)](#)<sup>13</sup> is chaired by the Dean of Arts and Divinity on the Vice-Principal's behalf.

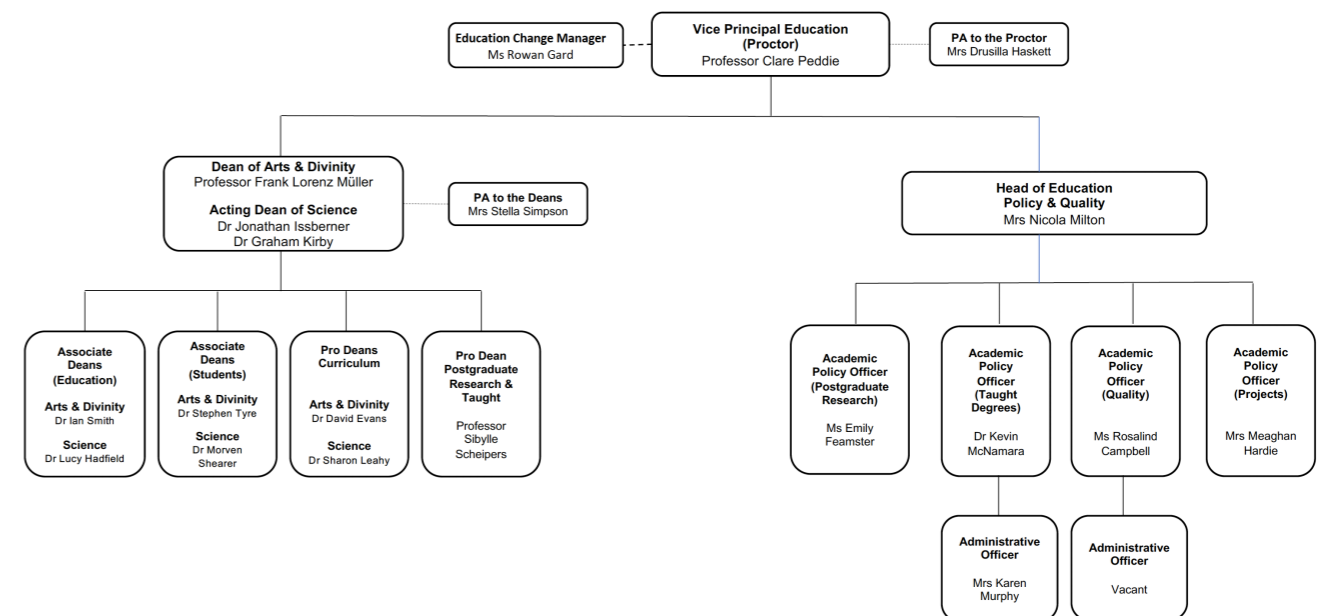
44 Since the last ELIR, the Proctor's Office has grown and now comprises:

- Vice-Principal Education (Proctor)
- Dean of Arts and Divinity
- Dean of Science
- Associate Dean Students (2)
- Associate Dean Education (2)
- Pro Dean Curriculum (2)
- Pro Dean Postgraduate (Taught and Research)
- Head of Education Policy and Quality
- Academic Policy Officers (4)
- Administrative Officers (2)
- Personal Assistants (2)

45 The creation of the Associate Dean Education roles and the appointment of four Academic Policy Officers have been the key changes since the last ELIR. These appointments have enabled us to move forward at a faster pace with initiatives such as pedagogical research and sector-wide initiatives such as employability, sustainability and enterprise in the curriculum. We are also now in a much better position to respond to external initiatives such as Westminster and Scottish Government policy development, the Teaching Excellence Framework, national and regional surveys, various reviews of quality assurance arrangements and changes to the UK Quality Code.

46 The structure of the Proctor's Office is detailed below.

Figure 4: Proctor's Office



## 1.4 Student representative structures, curricula and community

### Students' Association

47 The Students' Association is led by six annually elected [Sabbatical Officers](#)<sup>14</sup>, each representing a different element of the student experience. The Students' Association President is in charge of external relations, affordability issues such as accommodation and widening access, as well as strategy and governance.



48 The Director of Education (DoEd) is responsible for matters relating to education, postgraduate studies, and employability. The Director of Wellbeing (DoWell) is in charge of Welfare, Equal Opportunities, Saints LGBT+, Democracy, and Stand Together. The Director of Student Development and Activities (DoSDA) is responsible for the Students' Association extracurricular activities, including many student societies. The Director of Events and Services (DoES) is in charge of events, commercial services and venue management. The Athletic Union President is in charge of student sport at the University, encompassing club sport, recreational sport, national and international representation, as well as strategy and governance.

49 In addition, a Postgraduate Academic Convener, line managed by the DoEd, is elected by the postgraduate student body and has responsibility for representing the views of taught and research postgraduate students. The Convener oversees the training and development of postgraduate class representatives and is a point of support and coordination for them.

### Student representation

50 The Student Representative Committee (SRC) is the student voice and the legally recognised body for student representation at the University. The functions of the SRC are devolved into several different sub-committees: Accommodation, Alumni, Community Relations, Education, Environment, Equal Opportunities, Wellbeing, Lifelong and Flexible Learning. SRC members can put forward motions which are usually inspired by change that the members and students want to see happen at the University.

51 There is a strong culture of representation and engagement at St Andrews, with students having a voice at most levels of academic decision-making in the University on all of the key education-related University committees and working groups. There are over 300 Class Representatives who are elected from every level of undergraduate and postgraduate study. They are trained and led by the DoEd and work directly with School teaching staff and provide advocacy on issues such as the curriculum, learning resources, learning and teaching, assessment and feedback, student progression and achievement, guidance, and support.

52 There are also [School Presidents](#)<sup>15</sup> who are elected annually to represent all of the students in their academic School. The School Presidents who are also line managed by the DoEd, help support Class Representatives within their respective Schools and chair the relevant Student Staff Consultative Committees (SSCCs), which are known as Student Staff Councils in some Schools. There are also two Faculty Presidents who sit on the SRC and Academic Council.

53 School Presidents sit on School Teaching Committees and meet with the two Faculty Presidents and the DoEd regularly at Education Committee meetings. Twice in each semester, the School Presidents meet with the Vice-Principal Education (Proctor), the Dean of Arts and Divinity, the Dean of Science, and the Rector (or representative) at the School Presidents' Forum. At postgraduate level, a taught postgraduate and research postgraduate student representative from each School is elected to act as the Postgraduate Executive Representative. These representatives attend a Postgraduate Executive Forum which is attended by the Provost and Pro Dean Postgraduate (Taught and Research).

54 All student representatives are provided with training and guidance through CAPOD and the Students' Association. The training provision is reviewed and enhanced annually in response to feedback received from the student representatives.

### Curricula

55 In terms of undergraduate provision, the University offers a blend of entry routes to accommodate the different needs of applicants, with the majority of our students entering the traditional and flexible Scottish four-year undergraduate degree progressing directly from secondary school. The first two years, known as 'sub-honours', allow students to gain a broad understanding of the subject that they applied to study as well as other subjects of interest. The final two years, known as 'Honours', give students the opportunity to specialise in their chosen subject(s). All degree programmes aim to support independent learning and to engage students with our research agenda from an early stage. The University also offers Integrated Masters programmes in most of the science subjects.

56 The University offers a number of tailored programmes which promote the uptake of higher education among those groups who are traditionally under-represented at University. Students who have experienced disadvantage and who have not been able to achieve the top grades required for entry into the University, may apply for a [Gateway programme](#)<sup>16</sup>. These currently include the Gateway to Arts, Gateway to Medicine, Gateway to Science, Gateway to Computer Science, and Gateway to Physics and Astronomy. The Gateway and other supported transition programmes ensure that all students, including young carers and those who are care experienced receive appropriate levels of academic and financial support. Articulation arrangements are in place with a number of local colleges which enable students to enter directly into the second year of a degree programme. The [FE-HE Pathway to Arts](#)<sup>17</sup> and FE-HE Pathway to Science are designed for students coming to St Andrews from FE colleges. Our flexible degree structure allows students to study many of the subjects offered in the Faculties of Arts and Science to enter on these routes. If they meet the academic requirements in their second year of study, they will transfer from the FE-HE pathway onto their chosen named Honours degree route.

57 There are also opportunities for adult learners who have been out of education for some time to pursue part-time study in the evening through the [MA Combined Studies](#)<sup>18</sup> route leading to a General degree.

58 The University provides a wide portfolio of taught postgraduate programmes, the majority of which are MLitt and MSc degrees delivered in St Andrews. In addition, there are a small number of collaborative programmes and distance learning courses at postgraduate level. Our research postgraduate degrees offerings include the PhD, MPhil, MSc (by research); MSt (by research), although the majority of students study for a PhD. Some PhDs allow students to conduct doctoral research at two institutions and to obtain a jointly awarded degree.

### Current student community and key trends

#### Community

59 In academic year 2017/18, the University's student population of 9,160 was split 80:20 between undergraduate and postgraduate students. St Andrews is a diverse international university with a student distribution of 27% Scottish, 28% RUK, 12% EU and 33% overseas (Figure 5) and over 130 countries and territories are represented in our community. Since the last ELIR, our EU and overseas student population has grown by 15% in line with the growth in overall student numbers (Figure 6) and in academic year 2017/18 represented 33% of the student population. 41% of our taught postgraduate student population were overseas.

Figure 5: Student population by degree level and fee status 2017/18

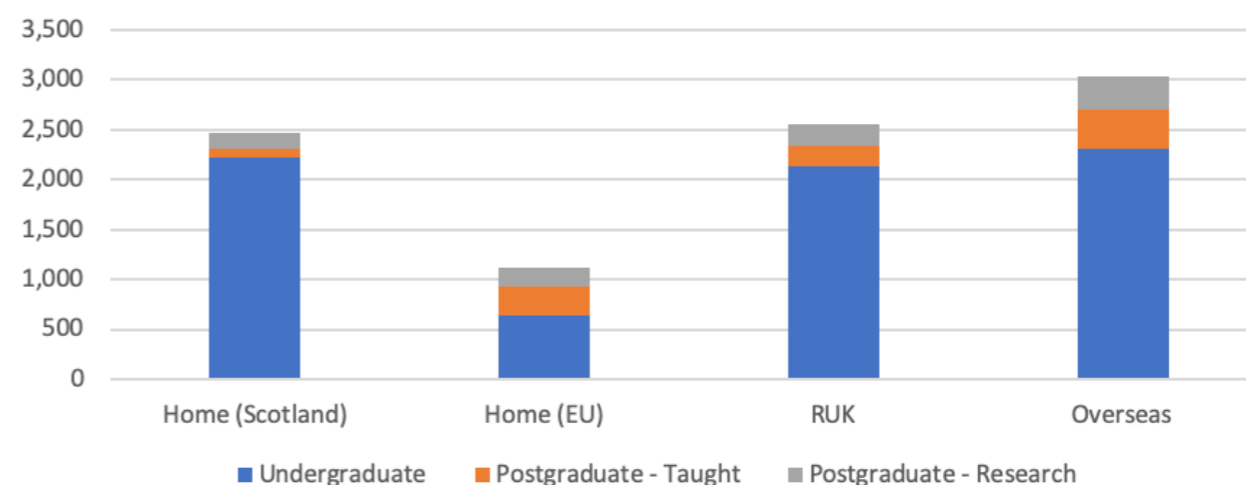
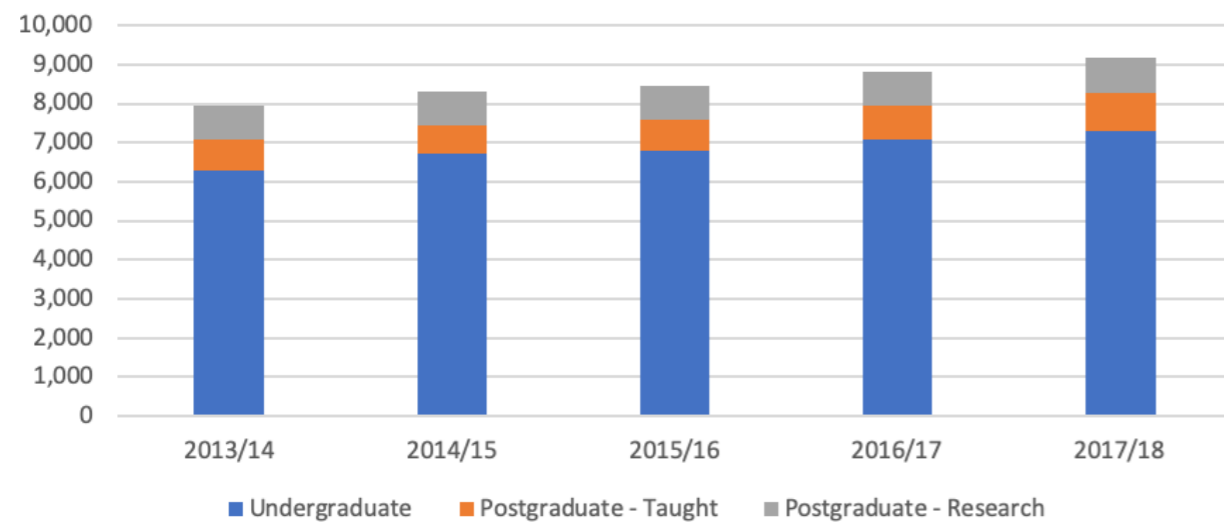


Figure 6: Student population growth



60 Diversity and widening access in our cohorts are discussed in detail in Section 3, but here we cover the headline information. In academic year 2017/18 the proportion of female research postgraduate students increased from 42% to 46%. The undergraduate gender mix has remained around 60% female, though the gender balance differs notably depending on cohort: our Scottish cohort is around 58% female, RUK around 56%, and EU and overseas both around 65%. Our Gender Action Plan and our commitment to Athena SWAN both look to address gender imbalances where they exist. There has been slow but positive change in other areas. In academic year 2017/18, 14% of our student body declared a disability, up from 10% in 2013/14.

61 We have also made progress in social inclusion. The University offers a wide range of opportunities for students to enter the University through non-traditional routes. Through our approach to widening access in 2017/18, we saw 49% of our undergraduate Scottish entrants and 19% of students coming from RUK flagged with an access marker. We are committed to achieving the outcomes recommended by the Commission for Widening Access (COWA) report. By academic year 2020/21, we aim to have 10% of our Scottish domiciled entrants from SIMD20 (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 20) areas by increasing the proportion of our intake each year incrementally. This 10% goal has already been achieved in academic year 2018/19 and is a step change compared with academic year 2008/9, when the SIMD20 intake was 3% (16 students) and academic year 2017/18 when intake was 7.4% (42 students). To achieve this target, we built on the work from the previous years, such as focusing on outreach programmes, adding routes from FE (articulation), provision of Summer Schools, and new Gateway programmes.

62 In the academic year 2017/18, over 140 students engaged in part-time study (day or evening provision), while over 160 registered on distance learning programmes (in Biology, Divinity, International Relations, and Psychology & Neuroscience). Currently the University has no immediate plans for notable expansion of our distance learning programmes. However, the potential for Micro Masters provision is under preliminary exploration and we may opt to develop plans in this area if it is deemed of sufficient strategic interest.

#### Retention

63 The University has one of the best first-year retention rates in Scotland for undergraduate entrants: 96.5% of our students continue in their studies at St Andrews. Less than 1% transfer to other universities, and less than 3% drop out of higher education altogether. At taught postgraduate level, 99% of our students either complete or choose to continue their programme.

#### Progression at undergraduate level

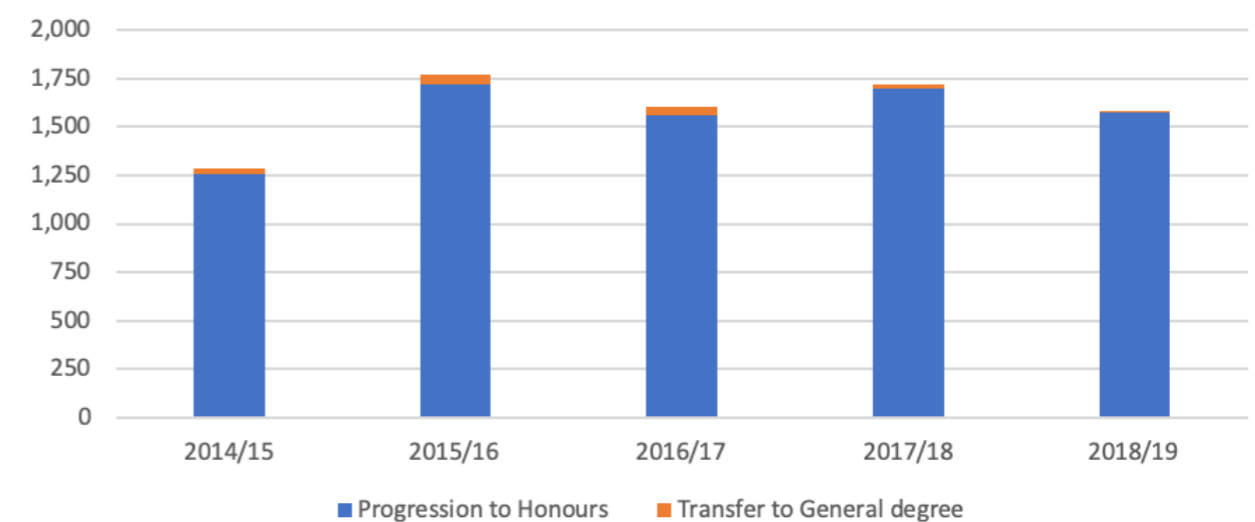
64 An integral feature of our four-year undergraduate degree structure is its flexibility. All students are very strongly encouraged by their Adviser of Studies to select modules in their first year that keep open the possibility of switching to an alternative degree pathway. This helps improve retention and progression, since students have a back-up option for continuing their studies if their initial subject is

not as they expected, or their performance is not sufficiently strong. Over the period 2014-2018, 45% of undergraduate students entered Honours in a different degree pathway from their initial choice at application.

65 Progression at undergraduate level is embedded in our curricular structure, with modules designed for different year levels offering a carefully calibrated increase in difficulty and sophistication aligned to SCQF levels; usually each programme culminates in an independent research assignment (such as a dissertation or a project).

66 Progression within the undergraduate degree, beyond achieving 240 credits, is governed by the 'Entry to Honours' process. 'Entry to Honours' requires students to achieve an average mark of 11 or above, on the 20-point scale, in designated modules. A second chance exists to meet these criteria via examination in the August resit diet. Until academic year 2018/19, the grades required at second chance were higher, at 13.5. It has now been agreed that this was an unnecessary additional barrier to progression, and the higher grade requirement has been removed for entry to Honours in the academic year 2019/20. Honours entry outcomes since the last ELIR are detailed in Figure 7 below:

Figure 7: Honours entry outcomes



#### Progression at taught postgraduate level

67 For taught postgraduate students, the marking scale and nomenclature are now aligned with that for undergraduates, both for the taught element and the dissertation which means there is now a common format within which different SCQF levels can be accommodated.

68 This change was introduced in academic year 2013/14 when, as a result of the analysis of taught postgraduate progression data and feedback from students, the University removed the 13.5 threshold for progression to the Masters dissertation. The key motivation for this change was to address the anomaly in our marking and classification systems which distinguished between achievement at Postgraduate Diploma level and achievement at Masters level, which resulted in some students not being awarded a Masters degree even if they had acquired 180 credits. In addition, we wanted to address the practice whereby a single failed module could result in no award at Masters level.

69 In June 2017, the Taught Postgraduate Masters classification system was expanded to award degrees at Pass, Merit, and Distinction and the right to resit modules was introduced. The absence of a Merit classification had negatively impacted on students in terms of academic competition and careers marketplace. In 2019, the Academic Monitoring Group commissioned a report to assess the effects of these changes. An analysis of these data (broken down by Faculty, School and gender), shows that academics are now using a broader range of the 20-point marking scale in 5000-level taught postgraduate modules.

70 In addition to these changes, in 2018 the University regulations on exit awards of Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma were formalised, allowing taught postgraduate students alternative pathways when circumstances changed during the course of their Masters degree. In academic year 2017/18 the University also introduced a policy which clearly defined how a student may change the degree for which they were registered to a longer or higher postgraduate degree. These policy changes support the recruitment and retention of postgraduate students and help support their transition to higher degree programmes (see Table 3). The policy was also designed to ensure that when awarding degrees, the University was better aligned with SCQF guidelines both in terms of credit and length of study.

Table 3: Number of postgraduate re-registrations to higher degrees

Academic Year	MPhil to PhD	PGT to PGR	Total
2017/18	3	9	12
2016/17	1	5	6

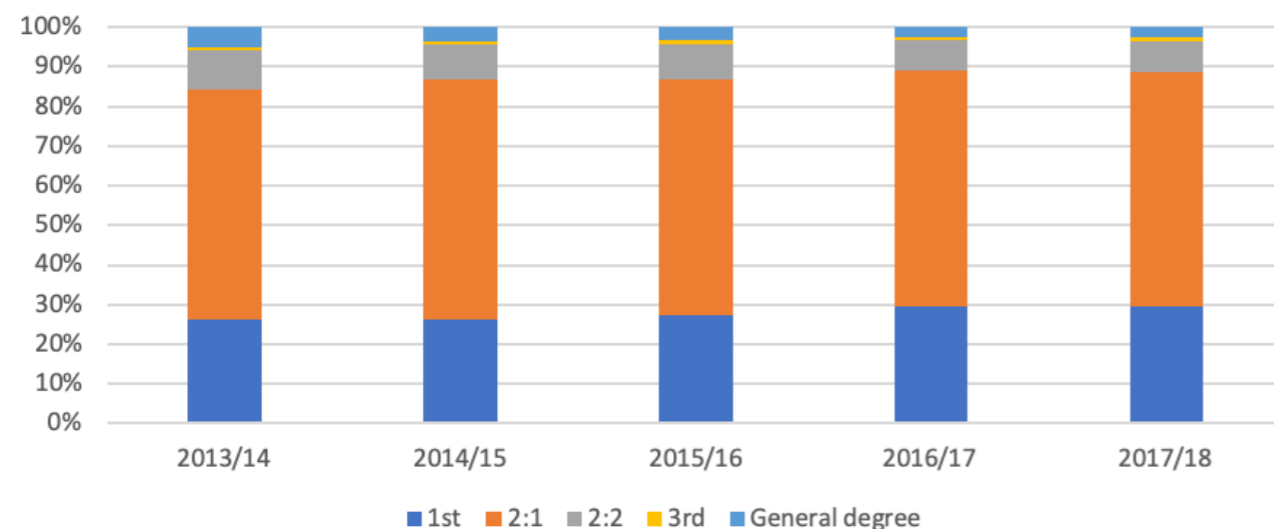
### Progression at postgraduate research level

71 Progression and timely completion for research postgraduate students are monitored and supported through the annual progress review process. A significant review and overhaul of the annual progress review policy was undertaken during academic year 2015/16. The updated policy clearly outlines the purpose of the annual progress review and the procedures to follow. To support the refreshed policy, updates and improvements were carried out to our bespoke student teaching and learning administration interface ([Module Management System – MMS<sup>19</sup>](#)) to track and support the progress review process. Reviewers are now able to access information from previous reviews, improving their ability to monitor the student’s progress over the course of their degree through one online system. New monitoring functionality was introduced at School level to give an overview of all review outcomes and show the last review date for all students. These data are reviewed annually by the Academic Monitoring Group and, for the first time, in 2019 Directors of Postgraduate Studies were asked to comment on these data in the School’s Annual Academic Monitoring report.

### Outcomes

72 We are encouraged that approximately 19% of our students obtain a credit-weighted mean of 16.5 or more across all modules in each academic year, thus meriting a citation on the Deans’ List for Academic Excellence. In addition, in academic year 2017/18 our degree results show 88.7% of graduating students achieved a First or 2.1. Our high academic standards are supported by our external examiners who play a crucial part in our quality assurance and enhancement structures. A summary of degree classification performance since the last ELIR is provided in Figure 8.

Figure 8: Degree classification performance



73 According to the most recent Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education survey (2016/17), 95.2% of our undergraduate first-degree level graduates were in either full-time employment or further study.

### Anticipated changes in the student community

74 The University’s strategic objective is to grow to 10,000 students by 2025, supporting a community of broadly 80% undergraduate and 20% postgraduate students. As described earlier in the document, such growth requires investment in an estate strategy across our four principal sites, and also in our accommodation strategy. With the uncertainties of Brexit and the future of tuition fee status for new EU domiciled entrants post 2019/20, planning for future growth is complex. However, it is the University’s intention to maintain the proportion of EU students in its student body.

75 As a research-intensive university, we value and rely on the contribution of our research postgraduate students. The availability of funding for research postgraduate students is key to the ability to attract them: securing funding thus remains the greatest challenge to their growth. We want to maintain a cohort of at least 10% of research postgraduate students compared with the overall student population. In academic year 2017/18, £11.5m worth of scholarships were made available for the research postgraduate cohort (of which £5.7m was University funded). Maintaining and growing this funding is a key objective. The Provost has completed a strategic review of research postgraduate growth plans and associated funding approach with Schools, which has been agreed across the University and will be the basis for achieving this growth ambition. New scholarships have also been proposed, which are targeted at increasing diversity, underpinning the interdisciplinary areas within the World-Leading theme of the University Strategy, and incentivising collaborations with strategic partners identified through Global St Andrews.

## 1.5 Preparation for ELIR

### Timeline and engagement

76 Preparations for ELIR and the creation of the Reflective Analysis (RA) were co-ordinated by the Vice-Principal Education (Proctor) and overseen by an ELIR Steering Group comprising the Vice-Principal Education (Proctor), the Head of School (Biology), who was the incoming Proctor in May 2019, the Head of Education Policy and Quality, the Dean of Arts and Divinity and the Associate Dean Education (Arts and Divinity), the Academic Policy Officer (Quality), the Assistant Registrar (Collaborations and Study Abroad), and the Director of Education. The Steering Group was supported by an Officer from the Planning Office who provided data to inform the group’s reflections.

77 Preparations for ELIR started in Autumn 2018 when the Steering Group met to agree the approach to writing the RA. It was agreed that there should be an inclusive approach to the production of the RA and that early preparations would allow for wide input and consultation. Four Writing Groups were created as a subset of the Steering Group and were given the remit to focus on key issues and actions, and provided detailed input to the Steering Group.

78 Students were involved and consulted in multiple ways and at various levels, through membership of the Steering Group and Writing Groups and by consultation with the School Presidents and other Sabbatical Officers. The RA was discussed at the Students’ Association Education Committee and at a meeting of the Postgraduate Society.

79 There was an opportunity for staff to contribute to the RA through focus groups, at the Learning and Teaching Committee, Postgraduate Research Committee, and Academic Council. Formal approval for the RA was secured by the Principal’s Office, Academic Council, the Audit and Risk Committee, and Court.

## Steering and Writing Group membership

80 Table 4 below details the Steering Group and writing group membership, taking account of the need for:

- Representatives from all key stakeholder groups, including students and Schools.
- Specific skills and experience of value to the self-assessment process.
- Gender balance.
- Engagement of senior staff in the process.

81 The Steering Group members are highlighted in bold.

Table 4: ELIR team

School/Unit	Role
Principal's Office/ Senior Management Team	<b>Professor Paul Hibbert</b> – Vice-Principal Education (Proctor) – outgoing (May 2019) <b>Professor Clare Peddie</b> – Vice-Principal Education (Proctor) – incoming (May 2019) Ms Ester Ruskuc – Director of Strategy and Policy
Proctor's Office	<b>Professor Frank Müller</b> – Dean of Arts and Divinity <b>Mrs Nicola Milton</b> – Head of Education Policy and Quality <b>Ms Rosalind Campbell</b> – Academic Policy Officer (Quality) <b>Dr Ian Smith</b> – Associate Dean Education (Arts and Divinity) Dr Jon Issberner – Associate Dean Education (Science) Dr Stephen Tyre – Associate Dean Students (Arts and Divinity) Dr David Evans – Pro Dean Curriculum (Arts and Divinity)
Schools	Dr Antonia Wilmot-Smith – Director of Teaching, Mathematics & Statistics Dr Lisa Jones – Director of Teaching, Philosophy Dr Vivienne Wild – School of Physics & Astronomy Dr Ana del Campo – School of History Dr Juliana Bowles – School of Computer Science Dr Alun Hughes – Director of Teaching, Medicine
Planning Office	Dr Jennifer Awang – Planning Officer
Centre for Academic, Professional and Organisational Development	Ms Catriona Wilson – Co-Director Ms Margaret Adamson – Head of Learning Technology and IT Skills Development Dr Rikard Jalkebro – Academic Staff Developer
Student Services	Dr Penny Turnbull – Assistant Director (Projects & Residential)
Registry (Collaborations and Study Abroad)	<b>Ms Samantha Lister</b> – Assistant Registrar (CSA) Dr Christian Harding – Collaborations Officer Ms Bronagh Masterson – Student Mobility Officer Dr Scott Gregory – Partnerships Officer
Human Resources	Ms Lenna Cumberbatch – Equality and Diversity Awards Adviser and part-time PhD student, School of Management
Students (2018/19 representatives)	Ms Paloma Paige – Association President <b>Ms Alice Foulis</b> – Director of Education Mr Ashley Clayton – Postgraduate Academic Convener Mr Nick Farrer – Director of Wellbeing Ms Ciara McCumiskey – Member for Widening Access and Participation Ms Alisa Danilenko – Science and Medicine Faculty President Mr Gianluca Giammei – Arts and Divinity Faculty President Mr Ronan Coyle – Study Abroad participant

## Impact of the institution's approach to engaging students

82 A whole University approach that engages and supports students in their learning is central to our identity. Students are proactively involved in our quality monitoring and enhancement processes and have many opportunities to collaborate on projects which help to improve the student learning experience. Our approach to engaging students in ELIR preparations was to include them in each of the Writing Groups, hold focus groups and to give opportunities at formal meetings for students to review and contribute to the RA.

83 As part of the preparations for ELIR we also contacted postgraduate students. Although we gave a number of opportunities for them to attend focus groups, the uptake was minimal and most of the feedback from that cohort was gathered by direct contact with particular groups such as the Postgraduate Society. One of our priorities for academic year 2019/20 is to look at ways of improving the postgraduate student experience, and to identify the very distinct challenges and opportunities for postgraduate student engagement activities.

### 1.6 Follow-up to the previous ELIR

84 The University's last ELIR took place in Spring 2015 where it received an overall effectiveness statement, along with a commentary on several areas of positive practice, with particular praise for our positive approach to widening access and promotion of equality and diversity. A year-on report to QAA Scotland was submitted in May 2016 which gave an update on progress on the ten areas for development. These are summarised below.

### Academic oversight of collaborative activity

85 The University was asked to ensure that there was 'clear academic oversight of collaborative activity, including the systematic engagement of academic staff in the arrangements for monitoring student performance as well as reflecting on the wider student experience'. The Director of the Global Office now has responsibility for managing the University's suite of collaborative programmes and study abroad opportunities. The Academic Monitoring Group, a group which has oversight of all teaching and learning quality, currently receives an annual report on all collaborative agreements and study abroad including data reporting on student performance. However the decision has been taken to strengthen the academic quality and standards oversight of our collaborative activity through the creation of a new Academic Monitoring Group (Collaborations and Partnerships) which will meet once a semester to monitor the quality assurance and enhancement of our collaborative arrangements.

86 Additional developments include the creation of a new Collaborative Provision framework as guidance for academic staff considering a new collaborative programme; a new policy on the Management of Work Placements approved in April 2016; and an annual training event for all study abroad co-ordinators to clarify their role and responsibilities in Schools.

87 Academic involvement in the proposal and creation of collaborative partnerships is an integral part of the process with consideration being given to curriculum matching, grade and module issues, academic appraisal and the student experience. Standard approval mechanisms follow, involving Heads of School, Directors of Teaching or Directors of Postgraduate Studies, Pro Deans, and the Curriculum Approvals Group as appropriate to the type of collaboration proposed.

### Role and status of teaching-only staff

88 The University was asked to 'consider the role, status and promotion structure for teaching-only staff'. Since the last ELIR, there has been substantial progress in this area. The University has redefined the role to ensure that it is fully aligned with the Academic Job Family, with new titles such as Lecturer (Education Focused), Senior Lecturer (Education Focused) and Professor (Education Focused). The latter category was developed by the University to allow progression to Grade 9 (the top of our pay scale) in

recognition of the level of work undertaken by colleagues in the Education Focused arena. In addition to the development of the grade, the promotion criteria have been revised to reflect these changes and allow for progression to Grade 9, in line with other academic colleagues and we are currently developing an equivalent to research leave for education-focused academics. Contribution to and influence on the scholarship of teaching and learning, and/or higher education policy and practice on a national or wider scale is expected as part of this progression.

### **Contextualised support for postgraduates who teach**

89 The University was asked to ensure that 'all postgraduate students who teach receive support from their Schools for undertaking this role. This would complement the well-regarded training already provided centrally by CAPOD'. In response to this recommendation, in 2016 a working group redesigned the University's [Policy on Doctoral Students who Teach](#)<sup>20</sup>, clarifying the guidance and support that all Schools should be offering to their postgraduate tutors as well as providing various templates (including application forms and roles and responsibilities) to be used by all Schools to ensure a consistent approach. The policy came into effect from academic year 2017/18 and was shared with other Scottish universities at the QAA Scotland Research Postgraduate Student Experience – 'Focus On' event in May 2017. Further work was undertaken in academic year 2017/18 on expected workloads and rates of pay and, following extensive consultation, in academic year 2018/19 a more explicit and nuanced pay scale for hourly teaching staff was introduced which allows for different preparation and marking pay rates according to the nature of the teaching or assignment. Discussions regarding tutor pay are ongoing, however, and the Vice-Principal Education (Proctor) and Provost will be working with Schools over academic year 2019/20 on how to maximise the development benefit for tutors.

90 Postgraduate tutors also receive appropriate development to enable them to undertake their teaching. This is provided in a collaborative fashion, with mandatory workshops and additional support currently provided centrally by CAPOD and appropriate training and support provided by Schools. CAPOD runs Faculty-specific versions of two mandatory workshops before the start of teaching each semester, as well as additional cross-Faculty versions at the end of summer and later in Semester 1, to accommodate different start dates. Additional optional workshops include a Mental Health Toolkit and Specific Learning Difficulties in higher education, as well as tutor/demonstrator networking lunches. School compliance with the policy on doctoral students who teach is monitored through feedback received from postgraduate tutors through the in-house research postgraduate survey and during meetings with research postgraduate students as part of the University-led Reviews of Learning & Teaching. CAPOD liaises closely with Schools to ensure that all tutors have attended the mandatory workshops.

### **Academic engagement in annual monitoring**

91 The University was asked to 'secure the engagement of a wider group of academic staff in the reflective elements of annual academic monitoring (AAM) to enhance the student experience'. Since the last ELIR, the AAM process has been revised to reduce the amount of documentation required from Schools and to gather information from central sources to support the process. The AAM report has been adapted to be more concise and evidence-based, and now includes more specific prompts for postgraduate research information.

92 All staff have an opportunity to contribute to the production of their School's AAM report and before submission the report is discussed at the School's Teaching Committee. To increase academic engagement further we have raised the profile of AAM through discussions at various fora and broadened the invitation to attend the AAM Dissemination Event. By popular demand, this event is now attended by a wide range of academic and professional services staff, by School Presidents as well as Directors of Teaching. We have also reminded colleagues at the Learning and Teaching Committee of the importance of all academic colleagues having an opportunity of contributing to the report and the requirement for it to be approved by a School's Teaching Committee prior to submission. In line with the UK Quality Code guidance and advice, during academic year 2019/20 our quality monitoring and evaluation guidelines and webpages will be updated to make more explicit the strategic objectives of AAM and University-led Reviews of Learning and Teaching. Progress on this will be monitored by the Academic Monitoring Group.

### **Use of technology to support learning and teaching**

93 The University was asked to 'reflect on the ways in which greater use of technology could enhance the St Andrews approach to learning and teaching'. Since 2016, significant progress has been made towards an embedded, co-ordinated, and well-supported technology enhanced learning (TEL) landscape, underpinned by appropriate policy and governance. Key indicators of progress include:

- Approval in 2019 of a new [TEL Strategy](#)<sup>21</sup> and governance structure which aims to enhance pedagogy, staff creativity, student experience, and staff effectiveness. In this context the ambitions for TEL link directly with our planned Digital Strategy and will underpin our ambitions of World-leading St Andrews where we aim to 'enrich our teaching and support innovations and technologies that reinforce quality'.
- The establishment of workstreams (with support from the Enhancement Theme) which take a consistent and evidence-based approach to the introduction of new technologies and educational initiatives such as learning analytics and digital exams.
- Participation in the JISC Student Digital Tracker Survey for the first time in 2018 which has provided us with benchmarked evidence that we can use to understand better our students' expectations and experience of technology.
- Introduction of Lecture Capture which is now an established service and has seen a 300% increase in usage since its pilot year. It now has a full-time member of staff to support it.
- From September 2019, the introduction of changes in the way in which students will access Moodle and MMS – moving away from the current separate interfaces, about which our staff and students have expressed poor user experience, to students using the MyCourses table in My Saint as a one-stop shop for student learning and course administration. (My Saint being the web-based portal through which students access various services and information).
- Continued evolution of our Moodle platform facilitated through the provision of both a development and testing environment.
- Introduction in 2019 of pilot [TEAL \(Technology Enhanced Active Learning\)](#)<sup>22</sup> spaces and an experimental TEAL space for staff. Evaluation of the use of these spaces, supported by the Enhancement Theme, will feed in to future TEL developments.

### **Further integration of the School of Medicine**

94 The University was asked to 'continue the positive work aimed at integrating the School of Medicine with wider institutional practices and processes for the mutual benefit of all Schools'. Since the last ELIR, progress has been made in this area through closer involvement of key Medicine staff in University committees and working groups. This has helped Medicine meet regularly with colleagues across the University, with the aim of improving mutual understanding of School and University-wide initiatives and issues. The Dean of Medicine is now a member of the Strategic Curriculum Approvals Group so has an opportunity to gain a wider knowledge of programmes and modules across the whole University; the Director of Teaching in Medicine has been involved in a number of institution-level learning and teaching working groups; and two senior members of the School have been seconded to the Proctor's Office as Associate Deans.

95 This participation and collaboration afford the School a deeper understanding of institutional policy and practices. In addition, the School is included and proactively engages with the Proctor's Office on institutional policy and quality issues, not least in relation to the introduction of the new ScotGEM graduate entry to Medicine programme which was launched in 2018. The School has engaged enthusiastically with the broader University via institutional initiatives such as School-based career links, enterprise and entrepreneurship champions, reviews of learning and teaching space, and the Graduate School for Interdisciplinary Studies.

## **Engaging with the student experience**

- 96 The University was asked to continue to 'reflect on the extent to which all students can engage with the St Andrews student experience, in the context of a more diverse student body including those who live some distance from the University'. Since the last ELIR there has been considerable work undertaken to support 'commuter' students. Students are now given the opportunity during online matriculation to identify themselves as a commuter and consequently agree to the University contacting them with information about relevant services and events. On the basis of this information, entrant commuter students are invited to visit the [Advice and Support Centre](#)<sup>23</sup> to collect key induction resources. Students get access to the dedicated Commuters' Common Room which provides a social space with kitchen and shower facilities as well as lockers, and has extended opening hours during revision and exam periods. They can engage with the Townsend Society for Commuting Students which is responsible for representing students joining the University after a break from education or through a non-traditional route (this includes commuters, parents, evening and part-time students). The aim of the Society is to ensure that the views of these students are heard and to work with the University to address issues which arise.
- 97 The University supports these students through a varied programme of social events, peer support and friendship to foster wellbeing and improve engagement with University life. Some particular needs remain to be addressed, for example the timetabling of Saturday exams which can be problematic for mature students who have difficulty finding childcare at the weekend.
- 98 In terms of co-curricular activity, commuter students now have access to the [Professional Skills Curriculum](#)<sup>24</sup> Award which has the option to be completed online. Similarly, care is taken to schedule the in-person Professional Skills Curriculum workshops at a variety of times — lunchtime, afternoons and early evenings to give a range of attendance options. Access to IT training is also hosted online so all students can study flexibly for Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) certification. In addition to these measures, since the last ELIR the University has introduced an option for students to access CAPOD study skills tutors via Skype which gives commuter students greater flexibility. For taught postgraduate students, two-month lead times have been incorporated into the dissertation bootcamps to enable students to make any necessary arrangements so that they can attend the two-day event.
- 99 In addition to these initiatives, in 2018, at the instigation of the DoEd, a new post of Alternative Pathway Convener was established to bridge the gap between mainstream students and those on alternative pathways such as the Combined Studies MA General programme, distance learners, and Gateway students who may feel under-represented. In 2018/19, this post was filled by a student on an MLitt distance programme who lived in the Middle East and organised Skype calls between School Presidents and staff in various Schools. This adds to the remit of the Lifelong and Flexible Learners Forum, a sub-committee of the Students' Association.
- 100 In terms of students on distance learning programmes, steps are being taken to ensure that students receive a positive St Andrews experience. In the School of Divinity for example, for distance learning students each semester begins with a residential study week held in the School. This includes lectures, seminars, sessions on using Moodle and MMS internet platforms and study skills training and is also an opportunity for students to meet other students and academic staff in person. Similarly, within the School of International Relations, students on the Distance Learning MLitt in Terrorism and Political Violence participate in regular online tutorials so they receive face-to-face contact with tutors and have an opportunity to attend a two-day postgraduate workshop held each February.

## **Develop a community of practice in pedagogical research**

- 101 The University was asked to 'consider extending the existing positive work of the Unit known as the Centre for Academic, Professional and Organisational Development (CAPOD) to include further development of the community of practice in pedagogical research and increase support for mid-career and longer serving researchers'. Since the last ELIR, developing a community of practice in pedagogic research has been taken forward through the [St Andrews Learning and Teaching Initiative \(SALTI\)](#)<sup>25</sup> and the [Centre for Higher Education Research \(CHER\)](#)<sup>26</sup> both of which have overlapping interests in promoting

research and scholarship around education themes at St Andrews. SALTI aims to enthuse, facilitate and promote development of a community of scholarship and pedagogical research within the University, and advocates centrally on opportunities for research in this field. It provides a platform for existing research groups both to disseminate their work across Faculties and to interact with members of other groups. SALTI provides workshops and makes recorded lectures and educational resources available to staff.

- 102 CHER focuses on helping active higher education researchers to share and promote their work, network with each other to build new collaborations, seek new sources of funding by providing a strong research environment, and generally stimulating increasing productivity and excellence in our higher education research outputs.
- 103 Both SALTI and CHER run research focused events and initiatives. In June 2019, CHER hosted a symposium on various aspects of enhancing the student experience and in October 2019 SALTI held an annual pedagogical research conference in St Andrews which focused on innovative assessment in higher education. A number of webinars were designed to help new pedagogical researchers, and workshops were also delivered on 'Flipping the Classroom' and 'Grappling with Intangibles in Higher Education'. In 2021 the University will host the annual international Higher Education Institutional Research (HEIR) network conference.

## **Increase support for mid-career and longer serving researchers**

- 104 The University was asked to 'increase support for mid-career and longer serving researchers'. Since the last ELIR, support for this group was considered an important part of CAPOD's remit. Although pitching support at the right level and finding suitable times for workshops have been a challenge, recruiting the University's own experienced staff to co-deliver workshops on the Academic Staff Development Programme has been successful. Other current activity includes the [McCall MacBain Teaching Excellence Award](#)<sup>27</sup>, which recognises staff who have shown outstanding contributions to teaching, particularly those who have advanced the scholarship of teaching and learning.
- 105 A review of induction and development of Heads of School has been undertaken and a proposal which includes a series of preparatory workshops and mentoring of new Heads by experienced Heads of School will be revisited by the Master and Deputy Principal. This work will connect with other current work streams, including an institutional review of induction processes for all staff, and the establishment of a 'role-based-curriculum' of professional development and training for staff in all roles. Work has also been progressed to support the induction of other senior academic administration roles, including Directors of Teaching, which has involved the creation of an induction event, a series of subsequent 'coffee with...' sessions to provide informal opportunities for DoTs to meet with those in key University services, and the creation of a dedicated '[DoT Zone](#)'<sup>28</sup> webpage.

## **Student performance and assessment**

- 106 The University was asked to 'develop a systematic process for monitoring cohort performance across modules and programmes, especially, although not exclusively, for students studying across Schools or institutions. The University should also undertake additional work to help students understand the assessment requirements, including clarifying the use of the Common Reporting Scale.'
- 107 Since the last ELIR, progress has been made on providing improved reports for the Academic Monitoring Group. In 2017, an analysis was conducted to investigate whether Joint Honours students are disadvantaged in any way in comparison to Single Honours students. Success in Honours entry and degree outcomes in Single Honours and Joint Honours across the University were compared, with the resulting analysis providing evidence that there is no detrimental effect on degree outcome or performance in taking a Joint Honours degree programme.

108 There also has been progress since the last ELIR in ensuring consistency and clarity in the mapping of marks to grades on the [Common Reporting Scale \(CRS\)](#)<sup>29</sup>. To date there has been a review of the University's webpages to rationalise and clarify information on the CRS. At the Learning and Teaching Committee, Schools were asked to review and, if necessary, clarify the marking criteria they use for all assignments and feedback. Schools were also reminded of the need to utilise the full marking scale when assessing students' work and this was formalised by inclusion of a new paragraph in the University's Assessment Policies and Procedures document:

*When marking any piece of assessment, the marker should always strive to use the full range of marks available to them e.g. 0-20 on the common reporting scale. A student should be given the top mark when they produce the highest quality of work possibly expected of a student at their level. By corollary, students producing work that bears no resemblance to university-level material should be given the lowest mark.*

109 The Common Reporting Scale is discussed in the 'student experience induction event' that all entrant undergraduates are expected to attend during Orientation Week and is also covered in the Orientation app. The Common Reporting Scale is covered in the 'Kick-start your Masters: What is Mastersness?' event which runs every year during Orientation Week for taught postgraduate students. There is an expectation that these centrally organised sessions are supplemented by information provided locally in Schools.

110 As mentioned earlier in the document there was a revision to the 5000-level marking and taught postgraduate classification system which introduced grading consistency for all students taking a module irrespective of their degree programme. This has arguably improved standards in assessment as staff now have the breadth of scale to award marks which truly reflect student performance.

111 Work has also been instigated to assure ourselves that all students, whether studying in one School or more, receive a consistent overall experience in relation to assessment and marking. The University introduced an early academic intervention scheme where students who are under-performing are invited to discuss progress and can be referred to Student Services for support if required. This new scheme is working well and has already reached a number of students who might otherwise have experienced serious difficulties. Since September 2017, approximately 75% of students whose studies have been placed on probation through our academic intervention scheme have gone on to complete their studies or progress normally in their degree programme. Previously they would have had their studies terminated but they are now required to engage with academic and pastoral support.

### **Publication of external examiner reports**

112 The University was asked to 'publish external examiner reports in order to give students the opportunity to engage in discussion and consideration of this element of the assessment process'. Since the last ELIR, the University has amended its External Examining policy and made it a requirement for Schools to summarise the key issues raised by their external examiners, list the actions to be taken in response to the reports, and present these items to their Student Staff Consultative Committees. Schools have been reminded of the need to share the reports at Student Staff Consultative Committees. However, as adherence to this requirement remains inconsistent, the University has now decided to make reports openly available to students through Moodle or other means.

## **1.7 Opportunities for enhancement**

We have reflected on the evolution, challenges and opportunities at St Andrews which, together with our strategic themes and also developments shaped by the previous ELIR, have resulted in our identifying the following areas that may provide opportunities for enhancement:

### **Diversity**

We celebrate and promote the benefits that diversity of ethnicity, religion and belief, gender and sexual orientation brings to our community. However, we also recognise that our situation in a relatively geographically isolated small town means that more attention may be needed to support the development of the cultural and community infrastructure that helps diverse communities feel 'at home.'

### **Postgraduate student engagement**

The University's postgraduate student community should feel able to identify opportunities for enhancement and respond to consultative processes. However, it has become apparent that our postgraduate students do not necessarily engage in this dialogue and it is an area we have identified as requiring further development.

## SECTION 2



## ENHANCING THE STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE

### 2.1 Strategic approach to the student learning experience

- 113 The University's strategic approach to the student learning experience is currently guided by the Student Experience Strategy. As mentioned earlier, during academic year 2019/20 we will review and update it and embed it within one overarching Education Strategy which in turn will be aligned with the new University Strategy and enabling strategies.
- 114 Our strategic aims for the student experience have not changed since the 2015 ELIR. Although St Andrews has been named top in the UK in the National Student Survey for the eleventh time in the past 13 years, we remain committed to the continual enhancement of the student experience, wanting our students to have a rounded, unique and highly enjoyable educational experience. Since the last ELIR, there has been sustained progress in all aspects of the student experience and under the direction of the Vice-Principal Education (Proctor) and Provost of St Leonard's Postgraduate College we will continue to prioritise the delivery of an excellent postgraduate experience in particular.

### 2.2 Student integration and support

#### *Preparation and arrival*

##### **Visiting days**

- 115 Visiting days are an opportunity to showcase the University for prospective students, and provide reassurance to students who may have concerns about whether the University is a good match for them. As a key component of the visiting day welcome, the University relies on 229 student ambassadors (2018/19 data) who provide guided tours and share their knowledge and experience to motivate and encourage other young people to consider studying at St Andrews.

##### **Orientation**

- 116 The introduction of an **Orientation Week app**<sup>30</sup> in 2015 has enabled the University to engage with entrant and returning students prior to the start of the new academic year. In addition to providing details of academic, social and sport induction events and activities, the app links to essential information regarding academic culture, academic skills and careers. The 2018/19 guide was downloaded by 90% of incoming students.
- 117 Alongside the app is a **pre-arrival Transitions Toolkit**<sup>31</sup> which aims to help student expectations of the learning environment before they arrive in St Andrews using online resources and videos, encouraging them to reflect on their own approach to learning, and their existing skill set. The first Transitions Toolkit was successfully launched in the summer of 2018, with approximately 800 returns. A taught postgraduate version was developed for summer 2019. The Transition Toolkits are customisable to reflect subject-specific learning environments.
- 118 The International Education Institute offers a range of pre-session courses for international undergraduate and postgraduate students, providing an orientation to the University, and including, for those that need it, a focus on the enhancement of academic English language literacy.

##### **Wardennial system**

- 119 All first-year undergraduate students are guaranteed a place in residential accommodation. Each hall of residence has a Warden supported by a team of Assistant Wardens who work with a hall student committee to provide a programme of social events and to welcome the new cohort of students to University life. Each hall has a proportion of students (around 30%) who have already been at St Andrews for at least one year; these students are pivotal in welcoming the freshers and helping them orientate themselves to University life.



## Supporting student health and wellbeing

### Current support

120 The University primarily provides health and wellbeing support through its **Student Services Unit**<sup>32</sup>, which works collaboratively with other professional service Units, Schools and students. Student Services introduced an evidence-based matched care model in academic year 2017/18 to ensure students can access the most appropriate level of professional assistance (counselling, wellbeing advice, coaching and mental health support) when needed. In addition to offering more than 350 appointments a week with the Wellbeing, Counselling and Mental Health Team, Student Services provides a wide range of targeted undergraduate and postgraduate wellbeing resources, including online presentations and in-person workshops. These are complemented by the introduction over the last couple of years of Wellbeing Officers in some Schools such as Computer Science, Psychology & Neuroscience, Physics & Astronomy, as well as University-wide projects undertaken by the Wellbeing Working Group (a sub-group of the Student Experience Committee). The introduction of Wellbeing Officer roles has not been an institutional requirement but was a result of Schools taking the initiative to have a specific role holder within the School, other than the Director of Teaching, who can signpost students to the relevant support services. We see the value in this role in principle but also the importance of having an institutional position on whether all Schools are required to have Wellbeing Officers, what their role is and how students know who to contact in each School. This will be reviewed over the coming academic year as a result of the development of a new mental health strategy for staff and students.

121 Evidence of effectiveness in student support is provided by the January 2019 accreditation from the Centre for Quality Improvement at the Royal College of Psychiatrists, in partnership with the British Psychological Society, for the University's combined wellbeing, counselling, and mental health programme in Student Services. The University is the first in Scotland and the second HEI in the UK to receive **APPTS accreditation**<sup>33</sup> (Accreditation Programme for Psychological Therapies Services).

122 Engagement with students is also collaborative and developmental; the student-led 'StAnd Together' initiative, in partnership with Student Services and the Students' Association Wellbeing Committee, provides opportunities for student leadership and project development on key student experience issues including wellbeing (Peer Support project) and gender-based violence (Consent project).

123 Student Services is also committed to ensuring equity of access to its services and is actively monitoring access to ensure all groups are proportionally represented. As part of this monitoring it was noticed that postgraduate access in 2018/19 had declined in comparison with previous years. In response, Student Services have promoted themselves more intensively to this cohort by attending all new student welcome sessions held in Schools and providing more information to research postgraduate supervisors.

124 The University also offers targeted financial support. The University provides over £1 million annually to assist all students in financial hardship, particularly with accommodation costs for both University and private housing.

### New initiatives and planned developments

125 A University-managed **Student Health Hub**<sup>34</sup> opened in summer 2018 in partnership with local NHS General Practices, supporting better communication with the GPs and allowing students to access NHS healthcare in a shorter timeframe (in-semester waiting times have been reduced, on average, from three weeks to one week for both students and the local community). Two full-time members of staff direct students to relevant resources, liaise with the NHS and the University and operate the Student Health Helpline. The Hub is supported by a free University of St Andrews Student Health app. Early data indicate that this intervention has been successful in increasing registration rates of students with health care services. Health Hub analytics are currently being analysed and a media strategy is also in development to increase student engagement and registration.

126 Mental health is an area of significantly increasing demand, and the Scottish Government has recognised the need for expanded counselling support. Over the past year, Student Services has delivered a **Mental Health toolkit**<sup>35</sup> training package to a variety of audiences across the institution, including residence and facility staff, Heads of Schools, Directors of Postgraduate Studies, PhD supervisors and research postgraduate students who teach, among others. This has been well received and in total around 500 members of staff and 26 research postgraduate students have taken part. Work is underway to develop a University mental health strategy for students and staff. Recruiting appropriately skilled mental health development workers to support this work has been difficult, given supply constraints and our relative geographical isolation. In response to this, we have developed a graduate trainee scheme that we intend to provide the foundation for a sectoral response to this skills gap. The first two graduate trainees were appointed in June 2019 and have begun long-term training and work-based learning that will eventually enable them to be advanced therapeutic practitioners. Queen Margaret University is providing the educational qualification and we are providing the placement and work experience. Overall, this trainee scheme will give the University additional resource to develop and implement a mental health strategy as well as to support individual students with complex and enduring mental health concerns.

## 2.3 Widening access and participation

127 The University actively engages in government initiatives on widening access and as expressed in the new Strategy, is committed to equity of access regardless of socio-economic background. Over the past ten years, the intake from SIMD40 as a proportion of Scottish-domiciled entrants has more than doubled, rising from 8.2% in 2007/08 to 19.6% in 2017/18. For SIMD20 entrants the figure has increased from 5.0% in 2014/15 to 10.3% in 2018/19. We continue to take action on a broad range of widening access fronts, including defining contextualised entry requirements; delivering outreach programmes; developing and delivering specific widening participation programmes; and constructing alternative study routes.

### Entry requirements

128 Informed by the recommendations of the Universities Scotland paper Working to Widen Access, entry requirements for 2020 have been systematically reviewed, with the aims of providing transparent accurate information to all potential applicants and improving the clarity and consistency of our entry information.

129 Contextual indicators, such as socio-economic background, attendance at a low-progression school, experience of being in care or a carer, and engagement with pre-University access programmes, have been considered within the admissions process for several years. Following the review, three categories of offers are published for each subject according to whether an applicant has contextual indicators or may qualify for a Gateway programme.

130 The University's **Access Pledge**<sup>36</sup> guarantees an offer to all applicants who are care-experienced, or who reside in a SIMD20 postcode and attend a school with lower than 30% progression to higher education, provided that they meet any subject-specific requirements.

131 To help students navigate all these options, an online lookup tool has been constructed. The tool allows a potential applicant to find out, by providing relevant personal information, the category of offer for which they may be eligible.

### Outreach

132 We operate three principal outreach programmes which aim to increase and diversify access for those facing barriers to progression to higher education. These widening access opportunities are promoted through admissions fairs, school visits, and an annual Teachers' Conference held in St Andrews for teachers and advisers in Scottish state schools.

### First Chances

133 The **First Chances Fife Project**<sup>37</sup> is a partnership between the University of St Andrews, Fife Education, Fife College, the Scottish Funding Council (Reach), and The Robertson Trust. This innovative programme, the first of its kind in Scotland, seeks to contribute to raising the attainment and aspirations of pupils who meet contextual criteria from age 11-14 upward, with continued support into further education or higher education. The Senior phase works with 13 high schools in Fife and 413 pupils (data from June 2017). Pupils experience workshops, tutoring, project work, e-mentoring by University students and staff, and summer schools to ensure they are supported at each stage of their educational journey. Care-experienced young people can access the programme at any stage, with a flexible structure allowing them to attend based on their availability.

### Reach

134 **Reach**<sup>38</sup>, funded by the SFC, supports students from 13 high schools in Fife who wish to apply for highly competitive subjects. The support comprises taster and skills workshops, lecture shadowing, finding relevant work experience, and guidance on university applications. Tutoring sessions for S4 to S6 pupils are offered during the University semester in addition to revision weekends for National 5 and Higher pupils. Students entering the University through Reach are matched with experienced students to provide peer mentoring and ease the transition to university. In 2017, there were 410 pupils involved in the Reach programme. Entrants from Fife Reach Schools amounted to almost 5% of all Scottish entrants to the four programmes and as high as 12% in Management in academic year 2017/18.

### Sutton Trust

135 The **Sutton Trust Summer School**<sup>39</sup> is a free week-long study programme with 140 places for UK students in their penultimate year at school. Students live in a hall of residence, enjoy a range of social activities, and are provided with seminar training on University applications, funding, personal development and study skills. The programme is aimed at those who fulfil widening access criteria. High schools with no history of sending applicants are tracked and visited. This has proved to be effective in generating applications from schools which have not previously engaged with us. Students who have attended a summer school are flagged at the point of application to St Andrews through the contextual admissions process. For 2017/18 entry to the University, 109 offers were made to those who had attended a Sutton Trust Summer School.

### Access for Rural Communities (ARC)

136 **Access for Rural Communities**<sup>40</sup> is a project run in partnership with the Scottish Funding Council and is aimed at supporting and enabling young learners on their journey into university. Working with S4 to S6 pupils, the ARC project provides a platform for pupils to explore opportunities in higher education from the following areas: Argyll and Bute; Highlands; Eilean Siar (Western Isles); Shetland and Orkney. Pupils receive support and guidance throughout the university application process, giving them the tools, know-how and confidence to stretch themselves and succeed in higher education. Support primarily revolves around our free four-day residential summer schools here in St Andrews where pupils are introduced to a range of different subjects, encouraged to develop their investigative and analysis skills by completing a group project, and given the opportunity to network with other pupils from across Scotland. This project has resulted in the increase in numbers of students studying at St Andrews from Rural Communities in Scotland from 14 in academic year 2014/15 to 28 in academic year 2018/19.

## Specific widening participation programmes and support structures

### Gateway programmes

137 As mentioned previously, the University provides five Gateway programmes (Arts, Computer Science, Medicine, Physics and Astronomy, and Science) which are designed to provide an entry pathway for students who meet the contextual admissions criteria and display potential as evidenced in interviews. The number of entrants on each programme is usually between nine and 12 students.

138 Students enrolled on the Gateway programmes are given regular academic and pastoral support, and skills training to facilitate a smooth transition to University. Mentoring by trained peers occurs weekly in the evening through conversation about all aspects of the learning experience. As well as academic mentoring, students have access to a peer-to-peer 'buddy' scheme. Additionally, each year a number of Gateway students receive financial assistance through scholarships.

### Access for care-experienced young people

139 Care-experienced young people are given priority on all our Access programmes. The number of these who are actively engaged on Access programmes has increased from four in 2015 to 30 in 2018. Admissions flags are set for any student who self-identifies as having care experience at any stage of their life, no matter how short. Applicants who are care-experienced are covered by the University pledge to make an offer of a place to qualified applicants, with each place being enhanced with support in securing year-round accommodation, financial assistance and guidance through the care-experienced support co-ordinators. Provision of a named co-ordinator gives continuity for students and facilitates feedback to strengthen our Corporate Parenting Plan. Although the number of care-experienced students applying to the University is low, the proportion has more than doubled since 2012.

### Support for young carers

140 The University is committed to increasing the admission of young carers. It is recognised that being a carer can present potential barriers to study and a range of support is offered. Admissions Officers take into account circumstances affecting students who have been or are young carers under the contextual admissions policy. The University has young carer support co-ordinators who act as a point of initial contact for those who are thinking of applying and provide ongoing support following admission. Young carers are also a priority group for awards from the Discretionary Fund which provides additional financial assistance.

### Summer mentoring

141 We also operate a Widening Access Mentoring Scheme in the summer whereby incoming widening access students are matched with those already engaged in the University. The scheme had 62 mentoring pairs in 2017/18, and 85% of mentees reported that they felt more positive about coming to St Andrews as a result of their participation in the scheme.

### Mobility opportunities

142 The University is committed to providing more **study abroad**<sup>41</sup> opportunities to a more diverse student community. In academic year 2017/18, 13% of our Honours graduates had undertaken a placement abroad. We have increased promotion through an expanded Study Abroad fair, targeted Facebook campaigns and Instagram take-overs run by students currently overseas. More significantly, over the past three years, the University has greatly increased its scholarships portfolio to support diversity in study abroad students. In 2018/19 we administered around £100,000 of scholarships for outbound students, in addition to around €300,000 of Erasmus+ funding for study and work in Europe. We are increasing promotion and awareness of scholarships to support study abroad but it can be challenging to reach the students who would benefit the most.

### Financial support and scholarships

143 In academic year 2015/16 the University was awarded Scottish Government Outward Mobility funding to support First Abroad, a study abroad widening access project which built on our successful partnership with the College of William & Mary in Virginia, USA. This gave a first year undergraduate student and an offer holder from an access background the chance to experience a week of tailored academic and co-curricular activities at William & Mary during Spring vacation. On their return, the undergraduate scholar undertook a Study Abroad Internship focused on widening access to study abroad for credit. Although Scottish Government funding has now come to an end, we continue to support this project for two Scottish first-year students each year. These students are guaranteed a place on a study abroad programme in their Junior Honours year (providing they satisfy academic eligibility requirements), and are supported with a St Andrews Abroad Scholarship. Feedback from participants has supported the transformative nature of the study abroad 'taster' experience.

144 In academic year 2016/17, the Moncrieff Travelling Scholarship was launched to support outbound Science students. A First Abroad Scholarship of £12,000 is allocated annually to a student showing academic excellence and financial need. The fund offers a range of awards to undergraduate Science students on study abroad programmes for credit including the St Andrews Abroad and School Abroad programmes. In academic year 2017/18, a similar programme was set up for students in Arts and Divinity, called the Arts Abroad scholarship. Through these scholarship programmes, we hope to increase the attractiveness and feasibility of study abroad for all students.

## Alternative study routes

### Lifelong and flexible learning, and articulation

- 145 The University is committed to providing pathways that promote lifelong and flexible learning as articulated in a dedicated prospectus. The FE-HE Supported Pathway provides an entry route for applicants currently studying at an FE college who may have accumulated few formal qualifications at school leaving age but who have the potential to benefit from higher education. Students are admitted into a full-time or part-time General degree programme in the first instance, with a view to progressing to a named Honours degree at the end of second year. Emphasis is on not only admitting students to the University, but also on integration into student life and successful study. With support from the student Lifelong and Flexible Learners Forum and the Lifelong Learning Officer, who provides a single point of contact for guidance, progression and retention rates for the cohort are high. Value is added to the student body through diversity of age and entry profile. There were 39 entrants on this pathway in 2018, a significant rise in conversion from offer to acceptance following more sustained and targeted contact with colleges.
- 146 In order to advertise the widening access options available and to help students make the transition, University-specific study skills sessions have been delivered in colleges across Fife and Dundee. Students are invited to a pre-session three-day skills workshop. The topics covered include essay writing, researching and using the library, and the support available at St Andrews. In addition, visiting days are customised for FE-HE Pathway students. The Lifelong Learning team meet with the students both in their colleges and again as a group in St Andrews on the visiting day. This facilitates discussion of specific concerns, for example, regarding commuting or childcare funding.
- 147 We also have two articulation agreements in place, with Dundee and Angus College and with Fife College. On completion of an HNC in Applied Science, a successful interview at the University of St Andrews and an A in the graded unit, students can gain second-year entry into the FE-HE Pathway to Science programme. There are a total of ten spaces, five for each college, set aside for this. We aim to expand our range of articulation agreements. A new agreement with Forth Valley College enabling articulation into Chemistry is in the final stage of development and the Dundee and Angus College relationship has been further strengthened with a new agreement which will give HNC Social Science students an opportunity to articulate into the second year of the FE-HE Pathway to Arts.
- 148 Recognition of prior learning (RPL) requests are relatively infrequent, typically arising from HNC or studies at another university, including part-time courses at the Open University. The University has made procedures for making access to RPL easier, especially for those with experiential learning, by introducing an application form and clearer wording on our website.

### Combined studies MA (General)

- 149 The University offers this degree on a part-time basis through a programme of tailored modules provided exclusively in the evenings for adult learners in both arts and science. This pathway attracts students from a broad range of backgrounds. Support is provided through a sequence of study skills workshops at the start of the programme which facilitate the transition to studying at St Andrews. Students on this programme have the opportunity to incorporate modules delivered by the University of Dundee and the Open University.

## 2.4 Equality and diversity

### Diversity overview

- 150 The diversity of the student body, in relation to gender, ethnicity and disability is summarised separately for all cohorts in Figure 9 overleaf. These data refer to our total student population (FTE) in each academic year. Overall, 58% of students are female (60% undergraduate, 54% taught postgraduate, 46% research postgraduate) with some evidence of long-term growth in the proportion of female research postgraduate students. However, there are significant gender imbalances in some Schools, which mirrors patterns found elsewhere in the sector. Despite the challenge of attracting BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) applicants within the UK, the ethnic diversity of the UK domiciled student body has grown significantly over the past four years at undergraduate and, especially, taught postgraduate level. We have recently introduced the optional declaration of ethnicity by all students at matriculation, and these data will be available for academic year 2019/20. Likewise, the proportion of students declaring a disability has risen rapidly since academic year 2014/15, most notably among the undergraduate population. In total, over 14% of students have disclosed a disability, with 5.7% having a specific learning disability such as dyslexia and 4.5% a mental health condition. The Figure also shows that there is an encouraging upward trend in the proportion of Scottish domiciled students from SIMD40 rising from 11.8% to 15.4% of the total undergraduate student population in four years.
- 151 Geographically, the University is characterised by a diverse student body with 45% of the students from outside the UK and representing over 130 countries and territories in academic year 2017/18. The United States is the origin of the largest grouping of our overseas students, especially at undergraduate level, and accounting for 16% of the student population, followed by China with just under 4%. International diversity is enhanced through the provision of nine International Foundation programmes by the International Education Institute which offer routes for progression into degree programmes.

Figure 9: Cohort diversity characteristics

Figure 9a: Undergraduate

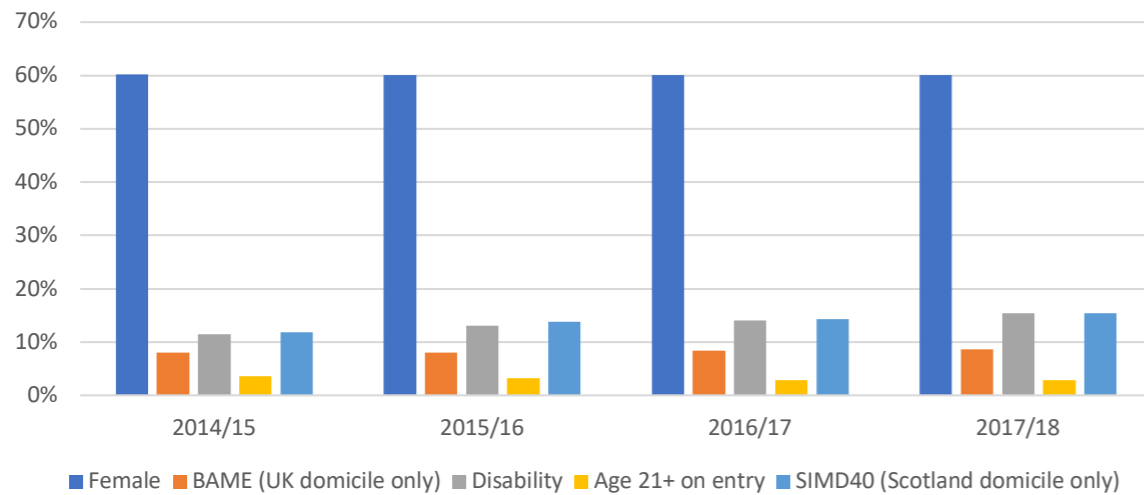


Figure 9b: Postgraduate Taught

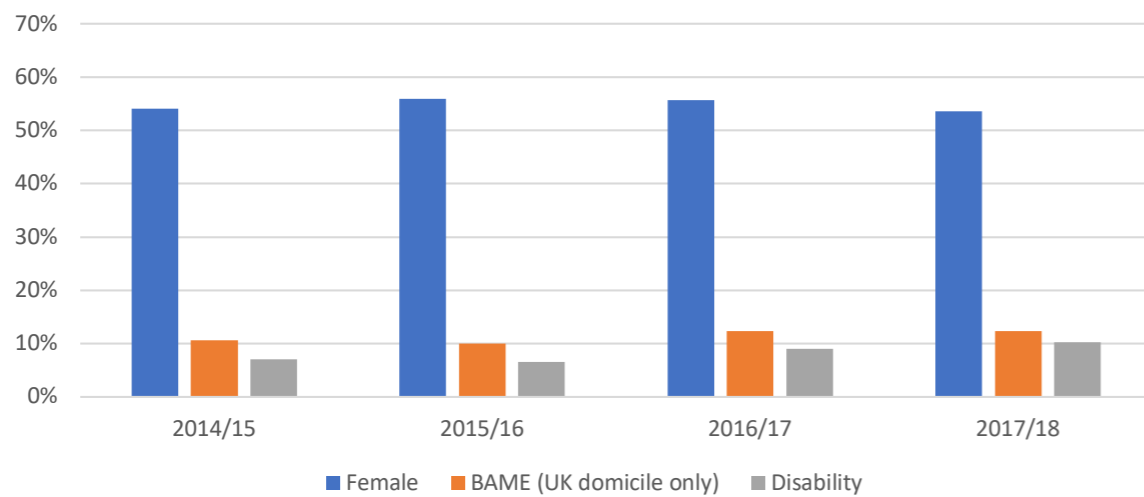
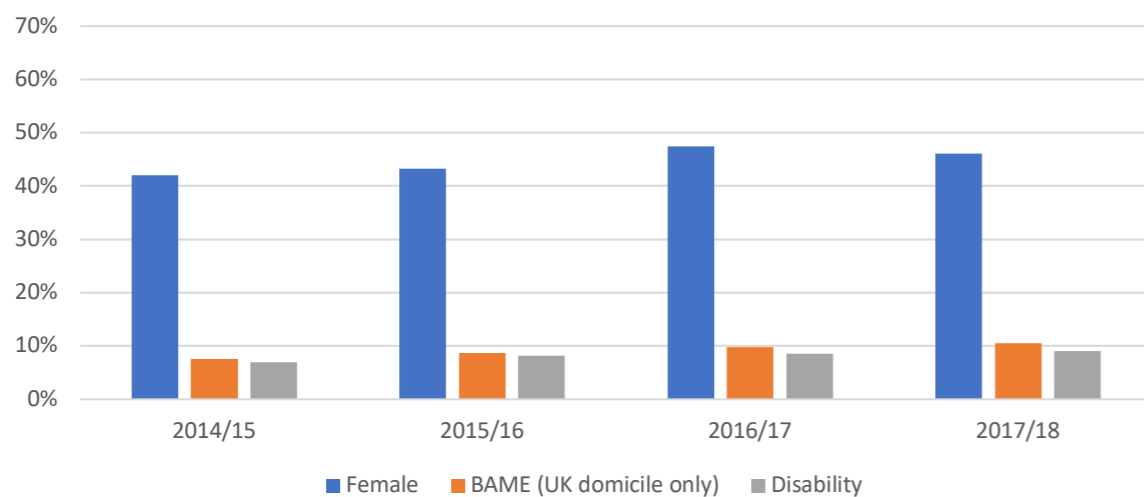


Figure 9c: Postgraduate Research



152 The following Figures illustrate the progression and degree outcomes for students who reside in a SIMD40 postcode. The figures show that in some years Scottish domiciled students from SIMD40 areas are less likely to achieve a first class or upper second class degree than Scottish domiciled students from non-SIMD40 areas.

Figure 10: SIMD40 attainment gap

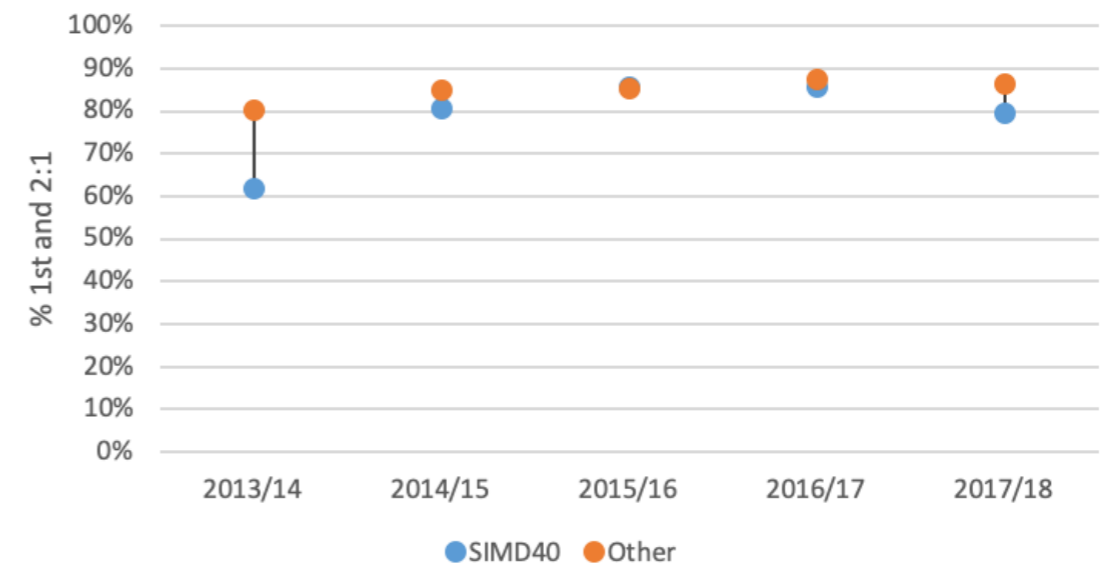
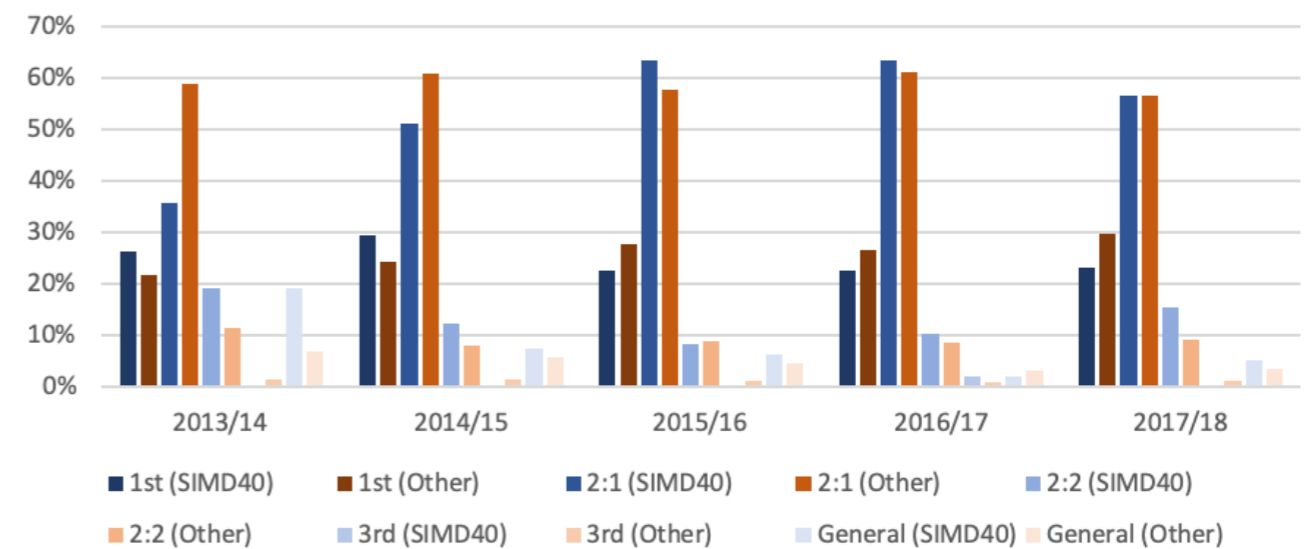


Figure 11: Undergraduate classification rates by SIMD area (Scottish domiciled graduates only)



153 The attainment gap of SIMD40 students achieving a first class degree will be included in the work being led by the Assistant Vice-Principal (Diversity) which will begin by looking at quantitative and qualitative data on the experience of SIMD40 students and then explore opportunities for curriculum-based and pedagogical interventions.

## Equality and diversity support structure

154 Students can declare a disability on application or after arrival. Where students have declared a disability at the application stage, and have been offered a place, Student Services contact them and request further details. In the majority of cases students are asked to provide medical/professional evidence of disability or specific learning difficulty. Early notification helps us to meet specific needs in a timely manner. Once registered with Student Services the necessary teaching and exam adjustments are disseminated to Schools and Units. Each School has a Disability Co-ordinator who liaises with Student Services to ensure adjustments are in line with the student's needs.

155 The University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) Committee (which is also the Athena SWAN institutional self-assessment team) is chaired by the Assistant Vice-Principal (Diversity) and is the primary committee guiding equality and diversity compliance and improvement. The Committee comprises representatives from School ED&I Committee Directors, the Athena SWAN and Race Equality Charter self-assessment teams, as well as representatives from the Students' Association and Human Resources (HR). In 2018, HR increased the number of staff focused on supporting and promoting ED&I initiatives throughout University life.

156 The University has been recognised by a number of ED&I awards and charters, including an Institutional Athena SWAN Bronze award. Work towards School-level awards is co-ordinated through School ED&I Committees. These committees include staff and student members, who are responsible for monitoring diversity and equality within the student body and the engagement with the Athena SWAN programme. Sharing of good practice is encouraged; regular informal meetings of the Science ED&I Officers are already taking place, and similar informal meetings are expected to start soon amongst Arts Schools. In addition, the few Schools without Athena SWAN awards are also paired with a School with an award. Overall, 16 out of 20 Schools currently hold individual Athena SWAN awards; the Schools of Biology, Physics & Astronomy and Psychology & Neuroscience have been pathfinders and hold silver awards.

## Equality monitoring

157 We are proactive in seeking to identify and address equality-related issues. To that end, we carefully scrutinise data gathered from different sources (Admissions, Registry, student feedback exercises, surveys) to gain a better understanding of where interventions may be required. We pay particular attention to rates of progression and retention, to levels of achievement, the quality of experience and the incidence of serious challenges to learning, for example mental health related problems. In response to some of our findings, we have already launched a number of initiatives. These include:

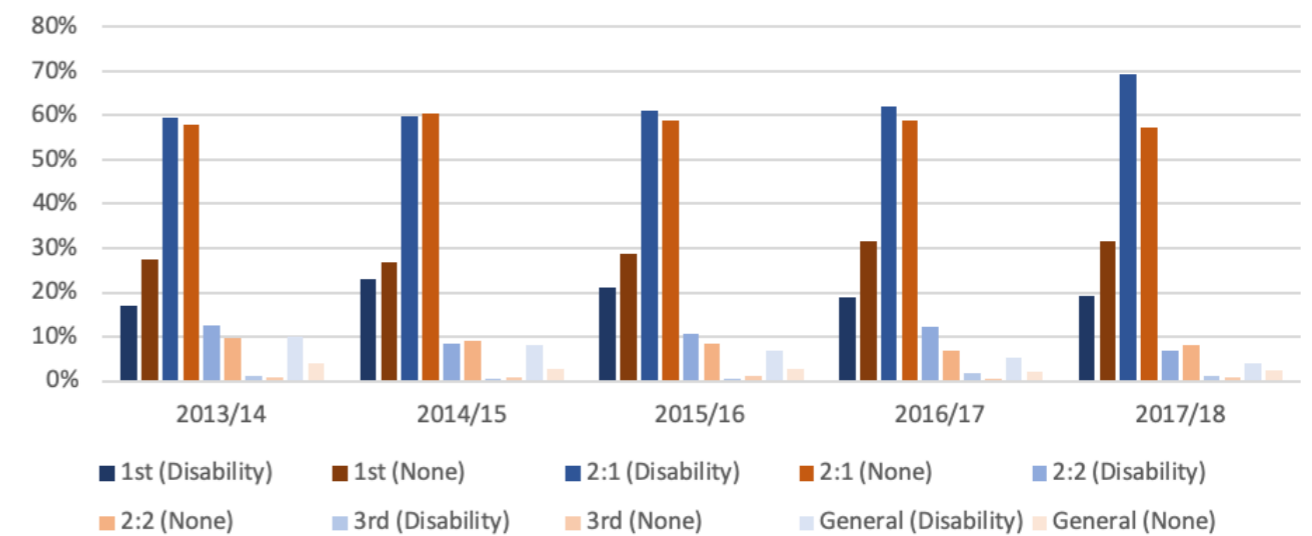
- The School of Physics & Astronomy is working with the School of Psychology & Neuroscience to study the wellbeing and discipline-based identity of students in relation to grades and their progression into the Integrated Masters year.
- In order to address the significant effect on the sense of inclusion and ambition caused by a lack of role models, the School of Physics & Astronomy now carefully monitors the gender balance of laboratory demonstrators.
- On the advice of the University's central Institutional Self-Assessment Team gender-neutral toilets have been installed in many Schools and Units.
- In academic year 2018/19, the University introduced four funded taught postgraduate degree scholarships and two fully funded doctoral scholarships to support students who originally joined the University through one of our access schemes and want to continue to a postgraduate degree.

158 Our active University ED&I Committee structure provides a vital route by which Schools can make changes to policies and practice. For example, during the 2018/19 academic year, we introduced a number of postgraduate research policies designed to address equality-related issues. These focused on the provision of parental and compassionate leave, allowance and consideration of part-time working, extended continuation periods for part-time students, and on how we support students with disabilities,

particularly during the examination process. To support students with mental health issues Schools have organised Wellbeing Days, a growing number of staff have undergone in-house training that equips them with a Mental Health Toolkit, a number of student-facing Wellbeing Officers have been appointed in Schools and the issue of mental health – for students and staff – was the focal question of the 2018/19 Annual Academic Monitoring exercise. A Mental Health Strategy Group is developing a University strategy for staff and students to ensure a joined-up approach to supportive good mental health and individuals facing mental health issues.

159 Careful scrutiny of available data has alerted us to be aware of attainment gaps between groups of students from different backgrounds related to potential disadvantage, for example some protected characteristics. For instance, data generated in 2018 shows that over the past few years, students with a declared disability, while as likely to achieve first-class or upper second-class degree as those with no disability are, on average, less likely to achieve a first-class degree. Benchmarking data show that the attainment gap at first-class level at St Andrews is unusually high. In academic year 2017/18, for the Russell Group of universities, 29% of students with declared disabilities received a first class degree, compared with 32.6% of students who have not declared a disability whereas for St Andrews these figures are respectively 19.1% and 31.5%.

Figure 12: Undergraduate classification rates by declared disabilities



160 While our monitoring data suggests that St Andrews is doing unusually well at retaining disabled students and supporting them towards gaining successful outcomes, we remain focused on identifying the causes of the attainment gap at the highest performance level, and addressing it. As a first step, we have reviewed our policy on academic adjustments and assessment formats for students with disabilities. Beyond this, the University is investigating explanations for this performance differential. A detailed analysis of quantitative data has so far not yielded any clear indications as to its cause. As part of the People Strategy consultation and the Mental Health Strategy Group consultation, we are now gathering qualitative data from students who live with disabilities, including mental health issues, to gain a better understanding of what might underpin the attainment gap, and where we might best make changes to address it.

## Diversity in the curriculum

- 161 The University provides online resources to support and promote diversity and equality in the curriculum in the form of an online **Inclusive Curriculum toolkit**<sup>42</sup>. This links to examples of good practice in the higher education sector across disciplines. To increase the profile of inclusivity and refresh our approach, the Learning and Teaching Away Day for Directors of Teaching, in January 2019, devoted a session to equality and diversity in the curriculum.
- 162 Within the curriculum we have seen strong developments towards enhancing diversity and decolonisation. Highlights include the School of Management's popular Equality and Diversity in Organisations module and the School of International Relations University-funded project on Decolonising Curricula and the Politics of Representation in Core Undergraduate and Postgraduate Syllabi at the University of St Andrews, 2009-2019.
- 163 There is a general trend in reading lists, to include more female, non-white and LGBT+ authors as well as including more topics such as postcolonial approaches, feminism or queer theory. This is particularly the case for literary subjects and film studies. For example, in the English module EN1003, there is a near equal gender split for the authors of the core texts; two of the ten texts are by black authors; two deal with colonialism/postcolonialism and one deals with gender identity issues. As part of their Athena SWAN submission, the School of History ensured that author forenames (as opposed to initials) were given on all sub-honours reading lists in order to address the common assumption amongst students that authors are always men, and to flag up areas where female authors are under-represented. In 2019/20, this policy is being extended to reading lists across all levels within the School.
- 164 The Philosophy Department has also increased the visibility and profile of female philosophers, especially in the undergraduate curriculum. Students from the Society for Women and Minorities in Philosophy were involved in the Department's new module planning. Three undergraduate interns researched inclusive and diverse reading lists for eight new modules which were subsequently adopted by the module co-ordinators.

## 2.5 Student representation and collaboration

- 165 Student engagement is central to our processes for enhancing the student experience. We have already detailed the organisation and leadership of student representation earlier in the document. In this section we focus on the activities of student representatives that have a bearing on maintaining and enhancing the quality of the student experience.
- 166 At the broadest level, the full-time Students' Association Sabbatical Officers, who are members of key University committees, provide valuable input from the student perspective and help to communicate collective decisions to the student community. For example, the DoED was a member of the Academic Alerts Working Group in academic year 2018/19 and helped to shape the policy and the wording of the alerts to ensure that they are as informative to students as possible.
- 167 Representatives act as a point of contact and consultation for students to provide views and suggestions to Schools. The School President convenes the Student Staff Consultative Committee (SSCC) which meets at least once per semester and comprises the Class Representatives and relevant teaching staff, including the Directors of Teaching at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Some Schools have separate undergraduate and postgraduate SSCCs. Indeed, some larger Schools have multiple subject-specific representatives where appropriate. For example, the School of Management has a representative for every taught postgraduate degree.
- 168 The School President chairs the meeting of SSCCs, and minutes are taken by a student member and posted online to embed accountability. This provides a forum for students to feedback to staff their views on the day-to-day management of modules and teaching as well as submitting constructive ideas on curriculum development, assessment, and module design. For example, in the School of Economics & Finance, a new first-year module for those with prior experience of economics was introduced as a result

of a class representative proposal. Likewise, it was an SSCC initiative which prompted the development of a specialist module in finance for Senior Honours students. Standing items on the SSCC agenda include feedback on the results of the module evaluation questionnaires as well as the external examiner reports.

- 169 There are many examples of the positive influence of School Presidents on the quality of the student experience. In Philosophy, the School President promoted the initiative to make reading lists more inclusive and representative. In academic year 2016/17, the School President in Classics worked with the School to modify the School's extension policy for assessment deadlines and subsequently won the Proctor's Award for this achievement. In academic year 2018/19, the School President of Physics & Astronomy, alongside the Arts and Divinity Faculty President, introduced a very successful wellbeing day for both students and staff in the School. During the Careers Week, various School Presidents collaborated to put on careers events – the most notable of these was the Humanities Careers Fayre, a joint venture between History, Classics, and Philosophy, which had more than 100 attendees.
- 170 A good example of the general influence of student representatives over the past two years relates to their support for the introduction and diffusion of Lecture Capture technology. While embraced strongly in some Schools, some academic staff are less convinced about the benefits. Championing of this initiative by students through the committee structures, has supported more widespread adoption.
- 171 At the postgraduate level, a voluntary taught and research postgraduate representative from each School is elected to act as the executive representative. In addition to their normal duties, executive representatives are asked to attend the relevant Postgraduate Executive Forum, arranged by the Postgraduate Academic Convener, which is a forum for debate and consultation for all relevant postgraduate matters. In attendance are the Provost, the Pro Dean Postgraduate (Taught and Research), and an Academic Policy Officer. At School level, both taught and research postgraduate students are often less engaged as student representatives than their undergraduate counterparts. Feedback from students indicates that this is partly due to pressure of studies, especially in intense Masters programmes, as well as the self-selection of academically minded students into postgraduate studies. Over the last couple of years, steps have been taken to address this by introducing separate meetings for research and taught postgraduates and as a consequence attendance has improved. In academic year 2017/18 we included an additional two postgraduate research student representatives to the membership of the Postgraduate Research Committee to try to broaden engagement.
- 172 A number of additional new initiatives to improve engagement are currently under discussion, some of which have been informed by the 2016/17 QAA Focus on the Research Postgraduate Student Experience event. These include the DoEd and Postgraduate Academic Convener running a more formal training session for new postgraduate representatives at the start of the Class Representatives training, similar to that delivered currently by CAPOD to the undergraduate class representatives. A priority area for action identified in the new 2019/20 Student Partnership Agreement is to consider ways of enhancing the communications between the University staff community and the student body; communications with our research postgraduate students will be included in this review.
- 173 A key feature of our partnership with students has been the Collaboration Statement (developed and introduced by the University and Students' Association in 2013). In the Collaboration Statement, three topics form an overarching focus for staff-student collaborations and were owned by the Vice Principal Education (Proctor) and the Sabbatical Officers. These topics formed a focus for discussion at fora such as LTC and PGRC, the School Presidents' Forum, Postgraduate Executive Forum, Academic Monitoring Group and Proctor's Office meetings.
- 174 In the summer of 2019, the Vice-Principal (Education) and Sabbatical Officers reviewed the impact and benefits of the Collaboration Statement and found that while it has certainly helped to provide an added focus for our activities, it is not particularly well shared or understood across the institution. In 2019/20 we therefore introduced a **Partnership Agreement**<sup>43</sup>, approved not just by the Vice-Principal Education (Proctor) but by the Principal's Office and Students' Association. The Partnership Agreement articulates formally how the students and staff at the University actively work together to enhance the student experience. It outlines the shared priorities for the coming academic year and, at the end of each year, creates an opportunity for a joint review of the impact of initiatives both at institutional and local levels.

175 The priorities identified for academic year 2019/20 are the taught postgraduate student experience, affordable living for students, environmental sustainability and the communication of change to students.

## 2.6 Skills, employability and careers

### Undergraduate skills development

176 We support undergraduate skills development through a wide range of activities to include understanding graduate attributes, use of assessments and feedback, and a professional skills curriculum.

### Framework – graduate attributes

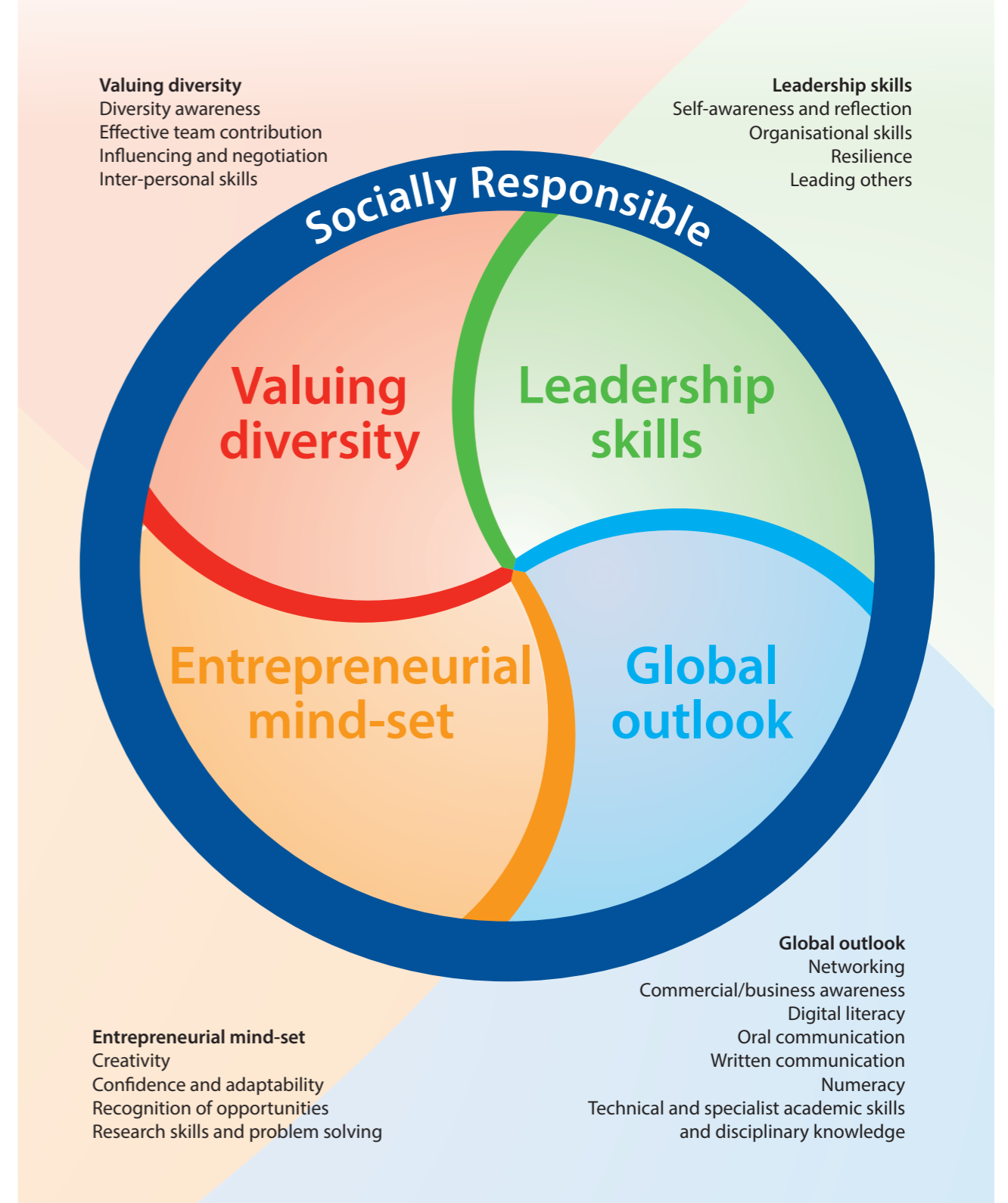
177 Graduate attributes have long been defined at the programme level and listed online in the degree programme specifications. Throughout the academic year 2019/20, through consultation with staff and student stakeholders, the University is developing an institution-wide graduate attributes framework which is closely aligned to the new University Strategy. The aim is to provide clear language articulating our values and priorities to the outside world, promoting employability by identifying what distinguishes our students, and to give a sense of common purpose and shared identity.

178 As a potentially powerful mechanism to promote student engagement with the attributes, we are currently developing an online tool which will enable students to log and self-evaluate the acquisition of graduate attributes in their curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular activities. When students log which skills they have developed through which module, their aggregate data will generate a map of graduate attributes across all modules. This will allow us to see the extent and pattern of where attributes are embedded in the curriculum. We also plan to construct a look-up resource to identify the academic and non-academic opportunities within the University which students can access to help strengthen each attribute. The graduate attributes framework is detailed in Figure 13.

Figure 13: Graduate Attributes

### University of St Andrews

Graduate Attributes: Students will have the opportunity to develop the following skill set whilst at the University of St Andrews through a mixture of curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, and through taking initiative for planning their own self-development.



## University of St Andrews Graduate Attributes

### Socially responsible

**Socially responsible:** Valuing integrity, ethical awareness, environmental sustainability, civic engagement, local and global good citizenship.

### Valuing diversity

**Diversity awareness:** Ability to appreciate multiple perspectives and see things differently, cross-cultural communication and understanding.

**Effective team contribution:** Managing tasks cooperatively to achieve collective goals through open communication and mutual support and accountability.

**Inter-personal skills:** Empathy, tolerance, honesty and respect, forming productive relationships.

**Influencing and negotiation:** Active listening, attending to others' points of view, asking questions, persuading, managing disagreement, reaching consensus.

### Entrepreneurial mind-set

**Creativity:** Using imagination to formulate, design and develop fresh and innovative approaches; generate original ideas, concepts, solutions, arguments, proposals and new kinds of value by thinking independently and in new ways.

**Confidence and adaptability:** A) Ability to maintain flexibility: adjusting when circumstances, situations and environments change. B) Ability to cope with the unfamiliar: dealing with uncertainty and the unknown, navigating ambiguity.

**Recognition of opportunities:** Identifying potential ways to make new and different kinds of value, generating ideas for future work, making connections between unrelated ideas, scanning the horizon and visualising future possibilities, understanding the implications of current learning for helping with other problems and decisions.

**Research skills and problem solving:** A) Problem solving: formulate problems precisely, identifying key issues, assessing the strengths and weaknesses of alternative options and finding ways to work through the challenges. B) Critical thinking: question, challenge and evaluate complex evidence, information and arguments and use of judgement in decision making. C) Analysis: constructing logical arguments and careful, coherent reasoning, breaking problems down into their component parts.

### Use of assessment and feedback to support skills development

- 179 The diversity of assessments within schools is steadily expanding and is welcomed by students as it augments their range of generic skills and employability. The traditional essay form of coursework in the arts and humanities is now increasingly complemented by group work, projects, presentations, and the use of learning diaries. This is the case at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. For example, modules in the Graduate School for Interdisciplinary Studies make use of a mix of posters, podcasts, reflective logs, case studies, learning journals and presentations alongside standard essays. In formative assessment, some module co-ordinators employ peer evaluation methods. These are useful for providing students with feedback at an early stage before they submit their final piece of work.

### Leadership skills

**Self-awareness and reflection:** Seeking guidance and mentoring from others, reflecting on feedback, learning from mistakes and failure, identifying personal development needs and taking corrective actions.

**Organisation:** A) Ability to plan and complete a task or manage a project: identify goals, prioritise, handling workload, implementing a strategy. B) Ability to manage time and deadlines and cope under pressure: learning reliability, self-motivation and dependability in delivering punctually, multi-tasking, tolerating stress, anticipating pinch points and organising appropriately.

**Resilience:** Adopting a positive approach to cope with setbacks and perseverance in the face of challenges. Taking responsibility for maintaining health and wellbeing.

**Leading others:** Managing, guiding, coaching, inspiring, enthusing and motivating others, delegating, mentoring, supervising, teaching, giving feedback, building and maintaining effective relationships, taking initiatives and responsibility, taking risks, making positive changes.

### Global outlook

**Networking:** Building and maintaining social connections and sharing information across cultures.

**Commercial/Business awareness:** Understanding market context, how organisations work, sector pressures, and client needs.

**Digital literacy:** A) Use of software: office, other menu-driven packages. B) Programming: specific coding skills (Excel, Python, Java, Mathematica, Matlab, mapping etc) C) Digital communication: through social media, podcasts, video.

**Oral communication:** Communicating clearly in public to a range of audiences and cultures.

**Written communication:** Communicating complex information and technical concepts effectively, concisely, cogently and accurately in essays, reports and projects.

**Numeracy:** Carefully and precisely generating, analysing, interpreting and presenting qualitative information or quantitative data.

**Technical and specialist academic skills and disciplinary knowledge:** Discipline specific skills.

- 180 The importance of feedback to students is well recognised. The University has a **feedback policy**<sup>44</sup> for all assessments and Schools monitor closely the quality and timing of feedback, with evidence provided, for example, through module evaluation questionnaires and the National Student Survey.
- 181 Students have voluntary access to a Moodle course on How to Spot, Love and Use Feedback. It is designed to explain the types and sources of feedback available to students, how to benefit from that and develop a growth mindset. Learning analytics data show that the video has been viewed by around 36% of students and 30% of these have accessed the video on multiple occasions.
- 182 In terms of supporting high quality feedback, as part of the Academic Staff Development Programme, CAPOD provides a ten-credit Masters-level module on curriculum design, principles of assessment and effective feedback, which is available to all academic staff who teach, including postgraduate tutors and demonstrators.
- 183 To help ensure fairness in marking, all pieces of assessment (where practical) are identified by student matriculation number rather than name. Launched in 2016, the Online Unconscious Bias Training Module has been completed by a majority of teaching staff and provides awareness of biases that may arise in non-anonymous assessments such as oral examinations and presentations.

### Professional Skills Curriculum

- 184 The University offers direct training on professionalisation and employability through the Professional Skills Curriculum (PSC), which is open to all students and offers a range of employability training based on target job skills valued by employers. In academic year 2017/18 there were 117 workshops, of which 11 were delivered in an online format. The PSC is incentivised by an award – if students complete a skills analysis, collect eight attendance stamps and submit a reflective essay, then they are recognised with a certificate in Professional Skills which is listed on their HEAR student transcript. Students track their learning in a PSC 'passport' which encourages them to consider a range of ways to develop their skill set. Academic year 2018/19 saw the introduction of PSC Plus, aimed at continuing the professional development of those students who have already successfully achieved the PSC Award. The Plus programmes involve students attending five linked workshops in a particular area to give them a depth of learning, contrasted with a breadth of learning in the standard award. There is currently a choice of seven PSC Plus programmes: IT Skills, Enterprise Skills, Negotiation Skills, Organisational Psychology, Communication Skills, Teaching Skills, and Consulting Skills.
- 185 The PSC is a collaborative programme and links into activity from other student-facing professional services. The Careers Centre, Student Services, International Education Institute, and the Sports Centre all have their own PSC passport stamps which they can use in the student passports to give PSC credit for workshops or activities they deliver. Engagement with the PSC can be measured via social media (over 1,400 'likes' on the PSC Facebook page), the number of passports distributed which indicate a student has attended at least one workshop (approximately 600 students per year), and awards completed (approximately 100 students per year). Improvements planned for academic year 2019/20 include the expansion of the PSC alumni programme for recent graduates, and the launch of an external coaching service for students who have engaged with the programme.
- 186 Under the auspices of the PSC, CAPOD runs an annual **Student Leader of the Year Award**<sup>45</sup> (over 30 applicants in academic year 2017/18) and sponsors a Professional Skills Award for student societies as part of the Students' Association's Society Awards. The PSC also provides volunteering opportunities for 10 students who form the PSC Operating Team and help project manage the programme with CAPOD support, as well as providing an outreach programme to the local high school, giving research postgraduate students the opportunity to develop their teaching skills by delivering PSC workshops to school pupils.



## Employability activities

187 Employability is supported by a comprehensive employability strategy, developed in 2017, which outlines the scope of activities across the University and sets detailed targets, responsibilities and measures of progress. The main activities and relevant support mechanisms are detailed below.

### Careers support – central and distributed

188 The **Careers Centre**<sup>46</sup> offers one-to-one and group careers information, advice and guidance alongside a comprehensive programme of career skills workshops (for example writing CVs or using LinkedIn). Access to the Careers Centre has been enhanced this year by CareerConnect, a new technology platform which allows students to book appointments, as well as being the means by which students can browse vacancies and sign up to events. A challenge is that resources are insufficient to meet student demand at busy times of the year. In the first week of Semester 1 in academic year 2018/19, Careers were fully booked with an excess demand of 230 students seeking appointments, and 162 in the following week; these students could only be accommodated later in the semester. A budget was approved to pilot the use of student CV Advisers in autumn 2019 to augment the supply of available appointments which has doubled the number of appointments available to students, and reduced excess demand to three students in week one of academic year 2019/20.

189 The Careers Centre provides support to Schools and initiatives such as workshops and alumni events. Within the Careers Centre, each Careers Adviser has a School caseload and delivers co-curricular workshops and events in every School. A new policy was approved in 2018 which requires all Schools to nominate an academic Careers Link to function as a channel of communication between the Careers Centre and the School, to share information, promote events, respond to student requests and formulate an action plan each year. The Careers Link academics meet as a group for regular training and dissemination of good practice.

190 Student School Presidents are also trained by Careers at the beginning of the academic year and tasked to recruit a team of student helpers to deliver employability events in their Schools. To facilitate this, the DoEd designed a careers survey template for School Presidents to personalise and distribute to students and collect information on preferred events.

### Careers activities and events

191 The Careers Centre organises a sequence of careers fairs as well as a comprehensive programme of on-campus employer events. Recorded attendances at these events over the past three years are detailed in the table below.

Table 5: Careers events

Event		2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Law Fair	Exhibitors	24	23	18
	Students	186	119	214
Management & Finance Careers Fair	Exhibitors	38	25	31
	Students	594	700	878
Science & Technology Careers Fair	Exhibitors	31	27	32
	Students	300	428	578
Employer Presentations		78	74	78
Workshops (Students)		87 (463 attendees)	70 (529 attendees)	41 (700 attendees)

### Careers Week

192 In Semester 2 each year, a Careers Week co-delivered with students is held, showcasing the range of careers entered by our graduates. In Careers Week 2018, 14 events were delivered by Careers and the Students' Association and were attended by over 700 students.

### Employability outcomes

193 In terms of employability outcomes, data from the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) Survey over a five-year period are reproduced in the Figure below:

Figure 14: Graduate destinations

Figure 14a: Undergraduate

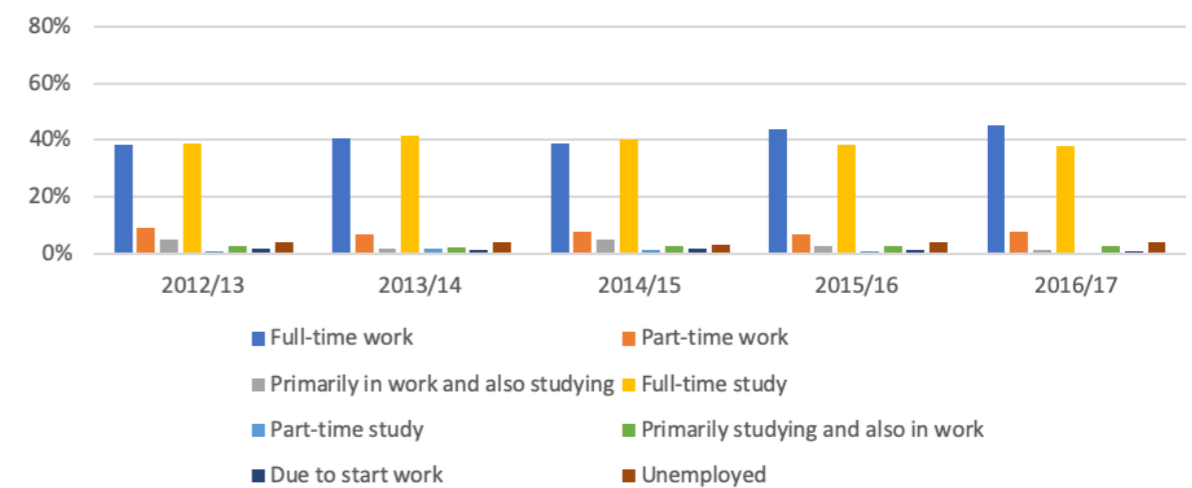
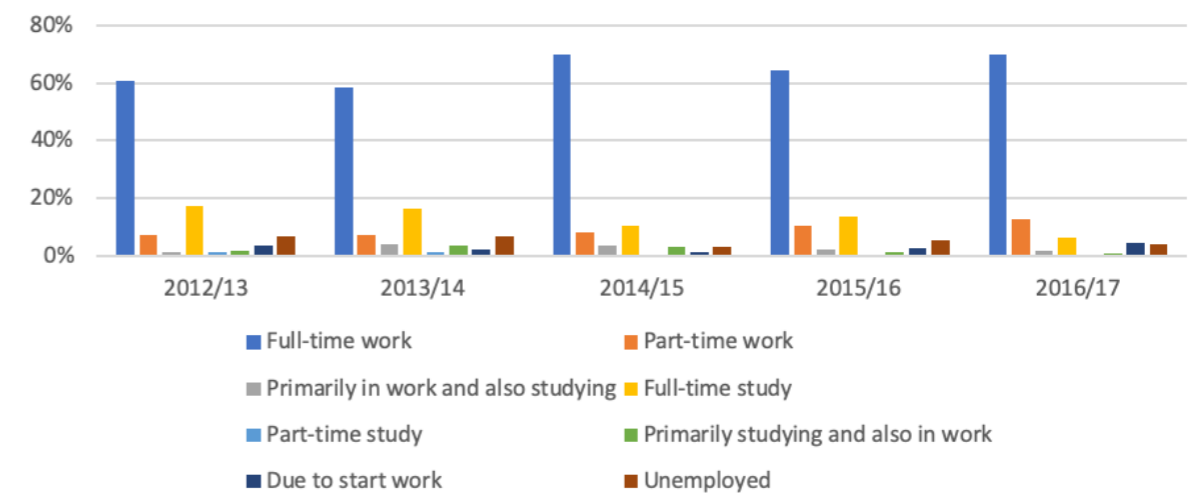


Figure 14b: Postgraduate Taught and Research



194 The numbers show an increasing trend in the proportion of surveyed students in employment up to 2016/17 for both undergraduate and postgraduate degree holders. Notably, a high proportion of St Andrews graduates continue with further full-time study (38%), which is much greater than at comparable institutions (26%). The proportion unemployed has improved over time and is now relatively stable at around 4% at the undergraduate level.

195 Other DLHE data indicate that the share in professional occupations shows some volatility but is on average around 75% for those with first degrees and 86% for those with postgraduate degrees following graduation. For Scottish domiciled students, the proportion of first-degree students entering professional level jobs is lower than average at 66% with students from SIMD20 (57%) and SIMD21-40 postcodes (50%) displaying the lowest rates. Careers and Admissions have initiated discussions to pilot a bespoke programme of interventions for our widening access students to raise confidence and aspirations.

196 HESA replaced DLHE with the Graduate Outcomes (GO) survey in December 2018, surveying graduates 15 months post-graduation. The graduates of each academic year, currently 2017/18, are split into four cohorts, which make up one dataset. As expected, the response rates have been considerably lower than the DLHE survey: the first cohort A achieved an overall (all institutions) response rate of 36%, cohort B achieved 45% and at the midpoint review of cohort C, the response rate was 35%. HESA is actively working to solve challenges which have included ensuring the successful delivery of email, and the response rates are moving in the right direction. Information about graduates' destinations 15 months post-graduation has the potential to be more insightful than that gathered at the six-month period but, with significant numbers of St Andrews first degree graduates undertaking taught postgraduate study, the 15-month survey timing poses a risk in that it coincides with the completion of that study.

### **Engagement with stakeholder communities and connections**

#### **Alumni engagement**

197 The University has its own alumni engagement platform, Saint Connect, which has 6,000+ students and alumni registered for advice, mentoring, and sharing of internship opportunities. The University has now launched an app version of the platform, which will facilitate engagement between students and alumni. Specific in-country activities in the United States are organised for students and alumni, since this is where the largest cohort of our international students originate, including speaker panels and networking events. We have appointed two full-time members of staff in Careers who work specifically on opportunity development and alumni engagement in North America and in Asia as well as an Assistant Director (Opportunities) who is the strategic lead on employer and alumni engagement.

#### **Careers registration project and student engagement with employability**

198 Currently much employability activity for students is optional, though it is clearly desirable that all our students engage in career development activity. To achieve this, the Careers Centre is piloting the 'careers registration' data project at St Andrews. This national project asks every student up to three career-based questions at the point of registration every year, focused on their level of career readiness, extent of work experience, and sectors of interest. Careers registration reaches 100% of the student population, allowing us to identify students who are currently under-engaged and introduce targeted interventions based on need.

### **Work experience opportunities**

#### **Student placements**

199 Credit-bearing external work placements are currently offered, primarily for students in their Honours years, in Biology, Chemistry, Earth & Environmental Sciences and Modern Languages (in the last case, these take place overseas, under the Erasmus+ programme). Their format and function vary depending on subject and programme contexts. In academic year 2015/16, a working group reviewed work placement provision across the University and devised a new policy aimed at a generic framework to manage the diversity of work placements and to outline minimum student, School and host eligibility requirements expected by the University. This policy has been helpful in reviewing our current provision, and instrumental in guiding colleagues when considering and evaluating new placements.

200 Since 2007, the University has also provided placements in local secondary schools for students seeking teaching experience and mentoring from a school teacher. These placements are integrated into the Communication and Teaching in Science (ID4001) and in Arts and Humanities (ID4002) modules. In academic year 2018/19, there were 78 students enrolled on these modules across 47 degree programmes.

201 In line with its entrepreneurial strategy, the University launched in 2019 the Erasmus+ Recent Graduate Traineeships. Although not for credit, these placements will allow graduates to have an international experience supported by the Erasmus+ programme. We also aim to incorporate a greater proportion of entrepreneurship into our offerings. In our Erasmus Mundus Computer Science, co-ordinators have built in industrial placements, and created a network of industry partners. Employment of graduates at some industry partners has strengthened links. Issues persist because of the ways in which various institutions recognise these placements. At St Andrews, they are for-credit placements in line with other traineeships, but this is not true everywhere.

#### **Internships and work shadowing**

202 The Careers Centre runs a summer internship programme for over 20 students in Schools and professional service Units across the University. Demand is high with around ten applications for every place. Students also have access to an internal undergraduate academic research internship programme in every School as well as 25 places annually on the externally funded Laidlaw Scholarship programme, combining research and leadership training. In addition, the University participates in the popular Santander Small and Medium Sized Enterprises Internship Scheme co-funded by Santander and the businesses themselves. This offers a variety of paid work placements for up to 20 undergraduates and postgraduates during vacation times. In addition, a Work Shadowing Programme offers students work shadowing opportunities with alumni, friends and staff of the University. In 2017/18, 468 opportunities were made available to students.

#### **Undergraduate Research Assistant Scheme (URAS)**

203 Since academic year 2015/16 the University has run the **Undergraduate Research Assistant Scheme (URAS)**<sup>47</sup>, which is aimed at giving undergraduate students the opportunity to engage in academic research. Each School is allocated a budget each academic year to spend on research assistants and is encouraged to employ at least three interns. The work is developmental for the student, academic in nature and research based, and has resulted in some astonishing outputs such as the third-year undergraduate Divinity student who became the first person in the world to translate some coded religious documents left by the famous Baptist leader Andrew Fuller.

### **Enterprise and entrepreneurship**

204 An important component of employability is equipping students with an enterprising mind-set and developing entrepreneurial skills, consistent with our commitment under the Universities Scotland 'Making it Happen' strategy. Enterprise Education is a University priority and recognised in that context within the Entrepreneurial St Andrews and the Global St Andrews themes of the Strategy. Enterprise and entrepreneurship are supported through curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular arrangements.

#### **Curricular arrangements**

205 The University set up an Enterprise Education Working Group in 2017, led by the Associate Deans and the Academic Policy Officer (Taught Degrees) which used the Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Education: QAA Guidance for UK Higher Education Providers as the foundation for developing six enterprise capabilities: creativity and innovation; opportunity recognition, creation and evaluation; decision making supported by critical analysis and judgement; implementation of ideas through leadership; reflection and action; communication and strategy skills. These capabilities were agreed with the aim to embed them across the curriculum. To facilitate this, we set up a staff **Enterprise Education**<sup>48</sup> network with over 30 members from across the University which meets every semester to disseminate the embedding of enterprise in modules. Exemplary case studies are posted on the Enterprise Education webpage and shared with DoTs.

206 More systematically, a student intern was employed in 2018 to map enterprise capabilities delivered through the curriculum as described in the Course Catalogue. The results showed the wide range of enterprising skills taught across the University though they were not necessarily articulated in these terms. We hope that a new graduate attributes/employability online tool, incorporating enterprise capabilities will help students to self-assess and log the skills they have augmented in each item of continuous assessment. These logging capabilities will allow students to monitor skill acquisition throughout their degree programme and accumulate a personal skills profile over their period of study.

207 A range of modules directly related to enterprise are also available. Most notably, MN2112 Enterprise and Creativity is a practical module accessible to all second-year students, which was accredited in November 2018 for Level 1 of the Scottish Institute for Enterprise's Scottish Innovative Student Award. The enrolment in academic year 2018/19 was more than 100 students from across the University on almost 40 different programmes with more than 60% of the class being female. It requires students to work on innovative projects in a group of six which they showcase in a project fair, two or three of which have a lifespan beyond the conclusion of the module. For Management specialists there are also Honours modules on Leadership Development (MN4245), Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development (MN4263 and

MN5515) and at postgraduate level on Leadership in Organisations (MN5511), and Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Creativity (MN5510). In other Schools, we offer modules on Music Leadership (MU2006), Political Leadership (IR3056), the Philosophy of Creativity (PY4639), and Risk Management (EC5722, MN5608, MT4539).

208 To support enterprise skills development in the curriculum, in academic year 2018/19 the Proctor's Office, in collaboration with the Students' Association, introduced an **Enterprising Mind of the Year Award**<sup>49</sup>. This is a prize for enterprising activity within any undergraduate or postgraduate module, or closely related to a module, which reflects the application of our established six enterprise capabilities in the curriculum.

#### Co-curricular arrangements

209 CAPOD currently offers a range of workshops and resources to support enterprise and entrepreneurship skill development. 'Enterprise and Innovation: Let's start a business' is open to taught students at all levels. Additionally, a series of enterprise skills workshops run as part of the University's Professional Skills Curriculum and generally attract around ten participants each. A new strand of the PSC, called PSC plus: Enterprise Skills, was launched in the academic year 2018/19. This programme, co-delivered with staff from Careers, has resulted in an immediate increase in the number of students engaging in the enterprise skills events from approximately ten to 20 per workshop. Our aim is to double engagement again in academic year 2019/20. For research postgraduate students, access is available to two Epigeum online workshops in 'Entrepreneurial opportunities: recognition and evaluation' and 'Entrepreneurial resources: people, teams and finance'. The uptake of these workshops is low, and work will continue to address how best to advertise and promote these.

210 On a larger, project-based scale, St Andrews is an early and active participant in the **Laidlaw Scholarship Programme**<sup>50</sup>. This programme provides scholarships for 25 students each year to undertake a ten-week supervised research internship spread over two summers. In tandem, students enrol in a comprehensive leadership skills training programme, both over the summer and during academic semesters. Scholars are required to undertake a practical leadership project as well as mentoring a Laidlaw scholar from the following cohort. In academic year 2018/19, an international dimension was added to the programme as partnerships were organised with Tufts University, Trinity College Dublin, and Hong Kong University. These provide Laidlaw scholars with the opportunity for their research projects to be supervised overseas and to engage in leadership training in a different context.

211 Since 2014, the School of Computer Science has partnered with the Code First:Girls organisation to run free co-curricular coding courses for women. These are designed to provide women with technical skills in programming and coding and to foster more female engagement with technology. Approximately 40 women each semester take the introductory HTML course in which the students work in small teams to create a website. Around 30 women take the more advanced course on programming with Python. Successful completion of the courses adds to the students' employability skills and has been recognised since 2019 through inclusion on HEAR transcripts.

#### Extra-curricular arrangements

212 The University has a Student Enterprise Office, located in the Careers Centre, which employs an Enterprise and Employability Adviser to provide guidance on starting a business, together with a range of case study, funding, legal and mentoring resources. Separate enterprise appointments for students have been set up by the Careers Centre – during Semester 2 of academic year 2018/19, 14 students took up these appointments. As well as supporting students who participate in nationally organised entrepreneurship initiatives, the Office runs three competitions supported by Santander Universities. The first is the Social Enterprise Challenge in which teams of students are invited to generate an idea or project that uses business methods to address social problems consistent with the Global Goals for Sustainable Development. Seed funding is available to students to support the implementation of their ideas which they then present at an 'I'm Changing the World Showcase' event. This ran for the first time in academic year 2017/18 with two projects receiving funding. The second is Idea Explosion at which students pitch ideas for new ventures with four winners each receiving £1,000. The third is participation in the Santander Universities Entrepreneurship Awards in which the University selects one or two student business pitches to proceed to the national competition if they are sufficiently strong. The number of participants varies from year to year with an average of 250 students engaging in Enterprise Week activities.

213 In addition to the competitions, Santander also supports the University's Enterprise Week for students, staff and the general public. It is primarily student-led and based around a series of between six and ten events and workshops, such as Meet the Entrepreneur. In academic year 2018/19, activities included a new Pitching Event at which four student projects secured partial funding.

214 External Challenge activities are also supported. The annual Global Challenges Programme hosted by the School of International Relations, initiated in 2016, is a well-funded collaborative competition with generous prizes open to any team of between two and five undergraduate students at St Andrews. The teams are tasked with addressing a global challenge, such as a finding a creative strategy to cope with climate change. Their findings can be delivered through a wide range of media to an academic judging panel. Student skills are enhanced through participation in four specialised workshops with a focus on teamwork, communication and presentation skills and tools with each team being mentored by an academic. In academic year 2018/19, nine teams applied with six selected for the programme. The challenge for the University is to find fruitful ways to augment the level of interest further.

215 St Andrews is also a partner university in the World's Challenge global initiative of Western University, Canada. Teams of three students are invited to select a global issue and present an innovative solution in a short presentation. The winning team progresses to the Global Final in Canada. Three team submissions were received in the 2018/19 round.

216 The Students' Association Charities Campaign inculcates enterprising skills as students raise annually £100k for charity through imaginative initiatives. In addition, students have multiple opportunities to develop their enterprising capabilities in over 160 student societies. Those that are directly enterprise related include St Andrews Entrepreneurs Society, Enactus St Andrews which develops social enterprise projects and the Management Society.

## 2.7 Student mobility opportunities

217 Student mobility opportunities at St Andrews include work placements and traineeships, study abroad and exchanges. Specific details of study abroad opportunities by subject and country are provided in the Advance Information Set. Student mobility opportunities at St Andrews are managed alongside collaborative programmes by the Global Office and form part of our overall strategy for collaboration (see Section 5).

#### External environment and strategic drivers

218 We are committed to increasing the number of students who access international opportunities, including through collaborative programmes, study abroad mobility and work placement activity. This commitment dovetails well with the Global theme of the new University Strategy. It does, however, present some challenges due to factors such as the political scenario facing the UK and Europe. On the positive side, we welcome the UUKi (Universities UK International) Strategy for Outward Student Mobility 2017-20 which aims to double the percentage of UK-domiciled, full-time, first-degree students on international placements as part of their higher education programmes to over 13% by 2020. On the negative side, at the time of writing, the future of our many Erasmus+ partnerships and programmes is uncertain. However, we are working very closely with European partners to facilitate continued collaboration irrespective of the UK's future involvement in Erasmus+.

219 Study abroad at St Andrews is embedded in the curriculum, reinforces our outward-looking and international nature, and supports the maintenance of a diverse, inclusive, open and globally-minded community. Since the last ELIR, the development of a First Abroad scheme has helped to raise awareness of international opportunities and enabled the University to start working with undergraduates earlier in their academic careers than was previously the case. The scheme, described earlier, provides an undergraduate student and an offer holder with the opportunity to visit one of our USA partners, and supports the student in an internship on their return. The scheme also guarantees a place on and funding for a study abroad programme when they reach their Junior Honours year so long as they meet normal eligibility criteria. As such, it aims to ensure that students and applicants who may not normally become

aware of study abroad opportunities are given an early insight into the type of experience available, and to provide the financial backing to enable them to become involved.

220 In addition to the First Abroad scheme we also run semester and full-year programmes. These programmes, St Andrews Abroad and School Abroad, allow for arrangements to be put in place with high-quality institutions offering wide-ranging matches for study provision across a range of subjects, and for more focused and individual subject-specific partnerships to be developed respectively. The St Andrews Abroad programme is an exchange programme that offers opportunities to students across the Faculties of Arts, Divinity and Science to spend a semester or academic year abroad. These include partnerships with institutions from Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Singapore and the USA. Our other key programme is School Abroad with exchanges specific to a certain School or Department within the University.

221 During academic year 2019/20, we have 62 subject-specific exchanges in 24 countries and St Andrews Abroad programmes in seven countries. This includes highly popular new institutional partnerships with the University of Auckland, the University of Hong Kong and Macquarie University in Australia. The University also launched an innovative new multi-lateral exchange in 2017/18 with Queen's University, Ontario and the National University of Singapore which is open to Biology and Geography & Sustainable Development students. This aligns courses across three partners on three continents to consider the environmental challenges facing the world today and compare societal responses. Students spend a semester at two host institutions, studying modules unique to each host and experiencing two different national cultures. This initiative speaks to the commitment outlined in our Strategy to 'act ethically, transparently, sustainably and for the wider public benefit at all times'.

222 At postgraduate level, several new taught and research exchanges have also been established since our last ELIR. Unfortunately, student demand for these opportunities has not been as strong as expected and work is ongoing to embed all of these links. However, the University recently joined the Europaeum network of leading European universities and participates actively in Europaeum events and a Europaeum Scholars Programme. The Programme, launched in 2018, provides doctoral training alongside a postgraduate research degree. It is designed to produce leaders, thinkers and researchers with the capacity and desire to shape the future of Europe. Three St Andrews PhD students secured some of the first thirty places on the programme. Overall, it is anticipated that the Europaeum network will encourage and support further research mobility in future.

#### **Study abroad selection procedure**

223 Study Abroad programmes involve a rigorous application and selection process, with selection for all institutional programmes (St Andrews Abroad) led by the Pro Deans. Honours entry is the minimum requirement for study abroad programmes, but other factors are considered, and most programmes have stronger academic entry requirements. In 2016 the Collaborations and Study Abroad Team (CSA), now the Global Office, and the Pro Deans reviewed St Andrews Abroad selection criteria to introduce more transparent and robust criteria due to increased demand for study abroad.

#### **Academic approval of new study abroad partnership agreements**

224 A quality student learning experience is central to our ethos and this extends to the academic quality and breadth of education received while studying abroad. The Global Office co-ordinates the proposal and approval process for new exchange agreements with partners. Expert academic appraisal of course offerings is crucial to this, built on QAA guidelines and benefiting from accrued University expertise. We aim to ensure that all students studying abroad receive the same standard of education as at St Andrews, and that they return sufficiently well prepared for the remainder of their degrees.

225 Academics and other staff participate in preparatory visits to potential partners, using a small central budget, and regular site visits are expected. Proposers of new links detail the strategic and academic advantages to the School, to students, and to the University, including alignment with the University's six strategic drivers for new academic partnerships (income generation, market development, funding opportunities, curriculum enhancement, research collaboration, and reputation). These elements form the basis of a proposal form or a collaborative business case which provide the means for assessing the new link prior to its creation. In the past year, the Global Office has updated proposal formats to allow for

greater flexibility of use across the variety of programme types available whilst retaining the important focus on legislative and policy needs that was always at the heart of the documentation. Previously, many programme types had bespoke proposal formats, but their variety has now been reduced, with elements required fitting the proposed relationship instead. This approach makes proposal and business case completion more intuitive and as such aids Schools in relation to administrative processes. Once completed, proposals are approved by the Curriculum Approvals Group (CAG), the relevant Pro Dean(s) or Associate Dean(s), the Provost, or the Principal's Office depending on their nature and scope. Curriculum compatibility and strategic focus are key considerations.

#### **Study abroad grade conversion**

226 Students typically study abroad in their Junior Honours year. On return, approved credits and grades are converted to the St Andrews system and contribute towards degree classifications. We use grade conversion tables which compare both our and the partner institution's marking standards and scales. Grade conversion tables are designed and approved as part of the wider programme approval process, and available online to students before they go abroad. Once implemented, conversion tables are regularly reviewed considering student performance, analysis of module results, experience and feedback, and if necessary, amended with the approval of the relevant Associate Dean.

#### **Academic monitoring of study abroad provision**

227 Schools may opt in or out of St Andrews Abroad programmes annually. Opting in requires academic review of course offerings at the partner institution, requested as part of the proposal process required for new School Abroad exchanges. Schools are required to ensure that the curriculum offerings at the partner institution are academically appropriate for their students. Academic reasons for a School opting out of St Andrews abroad programme may exist, such as a change in course offerings at the partner institution rendering their provision inappropriate for our students, or negative feedback in surveys of outbound students. We have found this to be a robust process, which has led to greater School confidence in institutional opportunities and has streamlined the introduction of new institutional partnerships.

#### **Other opportunities abroad**

228 A range of other opportunities for travel, work, volunteering or fieldwork are promoted across Schools, Departments and the Students' Association. Two projects provide students and staff with the opportunity to travel and work in Zambia. The first, IDEALS, is a project established by the **Wallace Group**<sup>51</sup> in which students from a number of UK universities travel to Zambia to create environments that allow the exchange of information and skills between the UK and Zambia. The second initiative is **Volunteer Zambia**<sup>52</sup>, a unique partnership between the University of St Andrews and the Zambian non-governmental organisation, Sport in Action, where students and staff volunteer in a rural Zambian village to help staff and pupils with literacy skills. The University is also involved in the Saints Stellenbosch Outreach Project, a partnership between Saints Sport and the University of Stellenbosch which gives five St Andrews students the opportunity to deliver PE sessions, sport-specific coaching sessions and some classroom-based sessions in local schools in Stellenbosch. There are additional opportunities such as the annual Race 2 charity hitch-hiking event, and Saints Funder (a crowdfunding platform), which sponsored the Arclight Tandem Africa project, involving two students undertaking a 10,000km tandem bike expedition from Cairo to Capetown to distribute Arclights (a device pioneered in St Andrews that helps in the fight against preventable blindness and deafness).

229 Many students also take up international summer internships and participate in worldwide student society events (for example the St Andrews Union Debating Society). There are six travel scholarships/ bursaries available from the University – many do not require that the student travels in relation to their academic course although many are merit-based.

230 In the summer of 2018, a student intern collated information about international opportunities for St Andrews students during their degrees, to highlight the variety of options and programmes to students and other stakeholders, as part of the University's wider international activities. The Global Office aims to use the results to increase promotion of all international programmes.

### Cohort support, development and experience enhancement

- 231 Each School or Department has an academic Study Abroad Co-ordinator, who helps study abroad students finalise their module choices at the partner institution and approve their academic programme. These processes are designed to ensure students can be confident about their academic programme abroad and how it will complement their future study at St Andrews. Changes to a student's approved module selection are considered on a case-by-case basis and are dependent on evaluation of the academic suitability of requested changes.
- 232 Since the last ELIR, the CSA Team/Global Office has liaised across the University to increase pre-departure support for outbound students. Students can now attend finance drop-in sessions and a course on building resilience to improve their preparation. Based on student feedback, the Global Office is working with Schools to enhance services further by offering additional academic preparatory support at School level, including more formal sessions on academic culture in the host country/institution.
- 233 Returning students can apply for an internship to lead Global Office projects and are encouraged to contribute to peer support services. Feedback indicates that enhanced employability is one of the main perceived benefits of study abroad. Consequently, the CSA Team and the Careers Centre ran a workshop last year for students on how to articulate the skills gained abroad on their CV.

## 2.8 Specific postgraduate student support

### Support during and after the degree

#### Orientation and induction

- 234 Key information and resources for postgraduate entrants, including induction information, is now provided in the Orientation App as well as a Postgraduate Welcome Booklet. This is in addition to targeted events and activities, including the Graduate School for Interdisciplinary Studies Orientation Week Programme, taught and research postgraduate induction events, and a 'Kickstart your Masters' session.
- 235 Additional successful initiatives include two large-scale events run annually to help equip students with the transition to further studies. 'A St Andrews Masters' and 'A St Andrews PhD' feature a wide range of academic staff and alumni speakers on topics such as the taught and research postgraduate experience, application process, funding sources, skills development support and career opportunities. The events in 2019 are made available online to give access to a greater number of students.
- 236 There are also pre-arrival mentoring schemes in two Schools (Computer Science and Management) for incoming taught postgraduate students, who are mentored over the summer months by outgoing students in their discipline. There is high engagement and positive feedback from students who take part: in academic year 2018/19, 40 mentees and 15 mentors participated in the School of Computer Science, and 158 mentees and 124 mentors in the School of Management. Further work will be undertaken to increase the number of academic taught postgraduate mentoring schemes. All postgraduate students have access to two non-academic mentoring schemes, Peer Support and Sports Buddies, providing one-on-one peer support and mentoring.

#### Personal support

- 237 Student Services has a postgraduate wellbeing adviser who engages in proactive outreach and provides dedicated appointments to the postgraduate community throughout the year. In addition, the research postgraduate induction event now includes a specific session on mental health and wellbeing. Support is further enhanced by a team of wardens and assistant wardens in the University residences that house large numbers of postgraduate students.
- 238 Postgraduate wellbeing has been the focus of the Wellbeing Working Group and will continue to be so during academic year 2019/20. The Working Group is informed by a taught postgraduate wellbeing research project undertaken by the School of Psychology & Neuroscience in academic year 2018/19. This project measured taught postgraduate wellbeing over time, with a view to identifying points in the calendar where the University can best deploy/employ its resources.

### Library support

- 239 The University Library continues to develop the ways its services and spaces can support postgraduate students, understanding that a dedicated space for this group is desirable. The Thomson Reading Room in Martyrs Kirk which was previously only accessible to research postgraduate students has now been opened to all postgraduate students. Some carrels in a silent study area are reserved for use by research postgraduate students and a newly opened collaboration space in the Library is ideal for meetings and group work. A new postgraduate study zone in the Library is planned for 2020.

### Community development

- 240 The University-wide postgraduate community is collectively known as **St Leonard's Postgraduate College**<sup>53</sup>. It works with taught and research postgraduate students from all Schools to promote a culture in which postgraduate scholarship, creativity and discovery can flourish. Regular events include a reception for new postgraduates, monthly coffee breaks for doctoral students, evening social events for Masters students, and film screenings. There is also an annual formal dinner hosted by the Provost and each November there is a chapel service for the commemoration of St Leonard, which postgraduates of all faiths, or none, are welcome to attend. These events have proved popular with postgraduates and help to foster a sense of belonging. St Leonard's Postgraduate College also provides financial support for postgraduate-led initiatives which contribute to the vibrancy of the postgraduate community. Initiatives funded during the academic year 2018/19 included interdisciplinary seminars and a St Andrews chapter of the national PubhD which gives doctoral students the chance to share their research in a public setting.
- 241 St Leonard's Postgraduate College works closely with the Postgraduate Society, which organises a range of events specifically for postgraduates including pub nights and bonfires on the beach, day trips around Scotland, and the postgraduate summer ball. St Leonard's Postgraduate College also works with colleagues from halls of residence with larger numbers of postgraduates and provides financial support for hall events aimed at postgraduates.
- 242 A significant strategic development is the plan to redevelop the Old Burgh School (currently home to a number of professional service Units) to a physical space for the postgraduate student community. The new facility, due to open late in academic year 2019/20, will include study space for individuals and groups, social space, lockers, a family room and meeting rooms where students can meet with staff who support students, such as the Pro Dean Postgraduate (Taught and Research) and professional services staff, to get advice and support on a wide range of issues such as employability and finance. Planning is also underway to provide face-to-face support for writing and data analysis to support postgraduate development.
- 243 **Future plans for post-degree support**  
The Provost is developing a St Leonard's Postgraduate College Associate Scheme which will allow research postgraduates who have finished their studies to retain links to the University. The programme will also strengthen the University's links with alumni and dovetails with the doctoral extension scheme.

### Specific postgraduate skills development

#### Skills programmes

- 244 Skills development for research postgraduate students (**GRADskills**)<sup>54</sup> is currently shared between academic Schools and CAPOD (soon to be CEED). With CEED's future focus on teaching and learning, the proposal is for its generic skills postgraduate training to move during academic year 2019/20 to St Leonard's Postgraduate College under the direction of the Provost. Whilst the operational delivery and co-ordination of the programme will remain the responsibility of CEED staff, the Provost will be best placed to be alert to training needs in the postgraduate community and set the strategic direction of the GRADskills and M-Skills programmes.
- 245 Within Schools, supervisors provide guidance in a wide range of areas such as research integrity, ethics and copyright, and work with students to ensure that they are taking an appropriate course of research skills training, for the students' annual progress review.

246 The GRADskills programme includes over 60 different workshops specifically for research postgraduate students, most of which run each semester, totalling over 400 hours of development time each academic year. In academic year 2017/18 research postgraduate students had access to 348 CAPOD workshops and events, and 2,214 attendances were recorded. All workshops are mapped to the sub-domains of Vitae's Researcher Development Framework (RDF). Students and supervisors are encouraged to structure their training needs discussions using the RDF, thereby making it easy for students to find relevant workshops. However, research postgraduate students can also make use of the new graduate attributes framework which is more holistic in terms of transferable skills.

247 Skills development for taught postgraduate students is available through CAPOD's co-curricular M-Skills programme. In academic year 2017/18 there were 142 events open to taught postgraduate students (up from 133 the previous year), and there were 439 attendees, an increase of 17% in attendance from the previous year.

#### **Careers support and alumni connections**

248 Since the last ELIR the University has appointed a joint Careers-CAPOD officer to provide developmental skills training and careers advice (one on one), mainly to science postgraduates and postdoctoral students looking for academic career paths. This position is now complemented by an Opportunities Manager position in Careers, who has responsibility for looking at the career development needs of taught postgraduate students in the context of informing the rest of the Careers team of these needs, as well as looking to identify specific work opportunities to help them into employment.

249 Going beyond the time and distance bounds of formal programmes, the Professional Skills Curriculum Alumni strand was launched in December 2018 to offer taught postgraduate students a distance learning option to complete their PSC Award and develop their employability skills. The programme comprises four steps: a workplace preferences profile, completing a skills analysis, access to online workshops on a range of professional skills, and completing a reflective essay. The participants are matched with a coach to help taught postgraduate students reach their employability goals. The programme is endorsed by the Institute of Leadership and Management.

#### **Research postgraduate students — academic support**

##### **Supervisor training and students' experience of supervision**

250 In the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) 2017, the University was ranked in the top quartile of the sector for overall satisfaction with a rate of 87% compared to a sector average of 82%. The area with highest satisfaction was supervision with 90% of students satisfied with the four dimensions of supervision addressed in that section (compared to 88% in the 2015 survey and a sector average of 86%).

251 All new supervisors are expected to attend a workshop which introduces them to the sector-wide approach to research postgraduate student support as well as local policies and procedures. There are presentations on practical matters such as changes of circumstance, UKVI and support available from GRADskills, as well as an exploration of the supervision process with experienced supervisors. There is also a workshop on best practice for PhD viva examinations for those new to the examiner process. CAPOD is currently reviewing, with the Pro Dean Postgraduate (Taught and Research), the best mechanism for providing ongoing support for supervisors ('refresher' training) to keep them up to date with changes in policy, procedure and practice. Starting in the academic year 2019/20, a new mandatory online training programme has been introduced for all new supervisors, supported by in-person sessions throughout the year that focus both on basic policy and regulations and on particular issues (for example mental health and interdisciplinary projects).

252 As the University had chosen not to join Advance HE in 2018, we conducted an in-house research postgraduate survey in 2019 using similar questions to those in PRES 2017 but with some questions customised to our own needs. In academic year 2019/20, the University has rejoined Advance HE and is re-engaging with PTES (Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey) and PRES.

##### **Support for postgraduates who teach**

253 It is University policy that doctoral students employed to teach or assess receive appropriate development for this purpose. This is done in a collaborative fashion, with mandatory workshops and additional support provided centrally by CAPOD and appropriate training and support throughout their time teaching provided by the Schools. CAPOD runs Faculty-specific versions of the two mandatory workshops before the start of teaching each semester, as well as additional cross-Faculty versions at the end of summer and later in Semester 1, to accommodate different start dates. Additional optional workshops include a Mental Health Toolkit and Specific Learning Difficulties in HE, as well as tutor/demonstrator networking lunches. CAPOD also offers two ten-credit, Masters-level Introduction to University Teaching modules, one on Supporting Student Learning, the other on Curriculum Design and Assessment. These are open to all staff who teach, regardless of contract type. All of this development is underpinned by the policy on [Doctoral Students who Teach](#)<sup>55</sup>.

#### **Recent developments in the postgraduate experience**

##### **Taught postgraduate enhancement**

254 Since the start of academic year 2017/18, the University has prioritised the enhancement of the taught postgraduate experience. A University-wide induction symposium held in January 2018 produced a set of best practices that were disseminated to Schools for implementation at the start of academic year 2018/19. These comprised:

- The standardisation across Schools of the timescale for supplying taught postgraduate programme and module handbooks, including reading lists, such that these materials are provided to incoming students at least four weeks prior to commencing their studies. This addresses the most commonly articulated frustrations of taught postgraduate students, namely the failure to receive material in advance.
- The inclusion in taught postgraduate handbooks of the following: clear grade descriptors; information on CAPOD's taught postgraduate training, including M-Skills; material on electronic resources and how to access them.
- Adherence to published timescales on the turnaround for feedback on assessed work and timely communication to students if delay is unavoidable.

255 In addition, a list of examples of best practice from around the University was circulated for consideration by Schools. These included providing students with a single point of contact from offer stage to arrival, inviting students to join a dedicated programme group on social media at the point of offer, sending a welcome pack on offer acceptance, organising an awayday during induction, providing taught postgraduate specific events and pre-sessional training, and offering research postgraduate mentors to taught postgraduate students.

256 In terms of curriculum development, the Graduate School for Interdisciplinary Studies was established in 2018, to foster interdisciplinary postgraduate education and scholarship. It currently offers three Masters degree programmes, with three additional programmes scheduled to run in academic year 2020/21.

##### **Policy and system revisions**

257 Research postgraduate progress reviews are now recorded in the online Module Management System (MMS) and viewable within each School as well as centrally. This helps to ensure consistency and allows the Pro Dean Postgraduate (Taught and Research) to identify potential problems at an early stage, for example by flagging delays in the review process at School level, and to report outcomes across Schools to the Academic Monitoring Group.

## 2.9 The learning environment and the use of technology

258 We take an evidence-based approach to development of the physical and virtual learning environment. Key strands of current evidence that are informing work in this area are the Teaching Spaces Review Report prepared by HLM Architects, the JISC Student Digital Tracker Report, Module Evaluation Questionnaires and NSS (National Student Survey) data. The institution's involvement in the QAA Enhancement Theme, including collaborative cluster work on Learning Analytics, also allows us to contribute and share evidence.

259 In this sub-section we review our general learning environment priorities in the light of our recent work and evidence-gathering, after which we focus on technology-enhanced learning in detail.

### Key learning environment priorities

#### Inclusion and accessibility

260 Within the new Strategy we make a commitment to improve provision for students with disabilities or special needs. An important aspect of such inclusion is to ensure that students with disabilities have support, adjustments and access to assistive and adaptive support, so that they are able to make full use of the learning environment. All students with special needs are strongly supported throughout their studies. This support can include mental wellbeing services, financial aid, and academic adjustments in assessments and teaching for those with such needs. Specific support with assistive technologies (hardware and software) is provided for such students to access reading materials and to create their own submissions content. Student Services also has a small pool of loan equipment, and recording booths are available to facilitate the capture of high-quality audio for particular support needs. The booths have also been used as protected quiet spaces for telephone interviews and are used for learning needs tests.

261 Inclusion can also be an issue for students who are not native English speakers, especially in the context of our focus on small-group, interactive learning processes. For that reason, a free in-session **Academic English Service (AES)**<sup>56</sup> offers weekly one-to-one tutorials, workshop programmes, independent study material and a range of online resources. The AES team work directly with students and also with Schools and have embedded workshops within the curriculum, where appropriate.

#### Teaching space design

262 An institution-wide review of teaching space was carried out by external consultants (HLM Architects) in the academic year 2017/18. This involved a physical review of every teaching space, and consultation with students to produce an overall satisfaction rating with alternative configurations. In addition, our participation in the JISC Student Digital Tracker survey in 2018 revealed that St Andrews students, when compared against the rest of the UK and Russell Group cohorts, were around 5% less satisfied that teaching rooms were well designed.

263 As a result of both of these exercises, it was decided to repurpose three existing teaching rooms as experimental Technology Enhanced Active Learning (TEAL) spaces in order to help shape the refurbishment and future configuration of the teaching and learning estate. These centrally timetabled rooms in the Arts Building were made available in the academic year 2018/19. The three rooms contain different types of flexible furniture, whiteboard provision (both static and mobile) and upgraded IT and AV provision. Initial evaluation of the use of these spaces indicates that 74% of students and 81% of staff felt that the new space facilitated interaction between lecturer and students, and between students. An additional source of further creative investigation was provided through the development of a dedicated Technology-Enhanced Learning (TEL) space for staff in the Gateway Building. This is a supported space where innovative technologies (both hardware and software) can be used experimentally. This new space launched in early 2019, and the evaluation of the technologies and activities trialled there will also feed into existing processes for room refurbishment and the configuration of the estate.

#### Accommodating growth

264 The growth in student numbers studying sciences has increased pressure on lab space, especially at sub-honours level. The Dean of Science has surveyed the Schools on the capacity constraints they face and their responses to these. An institution-wide review of lab space by external consultants is planned to take place in late 2019, along the same lines as the teaching space review outlined above. The sciences are centred on the North Haugh area of the town, and there are plans to refurbish and develop that part of our estate. However, due to the fire in the Biomolecular Sciences building in February 2019, the plans are currently being reconfigured to address the necessary temporary needs arising from this as well as to take the opportunity to think differently as a result of this new situation.

265 More generally, significant pressure will be relieved through various capacity building initiatives which will provide annual increases in new and refurbished teaching spaces. The most significant of these in the medium term is the refurbishment of the Younger Hall, which will provide another large capacity (500 seat) lecture theatre together with five large tutorial rooms for use by Schools in the centre of St Andrews. The acquisition of Madras College as accommodation for Schools in the Social Sciences will also have a major and positive impact on both the quantity and quality of learning and teaching spaces, on a longer timescale.

#### Study space and computer equipment

266 Students report challenges in finding suitable study space especially during times of peak demand, chiefly the revision and examination periods. As mentioned previously, in the next few years, there are several projects which will help to resolve the study space constraints, including the relocation of professional services from the town centre to the Eden campus at Guardbridge in 2020, the acquisition of the Madras College building and the creation of a Learning Commons near the library.

267 In the short term, the University is seeking to maximise the use of existing space by reconfiguring the Main Library to provide collaboration space and over 100 new study spaces. More significantly, in academic year 2019/20, a proportion of library stock and staff is moving to new facilities at Eden campus where there will be a browsable book stack. This move will permit the addition of a further 375 desks when the basement level of the Main Library is redeveloped. In addition, an app has been developed which includes information on available study spaces to include teaching rooms that are not currently in use.

268 As evidenced by the results from the 2018 JISC Student Digital Experience Tracker survey, access to computer hardware in study facilities is viewed by students as unproblematic. There are around 840 PCs available for private study at the University which sees around 17,000 individual sessions and 23,000 hours of use per semester. Reconfiguration to reflect students' increasing preference for their own devices may be an option in the future.

### Technology enhanced and enabled learning

#### Virtual learning environment (VLE) systems

269 The University operates two VLEs, Moodle and the in-house Module Management System (MMS). The assessment reporting and analysis functions of MMS are strongly tied into our overall data architecture. The ongoing institution-wide TEL Project has delivered an interface to MMS and Moodle through a single portal 'My Saint'. The TEL Project is run under the auspices of the Business Transformation Portfolio Office, with the Vice-Principal Education (Proctor) as senior sponsor. The Project Board has representation from academic staff, students and key services involved in implementation and support of the project deliverables (including CAPOD, IT Services and the Proctor's Office). The School of Medicine uses two different VLEs, Galen and Solas, which are particularly adapted to their unique teaching and learning needs.

270 The Moodle platform continues to evolve. Good use has been made of plugins, but importantly LTI (Learning Tools Interoperability standard) integrations provide seamless access to other TEL services such as reading lists, lecture capture and plagiarism detection. Results from the 2018 JISC Student Digital Tracker survey revealed that St Andrews' students were significantly more likely than the rest of the UK and Russell Group cohorts to have used digital tools to access materials and resources not recommended

by their lecturers, and to create digital records/portfolios. Moreover, significantly fewer St Andrews students agreed with the statement 'The VLE is well-designed' than the rest of the UK and Russell Group cohorts (42.5% at St Andrews compared to 55.2% in the rest of the UK). They also were less likely to agree with the statement that 'Learners are given the chance to be involved in decisions about digital services'. The current TEL project is addressing all of these issues through the development of the common interface, through strong student consultation and involvement in the programme board, and prioritised enhancements.

### Lecture capture

271 The introduction of lecture capture (Panopto) in 2017/18 after a pilot in 2016/17 marked a significant change in the learning environment. Students have responded highly positively as evidenced in unsolicited free text responses from Module Evaluation Questionnaires. The facility is especially useful to students with language challenges and those with disabilities. In Semester 1 of the academic year 2017/18, 241 lectures were recorded, increasing to 378 in Semester 2, and 662 in Semester 1 of the academic year 2018/19. There are currently 170 active staff users and 18 Schools or Departments involved, and work will continue to grow this number. There are a number of resources in place to support staff with lecture capture including basic workshops run throughout the year, one-to-one support including at their first lecture, a library of training materials including video tutorials, email, phone and hardware support. A series of advanced workshops began in 2019 and reporting functionality was also introduced to allow a lecturer who has made a recording to see which parts of that recording were most frequently viewed – allowing them to identify areas where students are having difficulties, and to respond to that need by teaching adaptively.

### Software provision

272 IT Services provides a wide range of generic and subject specific software for students' use. Around 70 applications are available for streaming through the Apps Anywhere service with the most heavily used including statistical and reference management packages. The JISC Student Digital Tracker 2018 survey identified that a reasonable number of institutionally-provided tools (Moodle, Lecture Recording, MMS) were useful; there was also a large representation for external tools such as YouTube, Khan Academy and Google. The survey did not ask whether the tools identified supplemented or replaced tutor-provided content, but this would be a valuable question to include in the future iteration of the Tracker survey.

### Development of synchronous distance learning and blended approaches

273 The **International Education Institute (IE)**<sup>57</sup> makes use of Bridgit conferencing software to bring together learners not present in St Andrews. It allows participants to interact, give presentations, and deliver lectures or tutorials with up to 24 others connecting remotely, including up to eight participants simultaneously connecting via microphone and/or webcam. Participants can work collaboratively on the same document or can take it in turns to share their screens and present their work.

274 Some modules on the MA (General) in Combined Studies programme are also delivered as blended learning. Students can request a Bridgit enabled laptop at any time throughout the semester, which especially helps those juggling work commitments, travel and family life. Bridgit has enabled one student to complete his degree while posted in the Falkland Islands; the oral presentation component of the assessment was delivered live through Bridgit.

275 In addition, the in-session Academic English Service (AES) within IE has piloted Zoom for tutorials as an improvement over Skype. This removes the need to exchange Skype addresses, it creates a meeting invite in the recipient's diary and can be recorded so that the student and tutor have a permanent record of the tutorial.

### Webpages and internet resources

276 Data show that 3.4 million users visit the University website each year, resulting in approximately 28 million page views. 74% are external users. In 2018, the digital prospectus section of the website was the most visited section, gathering approximately 4.6 million page views. Usability testing allows the Digital Communications team to meet with users and determine precisely what elements of a webpage are hindering or improving the user experience. This testing clarifies the importance of user-centred design, the need for mobile optimisation and an improved focus on website accessibility.

277 While these methods have been invaluable in learning more about how people use these pages, there is room to expand and develop the University's user-experience (UX) measuring methods. Furthermore, the digital visa staff training programme in digital best practice will be expanded to include training on advanced writing for the web and UX processes used at the University.

278 A further area for improvement is the balance and integration of information on the webpages. Students in focus groups have identified excessive fragmentation of information sources. For example, during Orientation, information for students is spread across diverse locations including Orientation webpages, the Orientation app, and pre-arrival Moodle courses. A future focus on student-preferred channels (such as apps) and the integrated systems interface will help to address this.

## 2.10 Opportunities for enhancement

Our reflection on the developments and challenges in delivering an excellent student experience, with particular awareness of our alignment to our strategic themes and building on earlier ELIR-shaped developments, has led to the identification of the following four areas that may be opportunities for enhancement:

### Graduate training scheme for mental health development workers

The introduction of a graduate scheme to train mental health development workers is a promising new initiative in growing our internal capability to support student wellbeing. Further developing and monitoring this scheme is an important element in resourcing our mental health strategy and supporting students with mental health concerns.

### Widening participation to undergraduate study abroad

The University is committed to widening participation in study abroad activities, particularly at undergraduate level, and a number of initiatives have been introduced to raise awareness, provide financial support and enable a study abroad 'taster' experience. Nevertheless, it can be challenging to reach the students who may never have considered study abroad. We will work on more ways of engaging students with study abroad.

### Engaging postgraduate students in quality enhancement processes

Despite some excellent examples to the contrary, the generally low engagement of both taught and research postgraduate student representatives in many Schools is an area of ongoing concern. Creating mechanisms to ensure that their feedback is taken seriously and acted upon to improve the postgraduate experience will help foster student involvement in quality enhancement. The addition of a research postgraduate section to each School's Annual Academic Monitoring report will help Schools reflect on areas for improvement in their support of students and supervisors and provide examples of good practice for dissemination.

### Embedding employability

The University increasingly encourages the decentralisation of careers events and activities to Schools, often with the help of alumni, to foster employability. The introduction of a networked Careers Link role for an academic member of staff in each School is central to this initiative. However, comparison with other institutions suggests there is still more scope to embed employability more deeply in University provision and the student experience.

In relation to the Careers Link role, it is anticipated that Careers Links will lead on a range of activities to promote employability such as careers days, varied assessment methods that mirror common workplace outputs, increased connections with alumni who can share their career experiences, and a greater encouragement for students to developing employability skills.



There are also ambitions to develop more instances of delivering professional skills workshops through the curriculum and to introduce more connected curricula projects such as the successful one introduced into the Graduate School for Interdisciplinary Studies. Employability will also be embedded more deeply in the curriculum via an increased focus in the approval process for new programmes and modules.

Finally, the Careers Centre is also reviewing its approach to School planning by using data and evidence, along with developing working documents that organise and plan the partnership with Schools more cohesively. It is hoped that this will introduce a more strategic and collaborative approach to better understand Schools' different priorities. Through capacity building and partnership working, the Careers Centre will have a more active role in supporting Schools to understand, engage with and embed employability throughout their provision.

## SECTION 3

# STRATEGY AND PRACTICE FOR ENHANCING LEARNING AND TEACHING

### 3.1 Strategic approach to enhancement

279 As mentioned earlier, under the leadership of the Vice-Principal Education (Proctor) we are writing a new Education Strategy. In the meantime, our strategic direction for enhancing learning and teaching is guided by the Quality Enhancement (QE) Strategy which has the following objectives:

- The improvement of teaching and learning quality wherever necessary and possible.
- Continual emphasis on improving our techniques to develop students as independent learners, to stretch their ambitions and competences and to stimulate their enthusiasm for learning.
- An enhanced appreciation among students and staff of the high quality of learning and teaching in the University and a shared ambition to contribute to their further refinement.
- The development and implementation of key strategic focal points in learning and teaching, as determined through periodic review.

### 3.2 Impact of enhancement themes on policy and practice

280 The University's engagement with and approach to the national Enhancement Themes has blossomed in recent years. Led by the Academic Policy Officer (Quality, an academic member of staff from the School of Biology and a team comprising staff and students, strands of work are now closely aligned with institutional priorities. In this section, we address the Student Transitions and Use of Evidence enhancement themes in turn.

#### *Student Transitions*

281 The team focused on the following strategic priorities for the Student Transitions Theme:

- The implementation of structures and initiatives to create a seamless transition from taught to research postgraduate study.
- The embedding of new initiatives that support and encourage students to make the transition from student to professional.
- The enhancement of support and information provided to students who benefit from the University's collaborative partnerships.
- The development of initiatives and resources that strengthen student confidence, resilience and independence.

#### **Evidence of institutional-level impact**

282 Our engagement in the transitions theme shaped a range of policies and practices. For example, substantial revisions were made to key policies and regulations as part of our efforts to smooth the transition from taught to research postgraduate study. In academic years 2017/18 and 2018/19 the Senate Postgraduate Regulations were revised to clearly define the taught degree programmes for all learner types and the associated exit awards, and a Change in Registration policy now governs the transitions between and within taught and research postgraduate degrees. In addition, major revision of the Policy for Students and Supervisors of Taught Postgraduates and the resulting Final Module in a Taught Postgraduate Programme Policy sets out an expectation of good practice, including recognition of alternative assessment methods, early allocation of supervisors, and supervisor and student responsibilities with respect to frequency of meetings, research training, feedback and assessment.

283 Institutional-level impact can emerge from School-level projects. For example, the concept behind a successfully funded project in History, which provided undergraduate students with a programme of academic skills support taught by postgraduate tutors, was adopted and rolled out as the Academic Skills Project. In the academic year 2017/18, 11 School co-ordinators and 52 workshop leaders, designed and delivered 114 workshops. Based on those registers, 1,086 participants (714 individual students) attended.

#### Evidence of School-level impact

284 The theme's impact is visible at a local, as well as institutional level. A total of 28 student and staff-led projects (representing 14 Schools and four professional service Units) received funding. For example, a research project conducted by a staff member in the School of Psychology & Neuroscience on 'Factors influencing the wellbeing of first year students' led to the establishment of the Wellbeing Working Group. In the academic year 2017/18, the group explored and put in place measures to manage the expectations of incoming first-year students and presented this to LTC members. The initial research project has been extended to include an online longitudinal study measuring the wellbeing of our incoming first-year students.

285 Outwith the funding scheme, the theme also encouraged the introduction of new practices at local level such as the establishment of [peer mentoring schemes](#)<sup>58</sup> in a number of Schools. These are largely overseen by CAPOD and involve more experienced students (second year and above) acting as mentors to the incoming first-year mentees. As mentioned earlier, some Schools have mentoring schemes for postgraduates, with incoming taught postgraduate students and research students being mentored by experienced research students. The schemes are student-led, with either a designated mentoring scheme representative in the School or the School President taking the lead.

286 As of January 2019, there were 1,411 students registered through CAPOD as either a mentor or a mentee. This included 766 students in Arts and Divinity, 337 in Science, and 308 in schemes outside of Schools (sports and widening participation). CAPOD currently runs 13 schemes, with 17 laying the foundations for launch in the academic year 2019/20. The mentoring schemes have been a great success and have mostly stemmed from students' proactiveness in establishing them. An example of success can be seen through Philosophy's scheme, which had 80 active members in the summer of 2018, despite Philosophy being one of the University's smaller Departments. The plan is to promote the schemes until we get to a situation where every School has mentoring opportunities in place for their students.

#### Further developments in student transitions

287 The University continues to build on and strengthen student transitions. We have worked to understand better and enhance students' readiness for study and their engagement with sources of academic advice and support (see details of the pre-arrivals survey discussed earlier in the document).

288 In 2017 we also completed the implementation of a new academic advising system which was led by the Proctor's Office and Registry with input from Schools and students. The new system automates the more routine parts of the Adviser of Studies' role, freeing up time during advising meetings for more discussion between Adviser and student. We have revised and expanded the advice on academic choices provided to both Advisers and students, ensuring that students are better informed about their options in our flexible degree structure and about sources of academic support. Initial feedback suggests that students are more satisfied now with the academic advice that they receive, as evidenced for example in the 2017 iGraduate survey which showed 92% of respondents to be satisfied with their [Academic Adviser](#)<sup>59</sup> and 94% satisfaction with the information that they received on optional module choices.

### Optimising the use of evidence to enhance the student experience

#### Approach to the theme

289 A streamlined approach has been taken to manage our portfolio of work for the current theme, which optimises the use of evidence to enhance the student experience. The large institutional team has been replaced with a small [steering group](#)<sup>60</sup> (comprising the theme lead, strand leads and the DoEd), and this group now meets more frequently. Theme updates are now provided to the Academic Monitoring Group on a quarterly basis and updates are provided to the Learning and Teaching Committee, and Postgraduate Research Committee. Eight staff and student projects were funded, including the toolkit

to support evidence-led enhancement work referred to below. In year 2 the group opted not to repeat an open call for funding, largely because our strategic priorities required the bulk of our grant, but also because to do so reflected our more streamlined approach with a smaller, focused set of priorities.

290 In terms of strategic priorities for the theme, the steering group is currently:

- Investigating factors influencing degree outcomes.
- Enhancing key staff capacity for the detailed statistical analysis of survey data.
- Using nomination data from teaching awards to identify and share good practice.
- Gathering and analysing evidence to inform the development of learning and teaching spaces.
- Enhancing attainment and building diversity across the student demographic.
- Developing the link between evidence and pedagogy.

#### Wider engagement with the theme

291 Our wider engagement with the theme has included collaborative projects, sector discussions and conference participation.

292 We have engaged with, and contributed to, two collaborative clusters: Learning Analytics led by the University of Strathclyde, and Employability and Distance Learning led by the Open University. As part of the learning analytics collaborative cluster, hosted a student intern who worked collaboratively with interns from the University of Edinburgh, University of Stirling and Robert Gordon University to develop and deliver student focus groups aimed at capturing the student voice on the use of learning analytics. Participation in collaborative cluster activity to date has been valuable not only in terms of progressing the projects themselves, but also in terms of the sharing of good practice and sectoral concerns with others.

293 We continue to work collaboratively with other institutions through sector-wide events, including participating in discussions surrounding using qualitative data for driving decision-making at scale and attendance at workshops which have included; 'Data Matters: Using Data to Improve the Student Experience' and 'Exploring Student Surveys'.

294 Staff and student attendance at the QAA's annual Enhancement Theme conference has nearly tripled in the last four years (from five in 2015 to 14 in 2018). In June 2018, one of our Masters students received a conference award (Most Inspiring Student-Led Contribution) for her presentation on 'Perceptions of health care needs and services at university'.

### 3.3 Approaches to identifying and sharing good practice

#### University-led approaches

##### Academic monitoring and review

295 Academic monitoring and review processes are central to our recognition of good practice. The critical components for this are an annual reflection process called Annual Academic Monitoring (AAM) and a rotating cycle of detailed subject-level reviews, the University-led Reviews of Learning and Teaching (URLT). Themes and good practice emerging from these processes are included in an annual report shared with the Academic Monitoring Group, the Learning and Teaching Committee, and the Postgraduate Research Committee for wider dissemination.

296 As part of the URLT, Schools submit a reflective analysis of all learning and teaching activities which, alongside the review team's report and School/Unit's resultant action plans, can be accessed by all University staff. This provides transparent access to subject-specific commendations and recommendations.

297 A specific development in the AAM process is the inclusion of a Question of the Year in the report pro forma. This addition has proven to be a valuable way to gather information on, and respond to, topical issues and/or areas for enhancement. For example, responses to the most recent question, related to the Careers Link role in academic Schools, were shared with the Careers Centre and as a result that data was used to better structure training for the Careers Links, and identify areas of good practice and areas of concern. By supplementing this material with insights from DLHE data, they are also able to identify Schools whose students may need more in-depth support.

#### Annual Academic Monitoring dissemination event

298 The AAM dissemination event was introduced in the academic year 2012/13 in response to feedback from Directors of Teaching (DoT) that the process should involve an opportunity for Schools to speak to and learn from each another. The intended outcomes are the dissemination and adoption of good practice across the University. The AMG (Academic Monitoring Group) identifies examples of good practice and these are shortlisted as potential topics for the AAM dissemination event. Directors of Teaching (DoTs) shape the programme by voting on their preferred topics and, at the event, relevant DoTs give short talks on the selected topics and lead discussion in groups. Those same groups then meet once more in the following month to broaden the dialogue. At the Learning and Teaching Committee, each group member highlights lessons learned from the exercise that can be adapted for their own disciplines and they then report any follow-up in the next year's AAM.

299 At a dissemination event in 2017, the use of exit interviews by Computer Science was explored by a group representing five Schools. The group's report was subsequently shared with the Learning and Teaching Committee, resulting in additional Schools (Chemistry and Mathematics & Statistics) successfully introducing exit interviews. They provide an opportunity to receive well thought out, consolidated feedback from graduating students on all aspects of their studies and to refine feedback gathered by other means. In the School of Computer Science, for example, students are asked about any perceived bias towards them or others on the basis of gender, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or other factors, and if so, how it affected their career plans. In the same School, the exit interviews contributed to the decision to revise lab provisions and layout which resulted in students having more space for bring-your-own-device work, more mobile whiteboards and fewer disruptions to student access in labs. Exit interviews also provide an opportunity for a School to have confirmed many positive aspects of a student's experience, which allows the School to continue the good practices it already has in place with confidence.

300 Feedback from the last three AAM events indicates that participants appreciate the spread of different topics and find it to be an invaluable opportunity to share ideas and further collaborations. The events also help colleagues feel like part of a community beyond their own School. One participant commented 'This is absolutely one of the best events in the teaching practice programme'.

#### Committees and groups

301 The Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC), attended by all the DoTs, provides an opportunity to foster and share good educational practice and promote developments in learning and teaching, embracing sound pedagogies and new technologies. This is achieved in a number of ways including presentations from DoTs about innovations in educational practice developed at the local School level; discussion of educational practices that have led to success in student satisfaction and areas that the University must focus on for development and improvement; and development of policy and strategy to promote forms of good educational practice across the University.

302 Dissemination of best practice at LTC has focused on the following areas over the most recent academic years: engaging and enhancing student feedback; increasing staff participation in teaching mobility and Erasmus+; the role of specific officers at School level that enhance the student academic experience (for example Student Experience Officers, Wellbeing Officers, and School-specific Careers Links); and the showcasing of various pedagogical initiatives across the University. Through the consistent dissemination of good practice at the committee level, members are encouraged to implement these developments within their own Schools, Departments and Units.

303 Members are also afforded the opportunity to participate in an away afternoon each academic year that focuses on areas of educational practice that the University views as key to the development of its strategic aims in the areas of learning and teaching. This event is organised in such a way as to involve LTC members in the development of the University's learning and teaching strategy in response to emerging areas of concern within the sector. Themes covered in recent academic years include: equality and diversity within the curriculum; development of the University's mental health and wellbeing agenda; the role of the DoT within the University; the role of lecture capture in learning and teaching, taught to research postgraduate transitions; and the research-led curriculum and employability skills. The LTC away afternoon is viewed as a key event in the academic calendar for members and participation rates are high. Similar awaydays are held for the Postgraduate Research Committee.

304 In addition to formal committee structures, frequent and informal opportunities are held for Schools to 'troubleshoot' or seek advice on best practice from colleagues via Head of School, DoT, DoPGR and DoPGT lunch meetings.

#### Academic fora

305 Whilst membership of LTC is restricted to DoTs and Directors of student-facing professional service Units, LTC holds regular (twice per year) academic fora open to all students and staff. Participation rates at these events is on average around 40 colleagues. These events focus on key areas of institutional development such as embedding enterprise in the curriculum, diversity and inclusion in learning and teaching, and making feedback work for you.

#### Masterclasses

306 In line with our Enhancement Theme work, the Proctor's Office piloted a series of masterclasses in the academic year 2018/19 for early career members of academic staff in the Arts Faculty. These are led by colleagues whose outstanding teaching qualities have been officially recognised through a teaching award or prize nomination. The aim is to disseminate best practice and make innovative teaching ideas more widely available across the Faculty. The format is informal with time for questions and discussion. It is also an opportunity to network with early career lecturers from across the Faculty. Feedback gathered to date indicated that most participants would attend future masterclasses. Cross-Faculty masterclasses will be rolled out in the academic year 2019/20, with topics and contributors identified by the Deans through the teaching nominations.

#### Funding and awards

307 Good practice is both identified and encouraged via a range of awards and funding opportunities available to staff:

- Outstanding individual or group contributions to teaching are identified by both students and Heads of Schools and rewarded annually at a joint Teaching Excellence Award ceremony held by the Students' Association and the Principal's Office. Award-winners are routinely invited to contribute to dissemination events or training courses organised across the University.
- Through the support of the McCall MacBain Foundation, the University awards bursaries to staff who advance the scholarship of learning and teaching. As part of the award criteria, nominees must demonstrate how they have disseminated teaching practice and agree in principle to participate in a good practice sharing event.

308 Up until the start of academic year 2018/19 Teaching Development funding was available for substantive, collaborative projects that have an impact on the organisational culture of learning and teaching within a group of Schools, Faculties or across the University. Reports of these projects were shared on the University's website and funding recipients presented posters at the AAM dissemination event. In May 2018, a temporary hold was put on the funding scheme to allow a postgraduate student to undertake research to evaluate and assess the impact of the Teaching Development fund. The research has provided recommendations for the future use of the fund which from academic year 2019/20 will be administered by SALT.

### St Andrews Learning and Teaching Initiative (SALTI) and the Centre for Higher Educational Research (CHER)

309 Best practice in pedagogical and educational research is now led by SALTI and CHER with support from the new Centre for Educational Enhancement and Development (CEED). Over the next couple of years, we aim further to develop and embed an institution-wide culture of pedagogical research to inform best practice in both learning and teaching, by introducing online accessible workshops, travel grants for pedagogical research dissemination and by providing research grants of up to £3,000 for pedagogical research and development.

### Teachers' Talk webpages

310 The University continues to bring information and resources (for example case studies and outputs from dissemination and academic forum events) together in one accessible space to enable sharing and showcasing of good practice.

## School-level approaches

### External accreditation by professional bodies and sector-level networks

311 Specific disciplines may be subject to external accreditation by professional bodies, resulting in commendation of practices that may lead to sharing across institutions. For example, Medicine is reviewed periodically by the General Medical Council and in 2017 received commendation on opportunities for technology enhanced learning (a priority area of development for the University). The BSc and MA Geography degree programmes are accredited by the Royal Geographical Society and were recently commended for the innovative use of fieldwork. The Academic Monitoring Group will ensure that identification of best practice by external bodies at the School level can be incorporated into the institutional strategic processes discussed above.

### Lunchtime events and School awaydays

312 Many Schools share best practice internally via regular short events or periodic awaydays. For example, Modern Languages organises fortnightly sessions on specific topics relevant to teaching within the School. These are open to all with the expectation that postgraduate tutors attend regularly. Medicine organises two annual awaydays, one on learning and teaching and another on pedagogical researcher development, to share best practice and encourage evidence-based research in teaching. Regardless of format, these events enable DoTs to capture information to share upwards through the institution via the AAM processes.

### Committees and groups

313 School Teaching Committees include student representation, which allows the School President to be involved with the decisions made within the School. This student representation goes alongside the School President's role in convening the School's SSCC (Student Staff Consultative Committee), where Class Representatives can take feedback from their cohort. This offers a forum for discussion between student representatives and staff in the School, and the Class Representatives can then report back to their constituents what changes may be taken forward.

314 The SSCC is a key committee in identifying areas of best practice from the student perspective. Whilst the methodologies used to identify issues and processes for recording output from SSCCs vary by School, the formal nature of these committees means that feedback and representation in the School continues to a high standard. In addition, the DoT consults with the School President and the School Teaching Committee and agrees the content of the School's AAM report prior to submission, ensuring that the best practice identified in the report is shared with students and staff.

### External examiner reports

315 The Associate Deans Education and Pro Dean Postgraduate (Taught and Research) produce annual summaries of areas identified for development and emergent themes from the external examiner reports. These are considered by the Academic Monitoring Group, and the themes are shared with DoTs via an annual report on outcomes from our quality monitoring processes which is submitted to the Learning and Teaching Committee. In addition, discussion of external examiner reports is a standing item on SSCC agendas, both to promote the quality of teaching and assessment they are receiving, and also to generate

discussion and identification of areas of best practice. As mentioned previously, from academic year 2019/20 we will make the reports available to students via Moodle or some other platform.

### Peer observation of teaching

316 Peer observation is not mandated by the University, but it is strongly encouraged as a way of supporting teaching and personal development through the collegial exchange of ideas. During the academic year 2019/20 we will identify in a more systematic way which Schools use peer observation in order that we might best share experiences and practice. Peer observation of teaching is however a requirement for research postgraduate students who teach, with some Schools such as Computer Science and Modern Languages encouraging their new postgraduate tutors to sit in and observe more experienced teachers. Feedback from the most recent University-led Reviews of Learning and Teaching (URLTs) held within the Schools of Physics & Astronomy and Geography & Sustainable Development, indicates that the scheme is useful for both parties involved, and a good way to provide informal feedback and learn about different strategies in teaching.

## 3.4 Engaging, developing and supporting staff

317 The University strongly supports the continued professional development of all staff and supporting our own talent – this speaks directly to our ambitions of Diverse St Andrews. This is best achieved by a supportive structure that encourages and enables colleagues to pursue professional development across the whole spectrum of their work in the University. Tailored support is provided according to staff roles.

### Induction and annual review

318 Before arriving in St Andrews, all new academic staff are encouraged to engage with the online [Academic Induction Resource \(AIR\)](#)<sup>61</sup>, in which key members of the University community explain the unique role titles in this university, the Scottish higher education context and the University's strategies, as well as highlighting further development opportunities and resources.

319 After being inducted locally in their Schools or Units by their line manager, all new staff are expected to attend a University staff induction event, which is constantly evolving in response to feedback from participants. The induction day offers an opportunity to meet fellow newcomers as well as colleagues from across the University. The morning session is open to all staff, both academic and professional services and covers organisational structure and a brief introduction to teaching, research and the student experience. Academic staff then receive an additional afternoon which covers the University's strategies for learning and teaching and research as well as an introduction to key professional services staff. For all staff cohorts, induction is complemented by a short course, New Staff Essentials, which runs monthly and introduces key information on such matters as health and safety, diversity awareness and career development.

320 As part of the Academic Review and Development process, Heads of School meet with new academic staff within one month of their start date in order to set realistic and specific objectives for the probationary period, with an emphasis on the first year. This includes identifying any development needs. The Head of School or a nominated deputy will review all academic and research staff annually. Many Schools have a staff handbook which outlines basic policies, procedures and School contacts, and some Schools have role-specific training or support. For example, Medicine provides tailored courses for medical demonstrators and Film Studies has a handbook specifically for module conveners.

### Workshops/courses

#### Academic Staff Development Programme

321 All academic staff are encouraged to participate in the [Academic Staff Development Programme \(ASDP\)](#)<sup>62</sup>, which introduces key policies and procedures as well as encouraging reflection on learning, teaching, assessment and research. In the academic year 2017/18, 120 academic staff participated in the programme and there was a 91% average satisfaction index rate. In consultation with their Head of

322 School, staff identify areas for development; for example, lecturers new to PhD supervision are required to attend training before supervising their first doctoral candidate. The ASDP is designed to complement the guidance and mentoring provided within Schools, where appropriate discipline-based support can best be given. ASDP workshops are largely delivered by selected St Andrews colleagues with known expertise and enthusiasm and provide an opportunity for participants to network with and learn from academic colleagues from across the institution.

323 The ASDP is subject to ongoing evaluation and review, with additions to the programme where there are clearly identified gaps, and existing activities updated where necessary. With the reorganisation of CAPOD and the establishment of CEED, further discussion will now take place to ensure that there is easy access and a clear development pathway for academic staff. This will need to address the learning and teaching activities that form part of ASDP and which will continue to be delivered as part of the CEED programme, as well as the other ASDP activities which will be delivered through Human Resources.

324 The emerging enabling strategies, including the People Strategy, will also have a bearing on the future focus for academic staff development. Once this is in place and the new structures with CEED and Human Resources are established, a strategic review of the ASDP will be undertaken.

325 The programme for PhD supervisor training is also currently under review by the Pro Dean Postgraduate (Taught and Research) with a view to moving some training material online for easier access and offering a broader range of additional training sessions.

### **Other sources of support**

#### **Mentoring**

326 Further support for academic and research staff is available through mentoring. The University runs a range of mentoring schemes for different staff groups. Although the organisation of all schemes is broadly similar, each scheme is tailored to meet the particular needs of the participants:

- The Elizabeth Garrett Mentoring Programme, sponsored by the Principal, aims to develop the leadership capability of women in, or aspiring to, academic leadership roles in the University.
- The Teaching, Research & Academic Mentoring Scheme (TRAM) aims to pair experienced academics (Mentors) with colleagues at an earlier career stage (Mentees), to provide guidance and structured support. This long-running, cross-institutional scheme now involves three universities other than St Andrews (Dundee, Glasgow School of Art, Abertay University) and The James Hutton Institute.
- Each School also has a local mentoring scheme as well as other approaches to supporting new staff, such as a buddy system in the School of Medicine.

#### **Aurora**

327 Aurora is a programme facilitated by Advance HE, which aims to develop women in both academic and professional roles (up to Reader level or professional services equivalent up to Grade 8) as leaders. The scheme is cross-institutional with learning activities provided. Each participating institution sponsors a cohort to complete the year-long programme on an annual basis and provides mentoring for their participants during this time. Within the university, CAPOD manages the mentoring aspects of the Aurora scheme from mentor recruitment through to the placing of mentors and mentees into partnerships. The University has been involved in Aurora since the academic year 2014/15, with 72 participants to date.

#### **Support for individual route applications for Advance HE fellowship**

328 CAPOD's Educational Developer (a Senior Fellow) runs workshops on how to write individual route applications for the Advance HE Fellowship scheme, and will review and comment on draft applications for any member of staff. In the academic year 2018/19, a fund to cover the cost of individual route applications for staff (disbursed as applications are received) was established. All staff, including postgraduate teachers, can attend the workshops and apply for funding.

#### **Changes to promotion criteria**

329 As mentioned earlier in the document, as part of a wider initiative to recognise the importance of education the University undertook a significant review of promotion criteria, establishing a new education-focused pathway which culminates with Professor. Principal Teaching Fellow was previously the highest possible grade for education-focused staff, equivalent in grade to Senior Lecturer. The weighting of research versus teaching in the promotions criteria was adjusted to reflect better priorities for education-focused staff.

### **3.5 Effectiveness of institutional approach to enhancing learning and teaching**

330 We are confident that, since the previous ELIR, we have made considerable progress in facilitating wider sharing of approaches to enhancing learning and teaching, including the adoption of strategies and initiatives across the University, addressing, in part, a concern that some Schools required better integration. This approach to sharing good practice has provided opportunities for all by synergising with the current Enhancement Theme, drawing in established discipline expertise, such as our existing strengths in medical education, and facilitating the emergence of a more robust culture of pedagogical research. Our emphasis on the sharing of ideas and practice has also contributed to the development and cross-Faculty involvement of initiatives such as SALT and CHER. In addition to the pedagogical research focus of SALT, we continue to seek ways to improve how best practice is disseminated to Schools and students. DoTs provide an essential role within Schools and adopt much of the responsibility at a School level and increasing numbers of roles for more School staff to assume (for example Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Champions) has aided wider engagement.

331 The success of our initiatives depends not only on the leadership of the Proctor's Office or the academic Schools but also on professional service Units for the implementation of effective approaches to enhancement. This concept of shared responsibility has been one of our strengths in recent years, but we recognise that its success is dependent on a high-level strategic commitment.

### **3.6 Opportunities for enhancement**

Our review and reflection on our approach to the enhancement of teaching and learning, with particular concern for our strategic themes and building on earlier developments, has led to the identification of two areas that may provide opportunities for additional enhancement:

#### **Academic Staff Development Programme**

The outcomes from the ASDP review will be used to enhance the current offering, particularly with a view to attracting mid- and senior-level academics to engage with and continue their professional development.

#### **Ensuring the implementation and adoption of best practice**

Ensuring the implementation and adoption of best practice is an area for development. When some responsibilities sit between two roles, experience has shown that uptake can be variable, and clearly demarcated lines of responsibility need to be established. Recent use of AAM reports to capture School-level adoption of policy and best practice has started this process of follow-up and checking of compliance.



## SECTION 4

## ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND QUALITY PROCESSES

332 In this section we begin by considering the key features of our approach. We then consider how our standards are integrated into an effective system and inform the development of curricula and assessment. We go on to explain how external reference points inform our standards, including how we have taken action since the last ELIR. We then turn to a future orientation to consider how data can inform the processes of evaluation and action, before concluding the section by outlining some specific areas for future enhancement.

### 4.1 Strategic approach to academic standards and quality processes

333 The University's strategic approach to the student learning experience is governed by the Quality Enhancement Framework and UK Quality Code. We believe that we have a well-developed approach to securing academic standards supported by a range of robust quality assurance processes. These approaches, structures and processes are underpinned by a number of guiding principles. Firstly, we believe that although our quality assurance processes must ensure consistency of standards, they also need to be sufficiently streamlined and flexible to ensure that they do not become overly burdensome for Schools. When Schools are preparing for a University-led Review of Learning and Teaching, and PSRB (Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies) accreditation, we therefore try where possible to submit the same paperwork but with additional narrative for the URLT.

334 Secondly, we value the standardisation of our quality processes and conformity of processes across Schools as this enables us through the Academic Monitoring Group to have a holistic oversight of standards across all Schools and undertake benchmarking across disciplines. For example, all curriculum proposals are considered by one central University group, Schools use the same module evaluation questions, complete the same Annual Academic Monitoring form and have externals appointed and reporting using one standard University process.

335 Thirdly, we also believe that our quality assurance structures should be constructive dialogues with Schools and Units which are held in an open and supportive environment, and that we all have a shared responsibility for academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience.

336 Although our strategic approach to academic standards and quality processes has not changed significantly since the last ELIR, additional new processes have been introduced to support new collaborative degree programmes such as ScotGEM and steps are being taken to ensure that our quality assurance mechanisms are appropriate for our Graduate Apprenticeship programme. The new Global Strategy outlines our institutional aim to develop more strategic partnerships and as such our academic standards and quality processes will be kept under continual review to ensure that they properly support any new provision. In addition, we keep under close review all external sector-wide developments in relation to quality such as the development of a new taught postgraduate student survey by the Office for Students, trends in degree classifications and government concerns about grade inflation.

### 4.2 Key features

#### *Educational philosophy and pedagogy*

337 World-class teaching, delivered by a research-led community of scholars, lies at the centre of the St Andrews approach to pedagogy. Our taught curriculum, our learning and teaching methodologies, and our approaches to assessment are continually developed to reflect the high quality of our students.

338 Innovation at St Andrews is driven by a commitment to both pedagogical excellence and a rigorous and reflective attitude towards maintaining and developing the highest standards. Learning and teaching at

St Andrews has a long tradition of small-group teaching providing for high quality classroom exchanges. For larger class sizes, technological innovation in teaching (such as the lecture capture system, use of lecture clickers and the facilities for flipped classrooms) has enabled us to strike a student-focused balance between scheduled teaching and guided learning that allows students to structure their study habits and to become independent and self-motivated learners.

### **Organisation of learning and teaching and standard setting**

#### **Senate and Court**

339 The University Senate, acting through Academic Council, has overarching responsibility for academic standards. Moreover, the University Court, through the Audit and Risk Committee, also monitors academic quality and standards through its scrutiny of an annual report from the Academic Assurance Group (AAG) and the SFC Annual Report on Institution-led Review of Quality. The AAG annual report provides an overview of key achievements over the previous year and the main challenges in the future. It also outlines the key risks to be faced over the next year as identified through our monitoring of the learning and teaching elements of the University's Risk Register.

#### **Academic Monitoring Group**

340 St Andrews boasts a sophisticated and multi-layered system of academic monitoring that has the concept of continued enhancement at its core. The central body for this task is the Academic Monitoring Group (AMG), currently chaired by the Dean of Arts and Divinity. Membership also comprises the Dean of Science, the Associate Deans Education, the Provost, the Head of Education Policy and Quality, the Pro Dean Postgraduate (Taught and Research), the Academic Policy Officer (Quality), and two student representatives. Our decision in 2018 to move the quality monitoring processes from CAPOD to the Proctor's Office, resulting in the creation of the role of Head of Education Policy & Quality, has greatly improved the ability of the AMG to focus on quality enhancement.

341 The AMG receives reports from external examiners, Annual Academic Monitoring reports, conducts the Annual Academic Monitoring Dialogues, receives and responds to feedback data (including NSS, internal surveys and Module Evaluation Questionnaire data), organises the periodic reviews of Schools and student-facing service Units (URLT) and proactively commissions research (for example into longitudinal marking trends). AMG also receives annual reports on student progression and completion, academic appeals and complaints, academic misconduct, and study abroad. Academic monitoring forms a central process for the identification and dissemination of best practice across the University.

#### **Proctor's Office**

342 While a high degree of School delegated authority and the fostering of discipline-specific cultures is a characteristic feature of learning and teaching at St Andrews, the Proctor's Office supports Schools and ensures that a robust set of monitoring policies and processes is in place to ensure overall compliance with our high standards. This is led by the Vice-Principal Education (Proctor), who has overall responsibility for education across the University.

343 The Proctor's Office also receives and acts on reports from external examiners. The Associate Deans Education and Pro Dean Postgraduate (Taught and Research) are notified when an external examiner requests an institutional-level response to a matter raised in their report. The relevant Associate Dean or Pro Dean responds, and the response is uploaded to the online external examiner system. The Associate Deans and Pro Dean also take responsibility for compiling an annual summary of good practice and areas for enhancement as identified by the external examiners. These are considered by AMG and the summarised key themes are shared at Learning and Teaching Committee. In September 2018, for instance, AMG learned from the external examiners' reports that several Schools in the Arts Faculty were operating unnecessarily intensive systems of double marking and moderation. This observation was subsequently followed up by the Deans and Directors of Teaching with a view to recommending a consistent practice in line with University policy. The University is satisfied with the level of School and institutional-level oversight of external examiner feedback.

#### **Academic Schools**

344 Our 20 Schools take responsibility for setting, monitoring and refreshing academic standards at a local level. In each School, the Director of Teaching plays a central role in the organisation, delivery and monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment. DoTs work closely with other School officers (Exams Officer, Directors of Taught/Research Postgraduates, Disability, Careers Links and Diversity/Equality Officers, Academic Misconduct Officers, Advisers of Studies, Admissions Officers), usually in the formal context of the Schools' Teaching Committees. The elected School President provides effective student representation on this committee which deals with issues such as curricular changes, assessment, Annual Academic Monitoring, feedback (e.g. NSS, Module Evaluation Questionnaires, Student Staff Consultative Committee). Directors of Teaching across Schools have plenty of opportunities for formal and informal interaction in settings such as the Learning and Teaching Committee, Teaching Fora and Director of Teaching lunches.

### **4.3 Integrated approach to standards**

345 The various institutional levels involved in delivering learning and teaching at St Andrews co-operate in a fully integrated and collegial manner in order to define, maintain and enhance academic standards. The following key areas will illustrate this integrated approach.

#### **University-led Reviews of Learning and Teaching (URLT)**

346 These review exercises are carried out for every School and student-facing Unit once every six years. A panel led by the appropriate Dean, including two external subject specialists, two student representatives, an experienced member of staff from another academic School of the University and either the Head of Education Policy and Quality or the Academic Policy Officer (Quality), reviews a set of data and documents including a detailed reflective self-analysis provided by the School. Benchmarking statements and PSRB criteria feature as part of the exercise with the externals scrutinising and advising on both curriculum/syllabus design and the standards achieved in pieces of student work, as well as across a student cohort. Through the recent addition of a Student View document, organised by the School President, URLTs now provide a much more detailed resource to gauge learners' opinions in each School. Moreover, the inclusion of the DoEd as an ex officio member of the panel, has enabled input from the student perspective.

347 Having reviewed the set of data and documents, the review team then visits the School for a day of conversations with different stakeholder groups (research, teaching and administrative staff; undergraduate, taught and research postgraduate students). On this basis a detailed report is drawn up by the panel which culminates in a list of commendations (to identify, highlight and reinforce instances of best practice) and recommendations (to direct the School to areas/issues where potential for enhancement has been identified). In response to the report, Schools are required to draw up an action plan, the content and implementation of which is monitored by the AMG.

348 The URLT process and outcomes (in terms of commendations and recommendations) are reflected upon in June of each year by the Head of Education Policy and Quality, and Academic Policy Officer (Quality) and subsequently shared with AMG. Issues identified as part of the URLT review were the need for a clearer connection between the URLT and Strategic Planning processes; the need for the School or Unit within their reflective analysis to consider their follow-up to the previous URLT; and the need for the School or Unit to submit a year-on report to AMG summarising progress with their Action Plan.

349 The schedule of Schools and Units reviewed since the last ELIR, with the review outcomes, is provided in Table 6 overleaf. There was only one outcome where a caveat was introduced (details of the URLT review and follow up are provided within the Advance Information Set). The University is satisfied that the issues which arose during the review were robustly and swiftly followed up by AMG and that in the future consideration will be given to how best support colleagues before and during the establishment of a new School.



Table 6: URLTs and outcomes

School/Department/Unit	Date of review	Outcome
CAPOD	April 2019	<b>Confidence</b> in support of Learning and Teaching
Computer Science	April 2019	<b>Confidence</b> in Learning and Teaching
Geography & Sustainable Development	November 2018	<b>Confidence</b> in Learning and Teaching
Physics & Astronomy	November 2018	<b>Confidence</b> in Learning and Teaching
Management	October 2018	<b>Confidence</b> in Learning and Teaching
Library	April 2018	<b>Confidence</b> in support of Learning and Teaching
Divinity	March 2018	<b>Confidence</b> in Learning and Teaching
Earth & Environmental Sciences	November 2017	<b>Confidence</b> in Learning and Teaching, with a <b>caveat</b>
Philosophy	November 2017	<b>Confidence</b> in Learning and Teaching
Careers	April 2017	<b>Confidence</b> in Learning and Teaching
English Language Teaching	February 2017	<b>Confidence</b> in Learning and Teaching
Medicine	November 2016	<b>Confidence</b> in Learning and Teaching
Social Anthropology	November 2016	<b>Confidence</b> in Learning and Teaching
Chemistry	March 2016	<b>Confidence</b> in Learning and Teaching
Music	March 2016	<b>Confidence</b> in Learning and Teaching
Biology	April 2016	<b>Confidence</b> in Learning and Teaching
Mathematics & Statistics	April 2015	<b>Confidence</b> in Learning and Teaching
Medicine (interim review)	April 2015	Excellent student experience noted along with some recommendations

350 The Academic Monitoring Group (AMG) agreed that the full URLT of the School of Medicine should be postponed from academic year 2015/16 to 2016/17 to allow sufficient time for the School to consolidate ideas for, and make progress on, planned curriculum development. Meanwhile, the AMG instructed that an internal interim review led by the Dean of Science should be conducted to provide an opportunity for discussion with staff and students of the School.

### Annual Academic Monitoring (AAM)

351 Annual Academic Monitoring and URLTs also provide an effective mechanism to identify institutional-level themes for further exploration. This enables the University to disseminate good practice and identify areas that require institutional-level support or policy change. For example, AMG's consideration of AAM reports led to the discussion of the following topics during the AAM dialogues: support for students with mental health conditions, and teaching delivered by postgraduate tutors and mentoring schemes for students.

352 This process embeds an ongoing practice of reflection and self-assessment in the Schools' approach to reviewing their own provision of learning and teaching. Schools complete a self-assessment form updated every year with a new 'question of the year' which allows us to gather information on or respond to topical issues and/or areas for enhancement. Schools also reflect on how they have dealt with previously-identified challenges, which developments in the current academic year have been successful and which have proved problematic. The report is evidence-based with Schools using data such as external examiners' feedback, NSS and other survey results. Schools routinely comment on the results of internal student feedback data (Module Evaluation Questionnaires) and highlight areas of particular concern or of notably good practice. These feedback data are made easily digestible through their presentation in the form of a report which comprises a grid showing all modules with colour coded

results by question (essentially blue-excellent, green-good, red-poor). The report sets mean scores against a University average to highlight areas of concern at an easy glance. The reports are considered by AMG and the Deans of Faculty ask for a response from Schools on any modules or common themes showing high levels of red or blue.

353 In 2019, the Annual Academic Monitoring process has been enhanced by the provision of a dashboard which allows Schools to access data relating to module and degree performance at their convenience. Previously these data were provided in a series of static spreadsheets (at least five per School), which were time-consuming to create and access. Working together with the Business Intelligence team, Planning developed a QlikView dashboard which allows access to all module outcome data in a single, central location. The dashboard features improved visualisations, allowing users to see at a glance the proportions of students achieving each outcome, rather than just raw numbers as previously supplied. Users can also quickly switch between modules, years, and cohorts, creating more streamlined processes for Schools. Behind-the-scenes enhancements also mean that the data are captured in a much more efficient, automated, and reliable process. Data are now also provided to allow Schools to reflect on their research postgraduate student cohorts, including completion rates, progress review, viva, and degree outcomes. Previously, these data have not been available in a standard summarised form and were only provided on an ad-hoc basis or was self-calculated by Schools, leading to inconsistencies.

354 Schools are asked to reflect on these data as part of the AAM process, and as part of a recent review, the dates for the submission of the AAM reports were altered to match up with the data availability to allow for better use of evidence in these reports.

355 Following a pilot in some Schools in 2018, each School's AAM report from 2019 will include sections specific to the research postgraduate experience and Schools will be asked to reflect on areas of good practice and also areas for improvement in their support of students.

356 The Schools' AAM reports are fully discussed during a dedicated meeting of the AMG. Wider themes are identified and addressed in feedback given to all the Schools, while specific issues are dealt with by individual conversations. Moreover, using a rolling annual rota, a third of all Schools are invited to the Annual Academic Monitoring dialogues which are 45-minute conversations between the AMG and a panel (HoS, DoT, DoPGR and School President). During these dialogues, issues addressed in the reports can be discussed in greater depth and Schools can bring requests to the attention of AMG.

357 The schedule of AAM Dialogues since the last ELIR is indicated in the table below.

Table 7: Schedule of AAM dialogues

November 2018	Chemistry Earth & Environmental Sciences Economics & Finance History Mathematics & Statistics Music Psychology & Neuroscience Social Anthropology
September 2017	Art History Biology Computer Science ELT English International Relations Medicine Physics & Astronomy
September 2016	Classics Economics & Finance Mathematics & Statistics Modern Languages Philosophy Psychology & Neuroscience
September 2015	Chemistry Divinity Film Studies Geography & Geosciences History Management Social Anthropology

## 4.4 Curriculum and assessment

### Curriculum innovation and monitoring

358 The Vice-Principal Education (Proctor) and the Deans have overall responsibility for aligning quality enhancement with quality assurance as well as for constructive engagement with newly arising issues or wider themes (such as diversity in the curriculum, enterprise education, employability, and sustainability). New curricular developments are initiated by (groups of) staff through their School Teaching Committee, with new proposals (approved by the DoT/HoS and fully scrutinised by the relevant external examiner) being reviewed and approved by the Curriculum Approvals Group (CAG). CAG is jointly chaired by the Pro Deans Curriculum who have responsibility for curricular matters and act under the authority of the Deans.

359 CAG monitors adherence to the external reference points such as the SCQF and subject benchmark statements as well as internal standards and regulations (e.g. structure, credit weighting, academic level, assessment). CAG also champions wider curricular innovation, for example by facilitating interdisciplinary collaboration or disseminating best practice across Schools and Faculties.

360 Schools are required to match their assessment formats to intended learning outcomes formulated for each module. The University is in the process of compiling a central record of all module learning outcomes and CAG is now tasked to monitor the connection between proposed assessment formats and learning outcomes for newly introduced modules.

361 External reference points are integrated into the curriculum approvals process. There is a requirement for new programmes and modules to take account of subject benchmark statements and to be mapped to the appropriate SCQF level. External examiner comments are required when a new programme or module is proposed, or when a significant change is made to an existing one, and programme specifications are created for all new programmes.

362 In this respect, CAG is effectively supported by a dedicated Curriculum Officer from the University Registry. Registry has led the introduction of C-View, an online portal, which facilitates access to the required documents and provides for quick dissemination and submission of the forms. CAG meets regularly and can deal with curriculum proposals swiftly allowing the University to respond with great agility to the arrival of new staff or sudden changes in student demand for provision in a certain area.

363 Curricular innovation can also easily be initiated outside the CAG process in response to new evidence. For example, the University's 2018 NSS results were once again very strong, but included a disappointingly low score for Question 22, which refers to students' satisfaction with the opportunities for group work available to them. This was discussed at the 2018 annual academic dialogues following which the Dean of Arts and Divinity convened a best-practice group of Schools whose provision of group work was in contradistinction rated very highly, and summarised their approaches in a short guidance document. This was then disseminated amongst all Schools at a DoT event with a recommendation to review their respective curricular and pedagogic practice. The 2019 NSS scores for Q22 show a marked improvement in this area and we feel confident that it was down to this intervention.

### Management of assessment

#### Appropriate forms and regimes of assessment

364 The management of assessment forms a central part of the University's stewardship of academic standards and the maintenance of quality. Through CAG, all forms of assessment in new or revised modules are monitored and approved. The aim is to combine appropriateness with regard to credit weighting, fairness and outcomes (both subject-specific and oriented towards transferable skills) with encouragement towards variety and innovation. Schools are expected to provide a mix of assessment formats across their programmes. The University's Policy on Assessment provides guidance to Schools and ensures comparable levels of challenge, workload and transparency. There is an awareness of the close link between assessment practices and learner behaviour leading to frequent reflection on the appropriateness of the volume and manner of assessment types. Initiated in response to student feedback, a recent review of the volume of assessed work has led, in some Schools, to a large-scale reconfiguration of the number of assignments and the overall quantity of assessed work. Research into the assessment practices of HEIs in our peer group had also indicated that some of our Schools were unusually heavy in their assessment regimes.

#### Appropriate marking criteria and standards

365 All Schools define and publish detailed marking criteria in School and module handbooks, together with information on any grade translation processes that may be necessary to map marks onto our 20-point reporting scale. The marking descriptors are actively referenced in feedback given to students and there are clear guidelines for each School as to the time frame for the return of submitted work and the structure of the forms used to record and provide feedback. Rules are in place to ensure that the marking of coursework and examinations is moderated or, for larger pieces such as dissertations and projects, that full second marking is used to ensure equitable outcomes and comparable standards. New staff are fully trained, and groups of tutors engage in calibration exercises such as marking fairs. The regulations guiding marking and assessment practices are published in the form of two University policies ([Assessment Policies and Procedures](#)<sup>63</sup>, and [Policy on Assessment: Marking and Standard Setting](#)<sup>64</sup>) that set minimum standards to be met across the institution.

#### Use of technology and statistical review

366 Marking of student assignments is conducted anonymously where possible. Students usually submit their assignments electronically through the University's Module Management System (MMS), which records the submission, links directly to Turnitin software and enables markers to provide electronic feedback directly to the student. Grades are typically recorded through the same system, collated and reported

to Registry after scrutiny and approval at the School Board and Decanal levels. MMS automatically generates analytical graphs and flags up unusual grade distributions in modules that may require further investigation from the Associate Deans Education, although these tools need to be used thoughtfully on small cohort data.

### Accommodating individual needs and disabilities

367 In academic year 2018/19, a working group addressed the issue of how students with special needs (learning disabilities, mental health, physical disability) can be most appropriately assessed and the necessary appropriate accommodations offered, in a supportive context. The working group produced a new [Policy on Academic Adjustments for Disabled Students](#)<sup>65</sup> which was approved for implementation in academic year 2019/20. The policy introduces new procedures for requesting alternative modes of assessment. The impact and operation of these procedures will be monitored by the Disability Team at Student Services through the documentation of each case to ensure consistency of treatment and to create a set of case studies of best practice. The policy guidance document for staff places a strong emphasis on the importance of inclusive teaching and assessment. To support greater staff engagement with inclusivity, we are planning to adjust the new module proposal form to invite module co-ordinators to think about and comment on inclusion during the module creation process.

### Managing assessment appeals

368 The appeals process is governed by the University Policy on Student Academic Appeals. Providing they can demonstrate grounds under the policy, students may request a review of an academic decision made about: a student's assessment; discretionary progression within or completion of a programme of study; or termination of studies on academic grounds. Students may not appeal against matters of academic judgment.

369 The appeals policy clearly sets out the grounds upon which an appeal can be made and outlines the process to be followed when launching an appeal (providing links to requisite pro forma). The policy also explains the stages of the appeals process, both Stage 1 – Resolution at School or Faculty level, and Stage 2 – Senate level, and provides guidance as to available sources of information and advice, both internal and external, including details of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

370 An information session on the appeals process is now included in the induction process for new Heads of Schools and the Senate Office is working with CAPOD to offer information workshops to existing staff.

### Managing academic misconduct

371 The academic misconduct process is governed by the University [Policy on Good Academic Practice \(GAP\)](#)<sup>66</sup>. The GAP policy was restructured in academic year 2018/19 to make clearer the processes of identification, escalation, investigation, and sanctioning for specific cases of academic misconduct at the University. Whereas previously the policy was predominantly focused on the handling of cases of academic misconduct by undergraduate and taught postgraduate students, the policy has now been restructured to include research postgraduates and allegations that arise after a degree has been awarded. As a result, the University has the flexibility to account for the significant nuances involved in handling cases of academic misconduct at all levels of study.

372 As part of this restructuring, a series of additions and clarifications were made to the policy in order to improve processes and the application of sanctions. A penalty can be applied only after a careful process, standardised across the University. Students found to have committed academic misconduct are added to the academic misconduct register. The Education Advocate for students at the Students' Association can give advice to students and can accompany them to academic misconduct hearings if necessary.

373 All Schools have a nominated Academic Misconduct Officer who is responsible for dealing with allegations of academic misconduct in the School. There is also an annual training event for all Academic Misconduct Officers at the start of the academic year along with extensive training on how to conduct School and University-level Boards of Adjudication.

374 Students are required to complete compulsory online Training in Good Academic Practice (TGAP), an online course designed by St Andrews staff and introduced for all students from academic year 2013/14.

375 TGAP marked a significant change in our approach to academic misconduct, actively promoting good academic practice before penalising bad practice.

376 A three-School pilot was launched in January 2019 to test the screening of submitted PhD theses by Turnitin anti-plagiarism software. This model is likely to be rolled out across the University in order to create an even greater degree of confidence about the academic integrity of the research generated by our research postgraduate students.

377 The University also introduced two new policies dealing with research integrity in January 2019 and clear procedures were put in place to determine whether an allegation should be investigated as academic or research misconduct, and for passing cases between the two processes if necessary. From academic year 2019/20 all postgraduate research students are required to complete a suite of training modules on research integrity in addition to the TGAP training.

## 4.5 Use of external reference points and expertise in quality processes

### Benchmarks and standards

378 The University's approach to assuring and enhancing learning and teaching quality is informed by nationally agreed reference points. These include the Quality Enhancement Framework, UK Quality Code, Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF), Subject Benchmark Statements, External Examiners and Professional, Regulatory and Statutory Bodies (PSRBs). These reference points are fully integrated into University procedures for managing academic standards.

379 Benchmarking statements and PSRB criteria feature in University-led Reviews of Learning and Teaching and accreditation exercises, during which other external experts scrutinise and advice on both curriculum/syllabus design and the standards achieved in pieces of student work, as well as across a student cohort.

380 In addition to these mechanisms, staff keep abreast of wider norms and standards for the sector and for their disciplines by engaging fully at every level with other external networks such as Advance HE, Universities Scotland, Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee, the Teaching Quality Forum and the Quality Strategy Network. Both academic and professional services staff are given support to attend conferences and other events of relevance to their area of responsibility and expertise. The Vice-Principal Education (Proctor) and the Head of Education Policy and Quality are both trained ELIR reviewers and have experience of undertaking ELIRs in other institutions.

381 As is standard practice across the sector, we involve experienced colleagues from other universities as external examiners in our efforts to maintain and enhance our academic standards.

382 Where accreditation through professional bodies is required, our Schools undergo an additional external validation process to ensure full compliance with all applicable standards.

### UK Quality Code for Higher Education

383 The UK Quality Code is a key reference point and integral to maintaining our academic standards. A new version of the Code was published in May 2018 following a significant redevelopment. At sector level, key staff attended sessions and contributed to discussions during the development phase of the new Code. In addition, colleagues contributed to the writing groups for the Advice and Guidance on 'Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access' and 'Assessment'.

384 We have systematically used the introduction of the Code to reflect upon our provision and policies. This has been a very useful exercise in engaging and familiarising colleagues with the new Code more widely in the University. Appointed leads carried out a comprehensive mapping to the Advice and Guidance (using a traffic light system to indicate where our practices are robust and effective, where

work is ongoing and where further work is required). This facilitated extensive discussion and reflection and enabled the University to gather detailed evidence and assurance that we meet the Expectations and Practices set out in the Code. Key outcomes of the mapping exercise (i.e. areas of particularly good practice, areas for enhancement, and approaches taken that are slightly different to that of the sector norm) can be found in the AIS. To this end the Education Strategic Management Group will monitor our Quality Code mapping on an annual basis to ensure that we have mechanisms in place for continual review and that the Code is embedded in our practices.

385 **As a result of the mapping we are confident that we have the evidence that we comply with the Expectations and Practices laid out in the Code.** We plan to build on our successful engagement and alignment with the new Code by using it more overtly as a key reference point during the design, implementation and revision of policies and practices.

### **External examiners**

386 External reference points and the expertise of our external examiners are integrated at every stage. For example, Subject Benchmark Statements and the UK Quality Code are used as points of reference when new modules and programmes are being developed. In addition, external examiners are consulted on new modules and programmes and also for significant changes to existing ones. They also monitor exam paper content, may moderate the marking of exam scripts and coursework, and attend the Module Boards. External examiners have access to the MMS sites of the modules in their remit and can therefore sample all pieces of electronically submitted coursework, feedback and the awarding of marks throughout the semester. As mentioned above, the reports submitted by external examiners are received and discussed by HoSs, DoTs, Pro Deans and the AMG which follows up on identified issues.

387 Two external subject specialists also serve on the URLT panels and comment in particular on curricular matters. Moreover, we have piloted a practice whereby Schools and student-facing Units can invite a senior international assessor to carry out a detailed scrutiny of their organisation, processes and learning and teaching practices as part of the URLT process. Examples of such reviews are the 2014/15 visit to the School of Mathematics & Statistics by Professor R Devaney (Boston University), the 2015/16 visit to Psychology & Neuroscience by Dr B Johnson (Cornell) and Professor M Platow (Australian National University) and the visit to the School of Physics & Astronomy by Professor D Kane (Macquarie University) in 2018. In December 2018, as a result of the success of this pilot, AMG agreed that in future Schools would be invited to make a specific case for international reviewers, for example to assist with curriculum reform. International perspectives related to quality monitoring and enhancement are also gained through participation in focus groups such as the EUA's (European University Association) focus group on the quality assurance of student-centred learning.

## **4.6 Commentary on action taken since ELIR 3**

388 In addition to the items discussed earlier, we have continued to reflect on the ways in which we maintain and enhance our academic standards. Innovations introduced since the last ELIR include the following:

- Two new posts, the Associate Deans Education, have been created; these have a particular focus on educational matters, lead on innovative teaching and assessment related projects and closely scrutinise outcome patterns. The two Associate Deans Students now take on a broader remit that includes admissions and widening access.
- Responsibility for quality assurance and academic monitoring has moved from CAPOD to the Proctor's Office, where the Academic Policy Officer responsible can work much more seamlessly with senior University officers leading the various quality assurance and enhancement processes.
- We have encouraged Schools to revise their feedback forms for submitted coursework (including indicative grids) so they are mapped clearly onto the applicable marking criteria/grade descriptors (for example in the School of History).

- URLT review exercises have moved from a five-year cycle to a six-year cycle to accommodate new Schools (such as the Graduate School for Interdisciplinary Studies). The URLT review documentation has been supplemented with a Student View report which is prepared by the School President independently from the School. This is submitted to the review panel with students indicating in advance whether they wish the report to be shared with the School. This report was introduced at the suggestion of the DoEd to ensure that all students were given an opportunity to contribute to the review process (not just the small groups in attendance on the review day), and the student voice was taken into consideration during the compilation of the lines of enquiry for the review day. This feedback has influenced commendations and recommendations made to Schools. For example, the student view compiled for Physics & Astronomy included feedback on events for PhD students. The review team explored this area and recommended that the School ensured all opportunities for research postgraduate students to socialise are appropriately badged and signposted.
- A dedicated section for comments on research postgraduate matters has been added to the AAM reporting forms, and the AMG's review of MEQ data (in the shape of summary data charts) has been made more methodical. These data are now reviewed twice per year and Directors of Teaching are specifically invited to comment on them. Besides, a digital facility has been created for reviewing the MEQ data on an individual module over a number of years to chart longer-term changes.
- In academic year 2018/19, work was completed to scrutinise the wording of the questions in our MEQ against the emerging literature on bias in such surveys (especially that related to gender, disability and ethnic background) with a view to minimising bias.
- We have introduced the C-View online portal to ease and expedite the flow of key documents involved in curricular innovation and amendment while, at the same time, ensuring compliance with relevant benchmarks.
- We have moved reporting by external examiners to an online system whereby reports are submitted digitally and then provided to Heads of School for comment before being considered by the Proctor's Office.
- We have launched the St Andrews Learning and Teaching Initiative which has the remit of initiating, improving and disseminating pedagogical research amongst members of staff, for example through conference or web-based material as well as providing training in pedagogical research methods.
- A three-School pilot was launched in January 2019 to test the screening of submitted PhD theses by Turnitin software; if successful, this model will be rolled out across the institution in order to create an even greater degree of confidence about the academic integrity of the research generated by our research postgraduate students.

## **4.7 Approach to using data to inform decision-making and evaluation**

### ***Effectiveness of the arrangements for securing academic standards***

389 While we are confident about our academic standards and have assurance of these based on external reviews and rankings, we are not complacent. Our commitment to identifying and resolving issues and delivering enhancement is evidenced throughout this document. It is, however, fair to say that, since the last ELIR, we have been able to continue to attract an outstanding student body to St Andrews and to offer a level of learning and teaching that has proved highly and consistently satisfactory to them. Measured by available league table rankings or the NSS survey, we can claim to be one of the most successful teaching institutions across the higher education sector in the UK. We have also fared well in the 2017 TEF assessment (winning an institutional Gold rating); and we continue to attract very positive assessments from our external examiners, both for our standard academic operations and in the context of our regular URLT exercises. Our academic Risk Register, monitored by Court, rates all routine potential learning and teaching risks as low.

390 We thus have reason to be confident about our ability to set, maintain and enhance our academic standards, but we consider this to be a constant work in progress. We have to be sensitive to new challenges and different standards that emerge as priority issues; to name but a few examples, elaborated in detail elsewhere in this document:

- The combination of paying careful attention to student wellbeing and mental health needs together with our commitment to rigorous academic challenges.
- The provision of suitable and sensitively attuned learning contexts and assessment methods for students with different (and multiple) forms of disability.
- The deeper integration of skills training informed by concepts such as sustainability, enterprise education and employability into our curricula and teaching programmes.

### ***Effectiveness of the institution's approach to self-evaluation, including the effective use of data to inform decision-making***

391 The University's approach to self-evaluation is multi-layered and highly effective. It engages staff and students at different levels and is driven by a constructive curiosity. We are keen to find out what the realistic picture is, measure our findings against the standards to which we subscribe and encourage creative thinking about enhancement and the dissemination of best practice at every stage. We collect, interrogate and utilise relevant data from the Planning Office and a variety of sources (Admissions, Registry, AAM, URLTs, research postgraduate student progress reviews, Module Evaluation Questionnaires, NSS and other surveys).

392 At the annual Strategic Planning Meetings, Schools are provided with a suite of learning and teaching related data. These include student populations, student staff ratios (both HESA, and our own more up-to-date internal ratios), research postgraduate student supervisor ratios, retention, graduate outcomes (DLHE), and NSS results. These are considered at a meeting between the School management team and colleagues from the Principal's Office, where they are used to decide the strategic direction for the School in the coming year. There are currently developments ongoing that will allow Schools to access these data year-round from a central information hub.

393 The University invites its students to take part in several surveys where they can reflect on their experience of their course, including NSS, iGraduate, and our own in-house taught and research postgraduate surveys. Data packs are provided to all Schools with their results and qualitative comments across all questions, and summary papers are provided to the Student Experience Committee, Learning and Teaching Committee, Postgraduate Research Committee and Academic Council highlighting areas of high and low satisfaction. Developments are currently underway to provide interactive dashboards to replace the current Excel and PDF data packs for staff to be able to access student survey data from a central location at their convenience. In addition, from the start of academic year 2019/20 a new Student Surveys Group is meeting with the purpose of managing and co-ordinating learning and teaching surveys as well as those relating to the wider student experience.

394 The Planning Office also produces an annual report to AMG on student retention and completion. This report considers degree outcomes and retention rates by a variety of different student characteristics (gender, disability, ethnicity, SIMD background, fee status) and by School. This report highlights any notable attainment gaps, and other possible areas for concern such as year-on-year changes, or specific Schools or cohorts with unusual patterns of attainment or retention. This report is considered by AMG, which then requests further analysis or discussion with Schools where there are concerns. One example of further analysis arising from this report was an investigation into whether students with disabilities were positively impacted by having a support plan in place with Student Services. We are currently in the process of making improvements to this report by expanding the possible variables measured, including some which are already held (such as student domicile), and some which require us to expand the data we hold (such as the type of school attended by international students). We also plan to expand the range of outcomes measured to include module performance and entry to Honours.

395 While these data are of great importance and allow us to benchmark our achievement and measure success or identify areas in need of improvement, we are conscious of the limitation of available material. In the context of seeking to gain a more detailed and subtler picture of the experience of diverse groups (for example BAME or students with disabilities) amongst our student body, for instance, we have moved towards more robust exploration of the retention and attainment 'gaps' between different groups, so that any reflections, discussions and interventions are evidence-based. We are also moving towards annual reporting of 'gaps' in order to increase awareness and broaden the conversation about the picture our data reveal and how we might address areas of concern. Further, for the first time, in academic year 2019/2020, we enhanced our monitoring of students' ethnicity to include those whose domicile before coming to St Andrews was overseas. As part of the strategy development for the University's People Strategy, we have also accessed more qualitative data relating to what might be termed 'experiential' gaps, undertaking focus groups with students, including groups with specific sets of students from minority backgrounds, for example BAME, LGBT+ and those with disabilities.

396 Analysis and consideration of the data and benchmarking will be undertaken by the University ED&I Committee plus the Academic Monitoring Group, Learning and Teaching Committee, and Postgraduate Research Committee.

397 Important aspects of the student experience at St Andrews cannot however be captured solely through quantitative analysis, and we need to think creatively and sensitively about how different kinds of data can be generated to complement existing mechanisms such as Student-Staff Consultative Committees, School Presidents' Forum and Postgraduate Executive meetings. In this context, regular face-to-face exit interviews may prove a very valuable measure.

### **New initiatives**

398 The current Enhancement Theme has allowed us to reflect on our use of data in the context of learning and teaching enhancement. We have therefore redoubled our efforts to assess how we can make better use of the data we have and continually collect. These new initiatives have been built into a rigorous existing system of data use. The University takes a pragmatic and proportionate response to data protection. The operation of data protection legislation will continue to add value with a focus on supporting and protecting the mission and values of the University, alongside protecting the fundamental rights of individuals. In that regard, continuing to work to change behaviours and perceptions positively forms an essential element of this work.

### **Utilising assessment and module evaluation data**

399 The Proctor's Office mainly through the work of the two Associate Deans Education carefully scrutinises grade patterns, module and programme outcomes and the distribution of results. Assisted by software that flags up anomalies, they identify unusual sets of results (for example significant shifts in pass/fail rates, unusual bunching of grades) and, if necessary, engage with Schools to investigate issues in order to ensure fair and equitable outcomes.

400 We have also continued to refine our MEQ system with questions being regularly revised (using input from student representatives) and feedback data being scrutinised at various levels (School, Associate Deans, AMG). Where MEQ data points to exemplary or problematic practices, appropriate steps are taken – either explication and dissemination of good practice, or investigation and remedial action. Schools participate constructively in this work through reflective processes aligned to Annual Academic Monitoring and overseen by AMG.

### Utilising NSS data

401 Our recent successes in the NSS have not caused us to treat the rich data set generated by this survey as a source of contentment. We scrutinise the results very closely, identifying strengths and weaknesses (both across the institution and in individual Schools) and act accordingly:

- Strong performers in particular areas (for example, Physics, Management and Italian with respect to group learning) are identified and invited to share their good practice across the University.
- Less well performing Schools or Units are asked to draw up action plans that are then followed up by the relevant Dean.
- In 2018 we initiated long-term analysis, purely for internal use, of our NSS data (reaching back ten years) to identify statistically significant trends using robust data analysis and test the efficacy of measures taken in response to earlier snapshots. This will allow us to address the issues highlighted by the NSS with greater confidence. This exercise has also helped us to chart the success of our attempts to enhance the quality of the feedback we offer our students, and also to confirm impressions about long-standing weaknesses (such as satisfaction with the library provision). Similar inhouse analysis was completed for the taught and research postgraduate surveys which were undertaken in 2019.

### Developing an integrated picture of learning and teaching performance

402 Using data collected and compiled by the Planning Office, the University has developed Teaching Fact Sheets for every academic School (see Advance Information Set). These offer key data sets (staff student ratios, retention rates, cohort sizes, outcomes) and provide an effective, highly valued tool for decision-making about resource allocation or strategic decisions. The Fact Sheets are considered by AMG and are used as part of the data pack for School Strategic Planning meetings. In 2018 the Fact Sheets highlighted an issue with the performance outcomes for disabled students discussed earlier and therefore are a key tool in helping to identify issues and trends.

### Identifying and sharing good practice

403 We have used qualitative data in the form of the nominations for colleagues, who have over recent years, won teaching awards (both the Students' Association and University schemes) to identify individuals to lead teaching enhancement events (Master Classes). These training events structured according to particular themes (innovation, small-class teaching, supervision etc) are primarily aimed at new colleagues and constitute a successful example of peer learning within the University.

## 4.8 Opportunities for enhancement

Reflection on our approach to assessing and maintaining quality, with particular concern for our strategic themes and building on earlier ELIR-shaped developments, leads to the identification of the following two areas that may be opportunities for enhancement:

### Feedback data on teaching

While we are keen to base our standard setting, quality control and decision-making processes on feedback data garnered from our students, we are aware of the shortcomings and limitations of such data. We are grappling with issues such as uneven participation rates and survey fatigue, known problems of bias in surveys and with the tension between making questions high level and widely comparable on the one hand and specific to particular teaching formats on the other. Steps have been taken to address some of these issues. For example, Schools with high MEQ participation rates shared their practices at a DoT lunch, and the wording of the questions in our MEQs have been scrutinised and changed to minimise unconscious bias of respondents. However as mentioned above, this is a complex and challenging area, and we are therefore keen to enhance the quality (as well as the quantity) and variety of feedback data.

### Module grade distributions and use of marking scales

We take great care in assigning marks to students' work (marking descriptors, indicative grids, double-marking, moderation, involvement of external examiners) and are confident that our processes are robust, consistent and fair. There remain, however, persisting differences in module grade distribution curves that can be observed across different academic Schools. The Associate Deans (Education) monitor grade distributions very carefully and follow up with Schools on individual modules with unusual distribution patterns. We also plan a detailed long-term analysis of grade distributions across different Schools to establish whether we have disciplinary differences in marking behaviours.

## SECTION 5

### COLLABORATIVE PROVISION

#### 5.1 Strategic context and management framework

##### *University strategy*

- 404 As a sector leader in international engagement, the University is committed to the development and enhancement of strategic partnerships and alliances which support our research and teaching endeavours. Since the last ELIR, a new Vice-Principal (International Strategy and External Relations) has been appointed and a new International Committee (IC) has been established, which brings together members of the Principal's Office, professional service Units, Faculty and School representation. The IC meets four times a year and has been instrumental in steering our approach to institutional partnerships and strategy development over the last 12 months. Global St Andrews is one of the key pillars of the new University Strategy, and work is currently underway with stakeholders internally and externally to shape a new Internationalisation Strategy in support of Global St Andrews, as well as the other pillars of the University Strategy.
- 405 In the context of our strategic international backdrop, academic partnerships and the associated student experience are managed and supported through the new Global Office, which works closely with Schools, the IC and other internal stakeholders, and partners worldwide. All of our partners are carefully selected and considered in the context of six strategic drivers for partnership activity mentioned earlier. Our strategic partnerships remain those which are driven by strong synergies in teaching and research expertise and which operate successfully on multiple levels, providing the foundation for strong, multi-faceted and long-term collaborations. In developing and maintaining collaborative provision, we are committed to providing an excellent and seamless student experience, and high quality academic programmes that align with our research and teaching expertise.

##### *Management of programmes*

- 406 Management of collaborative programmes is an area which requires the involvement of a range of academic and professional staff. Working together, we have been able to improve overall co-ordination through early co-operation between the various interested parties, by establishing clearer models for submitting programme and partnership proposals, and by enhancing our due diligence processes. Our aim is to better anticipate programme needs at an early stage, and to work collaboratively to ensure that programmes fit policy, legislation and academic requirements, and that they operate fluidly once established. We are improving co-ordinated discussion between professional and academic staff through joint boards focused on the academic needs of the programme. We also work across professional units to improve processes related to student record creation and management requirements, programme promotion, award outcomes, application processes for external funding and funding regulations. As a whole, these measures improve the ways that we work together within the University and with external partners to ensure effective management.

##### *Flexible engagement*

- 407 Collaborative programmes should support the needs of a cohort of students or the nature of an area of collaborative research. Diversity of provision is important, and many arrangements therefore have unique elements. Relationships are flexible so as to be tailored to the mutual strengths of the partners to create links founded on research or teaching synergies. This approach does present challenges, but measures that we have put in place allow for flexibility and diversity whilst giving us the basis on which to build lasting, secure, and rewarding links.
- 408 Collaborations are built from two directions. Links may grow organically from academic connections; other links are created strategically with an eye to institutional goals. Both are designed with research links, curriculum matches, student experience and wider co-operation in mind, and are supported by the Global Office. All have an academic lead and an institutional contact. Many of our institutional

collaborations have benefited from good established links built through Erasmus+ and other student exchange opportunities which create long-lasting partner relationships and allow us to grow a body of expertise which supports further activity. Increasingly we take a strategic approach to partner relations informed by academic links, School intelligence on curriculum matches, and institutional priorities.

### Appropriate contractual arrangements

409 Notwithstanding the need for necessary flexibility explained above, appropriate contractual frameworks help to ensure that all programmes operate successfully. Since the last ELIR we have built a set of agreed contract formats and approved clauses with experts across the University which can be used to create bespoke arrangements, and which ensure full policy and legislative compliance. This incorporates advice on legal issues, risk and insurance, data protection, freedom of information, UKVI compliance and intellectual property rights. Our process provides clear lines of communication with colleagues and clarity on areas which require escalation. This allows us to manage all collaborations which involve students or applicants where credit is involved.

410 Particular due diligence is exercised in the development of new relationships. The Global Office may produce a partner profile to a specific format considering the institution's compatibility, research output, existing collaborations, financial and governance details. Risk assessments are produced using a new tool developed in partnership between the Global Office and our Risk and Insurance Manager to cover areas including the safety of the destination country, the nature, reputation and quality of the institution, and the proposed activities of the student during the mobility. We use Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice and reports from insurance providers to test the ground for new programmes. Finally, all our new or renewed agreements are submitted to the Vice-Principal (International Strategy and External Relations) for approval. On completion of a contract, the document is held by the Global Office and the principal details are held within a new database for academic partnerships. The overall result is a suite of measures prior to establishing a collaborative programme which ensure a robust academic match and a secure student experience.

411 In summary, our management approach is designed to be robust, secure and academically focused. We aim to provide opportunities for the development of partnerships in as diverse a manner as possible whilst ensuring that we observe the robust principles of collaborative provision outlined by the QAA and maintain compliance with policy and legislation. We strive to work in a collegiate manner across the institution to make best use of expertise in all areas and aim to anticipate external developments and to react positively to challenges.

## 5.2 Collaborative programmes and opportunities for students

412 Collaborative provision at St Andrews includes:

- Collaborative taught degree programmes (with other HEIs and partners)
- Collaborative PhD programmes
- Validation arrangements

413 Details of collaborative programmes are provided in the table over the page (note that student mobility and study abroad is covered earlier in the Reflective Analysis).

Table 8: Existing collaborative degree programmes (including Joint PhDs)

Region	Country	Partner	Programme	Subject/s
Africa	Malawi	University of Malawi	Joint PhD programme	Medicine
Europe	Belgium	Universiteit Gent	Joint PhD programme	Arts, Divinity
Europe	France	Université de Perpignan*	Erasmus Mundus Masters programme	Modern Languages
Europe	Germany	Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn	Joint PhD programme	History and Mediaeval History
Europe	Germany	Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn	Joint Masters programme	German and Comparative Literature
Europe	Ireland	National University of Ireland, Maynooth†	Erasmus Mundus Masters programme	Computer Science
Europe	Italy	Sapienza – Università di Roma	Joint PhD programme	Classics
Europe	Norway	Universitetet i Oslo	Joint PhD programme	Philosophy
Europe	Russia	Lomonosov Moscow State University	Joint Masters programme	International Business and Strategy
North America	USA	College of William & Mary	Joint undergraduate degrees	Classical Studies; Economics; English; Film Studies; History; International Relations
United Kingdom	Scotland	Royal Conservatoire of Scotland	Award Validation (PhD)	Music
United Kingdom	Scotland	James Hutton Institute	Joint PhD programme and Award Validation	Science
United Kingdom	Scotland	University of Dundee	ScotGEM joint medical programme	Medicine
United Kingdom	Scotland	Heriot-Watt University‡	Joint PhD programme	Physics
United Kingdom	Scotland	University of Stirling	Joint Masters and PhD programmes	Philosophy
United Kingdom	United Kingdom	University of Dundee / Open University	Undergraduate degree with partner-taught elements	Faculty of Arts
United Kingdom	United Kingdom	Skills Development Scotland/Pricewaterhouse Coopers	Undergraduate degree programme with integrated graduate apprenticeships	Computer Science
United Kingdom / North America	England/USA	The Fish Site / 5m Publishing	Distance learning Undergraduate and Postgraduate certificates, Postgraduate diplomas and Masters degrees	Sustainable Aquaculture

\* Part of consortium Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters degree programme including the University of St Andrews and institutions in Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Poland, Portugal and Spain, and another within the UK. The Université de Perpignan is the lead organisation. The programme has been in place since 2005 but has not always been in receipt of Erasmus Mundus funding and has, therefore, been offered under slight variations throughout the period.

† Part of consortium Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters degree programme including National University of Ireland, Maynooth, Université de Lorraine and the University of St Andrews, led by NUI, Maynooth. The programme has been in place since 2012 but has not always been in receipt of Erasmus Mundus funding and has, therefore, been offered under slight variations throughout the period.

‡ Consortium doctoral programme including the University of St Andrews, Heriot-Watt University, the University of Glasgow and the University of Strathclyde.



## **Collaborative taught degree programmes**

### **Collaborative programmes**

- 414 The University continues to work with UK and international partners to manage a small number of high-quality, established collaborative programmes, most of which lead to a joint award. At undergraduate level, our longstanding and close collaboration with the College of William & Mary supports a truly integrated joint degree programme, the BA (International Honours), which remains unusual, if not unique, in offering students multiple possible degree pathways.
- 415 At postgraduate level, we run a small number of programmes, including Erasmus Mundus Masters programmes in Computer Science and Modern Languages, a two-year joint degree in German and Comparative Literature with the University of Bonn, and collaborative programmes in Philosophy and Photonics & Optoelectronic Devices with the University of Stirling and Heriot-Watt University respectively. We offer via the online distance learning site The Fish Site/5m Publishing, undergraduate and postgraduate certificates, postgraduate diplomas and masters degrees in Sustainable Aquaculture. We developed two new collaborative programmes aligned to key skills-shortage areas in the UK and Scottish contexts, ScotGEM and a BSc Graduate Apprenticeship and have a partnership with Dundee University and the Open University for students on the MA (General) Combined Studies programme.

### **ScotGEM**

- 416 In academic year 2018/19, the University welcomed students for the first time on to the Scottish Graduate Entry to Medicine (ScotGEM) programme, delivered in collaboration with the University of Dundee, NHS Fife, NHS Tayside, NHS Highland, NHS Dumfries and Galloway, and the University of the Highlands and Islands. ScotGEM is an innovative and complex collaboration and much work has been undertaken to establish the new programme, working closely with all partners. Feedback from the first cohort has been very positive, and frameworks are in place to continue the support for the experience of the first cohort and the further development of the programme.

### **BSc Graduate Apprenticeship**

- 417 Also in academic year 2018/19, a new Data Science BSc Graduate Apprenticeship scheme, delivered in partnership with PwC and supported by Skills Development Scotland was launched, offering students the opportunity to study for an Honours degree while gaining significant industry experience and support. This new programme received approval at Principal's Office level and it is currently available to students in the areas of Computer Science, Mathematics and Statistics. Unfortunately, academic year 2019/20 may be one of the last entry cohorts as the partnership between the University and PwC is currently under review.
- 418 An academic lead from the School of Computer Science has been instrumental in the development and delivery of this programme with support from the Global Office. During the first two years, students attend St Andrews full time during semesters, and also complete ten-week work placements in the following summers. A further 12-month work placement takes place mid-way through the Honours programme, with students completing the entire programme in the normal four years. All placements are compulsory. The summer placements are not academically assessed, whereas the 12-month placement is academically assessed, with input from PwC, with the results contributing to the degree outcome.
- 419 In these first two years students have several meetings and events with PwC to ensure they feel part of the team. For example, they have an induction day at the start of the first semester in first year when they are invited to the PwC work events, and they are each interviewed by the Associate Dean Students (Science) and a PwC contact, towards the end of first semester, about their progress.
- 420 Students are fully integrated into life at the University, having the same opportunities to join clubs and societies as any other undergraduate student. They sit in the same mainstream modules as their peers and are welcomed into the Schools in the same way – they attend all the usual Orientation Week events and social events held in the Schools during the year. Students also receive significant training in transferable skills throughout their time on the programme. This is regularly assessed (but not for the degree) by St Andrews and PwC to ensure each apprentice is developing an appropriate skills set.

## **Collaborative PhD programmes**

- 421 Prior to 2018, the majority of our collaborative PhDs were offered through individual co-tutelles set up for one student with a co-supervisor from St Andrews and a partner University. Since then we have adopted a more uniform approach of pursuing umbrella programmes and recently we have moved strategically towards enabling their wider provision by establishing programmatic contractual relationships with partner institutions. These can be School, Faculty, or University umbrella arrangements and they minimise the administration associated with creating individual research postgraduate agreements. Consequently we have a small but growing number of such umbrella arrangements, as well as more individual co-tutelles with partners in Europe, Africa and Australia. This flexibility of approach speaks to the way that we operate, preferring to facilitate a variety of approaches that enhance the student experience. We continue to focus on strengthening the programmes and associated support available to students, supervisors and partners.

### **Enhancing transition support for collaborative programmes**

- 422 Since the last ELIR, the University has worked to enhance the overall experience of students on collaborative programmes. New websites have been created for current students on the MLitt in German and Comparative Literature offered in partnership with the University of Bonn and for students undertaking joint PhDs in Philosophy with the University of Oslo. These websites provide detailed information about the transition between the two institutions. We aim to develop similar websites for postgraduate joint programmes as they are particularly challenging for students due to their short duration or the nature of the transitions involved.
- 423 At undergraduate level, our joint BA (International Honours) degree with William & Mary continues to be a strategic focus. Since the last ELIR, the programme has expanded to include the option to study two new subjects: Classical Studies and Film Studies.
- 424 The University is committed to working with students on the BA (International Honours) programme to enhance their experience, especially to increase their sense of cohort belonging, which eases the challenges of transition between institutions. This has been an important focus for the CSA Team/Global Office and the Pro Dean Curriculum since the last ELIR. Innovations that we have introduced include a bespoke lecture series on Global Challenges and Employability, a virtual undergraduate symposium and a joint newsletter. The Global Office now has a student intern for the programme who manages a peer support service, co-ordinates student events, and enhances information provided to students at key transition points. The peer support service connects first and second year students arriving in St Andrews with third and fourth year students on the programme, while a separate 'buddy scheme' also connects first year students at both institutions.
- 425 Working with Student Services, Careers and CAPOD, the Global Office has devised an events calendar for first and second year students to enhance their transition to St Andrews, focusing on academic culture, careers and internships, and pre-departure meetings in Semester 2. William & Mary's Academic Director takes part in some of these activities during a February visit, and academic and professional staff visit the other institution several times a year to ensure high levels of co-operation, smooth running of the programme and to plan future developments. Our experience of designing and monitoring this programme is informing approaches to the strategic development of other collaborative programmes.

### 5.3 Ensuring academic standards

426 This section also builds on the management framework discussed earlier. Here we provide detail on the types of collaborative programmes offered and a focus on the academic approval of programmes and joint academic monitoring.

#### Academic approval of new partnership agreements

427 Our collaborative programmes are joint enterprises with one or more partners. Strategically, we have focused on a small number of high-quality, unique and innovative partnerships with institutions ranked highly for academic excellence. These programmes offer students an enhanced learning experience and the chance of immersion in more than one academic culture.

428 At their outset, all collaborative programmes go through a proposal and approval process through bespoke proposal forms created, monitored, and updated as required by the Global Office, and via specific approvers or approval committees. Proposal form design aims to ensure that quality arrangements such as entry or eligibility requirements, programme review, outcome, award and programme content are considered, and are created in partnership with approvers to ensure all necessary areas are captured at the initial stages. The forms themselves also inform the means by which the contract for the relationship can be created through inclusion of these elements and more practical arrangements such as intended start date and programme duration.

429 For new joint PhD partnership arrangements our preference is to sign an umbrella agreement. These agreements set out a regulatory framework that can then be used for multiple co-tutelle students. Enhancing our processes around the establishment of joint PhDs has been an area of significant focus and has enabled us to take a more strategic approach to collaborating at this level, with a view to growing our PhD cohort while strengthening our partnerships.

430 Individual co-tutelle PhD and joint PhD programme proposals are submitted to the Global Office, who may interact with both the proposer and the partner institution to ensure that all regulatory and policy issues are considered. For example, the format of the viva voce and the composition of the examining committee is defined and agreed. Co-tutelle PhDs are awarded jointly, with both institutions referenced on the degree certificate and students only graduate from one of the partner institutions. Approval is sought for individual co-tutelles from the Pro Dean Postgraduate (Taught and Research), and the Provost may also be included in approval requests for joint PhD programmes.

431 Joint taught degrees including Erasmus Mundus Masters programmes, undergraduate and postgraduate taught degrees (both joint and double Masters degrees) as well as credit-bearing summer programmes, articulation and validation arrangements, require more detailed proposals via Collaborative Business Case forms. This includes a financial plan, risk assessments, letter(s) of support from the partner(s), market analysis produced by Admissions, including an assessment of expected student enrolment and programme sustainability, and an overview of the academic suitability of the partner(s), including whether their academic standards are commensurate with our own. The Collaborative Business Case is reviewed and approved by the Principal's Office and academic input is provided by the Pro Dean Postgraduate (Taught and Research) and the Pro Deans Curriculum.

432 Over the last year, we developed our due diligence and information analysis to help inform University decisions on collaboration and ensure appropriate consideration of academic regulations at the outset. A good example of this is our approach to joint PhDs, and the background research conducted to identify, ahead of any proposal, issues that might impact successful collaboration.

#### Academic monitoring

433 Collaborative programmes are subject to a [five-stage review process](#)<sup>67</sup>: approval, implementation, first review, annual monitoring and review, and agreement renewal review. Four of the five elements of the review process are now embedded in the management processes for our collaborative provision and we are currently implementing the requirements of the agreement renewal review.

434 Each taught collaborative degree programme has a joint committee which provides a framework for monitoring academic standards and the administration of the programme and each participating institution has an academic lead. The composition of each committee is currently bespoke. For some programmes, such as the Erasmus Mundus MSc in Advanced Systems Dependability, this consists of the academic leads from the partner institutions. For other programmes, like our PhD validation agreement with the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS), the committee includes academic leads, institutional policy makers, and senior management.

435 The Academic Monitoring Group in partnership with Schools and the Global Office aims to harmonise the remit and structure of these joint committees. As each programme is unique, and has often grown organically, there are occasions when lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities results in the duplication of activity. We aim to enhance oversight of collaborative programmes in the future by convoking a standardised joint committee for each of them which will meet and report at least annually and will combine academic and professional service Unit staff representation. A minimum membership is anticipated to include representatives from the relevant academic School, the Global Office, Quality, Registry and other appropriate members. Ensuring this level of expertise from various areas related to quality management, programme-specific knowledge, and regulatory, process and policy needs will allow for clearer delegation of the responsibilities and activities essential for the smooth running of collaborative programmes. Developments to the format of these committees are expected to begin during the academic year 2019/20 with the aim that all collaborative programmes have this structure by the time that they are due for renewal and review. In addition, as previously mentioned we have created a new Academic Monitoring Group for Collaborations and Partnerships which will meet once a semester to monitor the quality assurance and enhancement of our collaborative provision.

436 For our joint William & Mary undergraduate degree programme, the BA (International Honours), a Joint Council is convened annually at the end of each academic year. Senior academic and professional colleagues from both institutions attend, and the Council reviews the success of the programme and strategic issues. In addition, there is an internal St Andrews committee, the BA (International Honours) Academic Board, chaired by the Pro Dean Curriculum (Arts & Divinity) as academic lead, and attended by the Director of the Global Office and subject representatives for each of the six participating Schools. This Board meets once or twice per semester, considers academic issues concerning current students, and constantly reviews programme requirements in dialogue with William & Mary. Mobility funding is granted each year to the six Schools so that they may send one academic to William & Mary, and host one visiting scholar in St Andrews, presenting a research paper, meeting students, and discussing face to face any issues which have come to light during the year. A parallel BA (International Honours) Student Experience Committee, chaired by the Director of the Global Office, brings together Departments across the University which contribute to the student journey, specific programme orientation and transition support.

#### Validation

437 St Andrews has a PhD validation agreement with the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS) as the awarding institution, accountable for the quality of educational provision and the academic standards of each programme of study. RCS has adopted our research postgraduate regulations and procedures for progression, examination, and the appointment of supervisors. Once a year a review meeting is convened by the Proctor's Office to ensure the continuing academic quality, and smooth running, of the programme. The RCS validation arrangement has been very positive from the beginning. Communication between the parties works very well with the annual meetings serving as excellent examples of precisely the kind of joint committee operation that we envisage creating uniformly across all collaborative programmes. Students gain the benefits of access to services and events at two institutions and whilst most of their time is spent at the RCS, valuable research and presentation days occur at St Andrews annually. At St Andrews, the Pro Dean Postgraduate (Taught and Research) has been the primary link between the institutions, assisting with the drawing together of policy and process, and being directly involved in progress review. The Pro Dean can be replaced in relevant meetings by an academic from the University of St Andrews with expertise in the subject area.

438 A similar validation agreement has recently been established with the James Hutton Institute. This is currently in the process of being implemented to ensure that student selection, supervision and progression at the partner institution conform with our academic standards, and to build trust and working relationships to help towards future development of the arrangement. Under this arrangement, we expect to build a valuable partnership between the James Hutton Institute and initially the School of Biology at St Andrews for PhD supervision. In the first instance, we encourage joint supervision of PhDs between the two institutions with the degree being awarded by St Andrews. Processes have been established to ensure that both parties are involved in the selection of candidates, approval of projects, and supervision, review and examination of students giving the relationship firm foundations at its outset. As the relationship develops, the current requirement for shared supervision of the students may be removed.

#### 5.4 Opportunities for enhancement

Our review and reflection on our approach to collaborative provision, with particular concern for our strategic themes and building on earlier ELIR shaped developments, leads to the identification of two areas that may provide opportunities for enhancement.

##### Further opportunities for research postgraduate growth and mobility

As outlined earlier in this Reflective Analysis, several new opportunities for research postgraduate student exchanges have recently been established. We wish to ensure research postgraduate students are aware of these opportunities and are supported to take advantage of them. In addition, we are focused on expanding and developing new joint PhD programmes with our strategic partners, as a way to strengthen institutional partnerships and research connections, as well as grow our research postgraduate cohort.

##### Further enhancing structures to support the operation and monitoring of collaborative programmes

Earlier in this section we discussed the robust policies and processes in place to ensure academic standards across all collaborative provision. In order to enhance support for these processes, we are currently reviewing the remit and structure of the Joint Committees to ensure consistency of practice and to define how they feed into AMG collaborative reviews with Global Office support. We intend to provide more guidance in this area, building on examples of best practice in individual programme contexts.

## APPENDIX: CONTENTS OF THE ADVANCE INFORMATION SET

1. Mapping of the University's policies and processes to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.
2. University-led Reviews of Learning & Teaching: sample of recent reports and responses to them.
3. SFC annual returns for the period since the previous ELIR.
4. Sample of annual academic monitoring reports and related guidance.
5. Analysis of external examiner comments for the preceding academic year.
6. Analysis of student feedback for the preceding academic year.
7. Additional information.

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# GLOSSARY

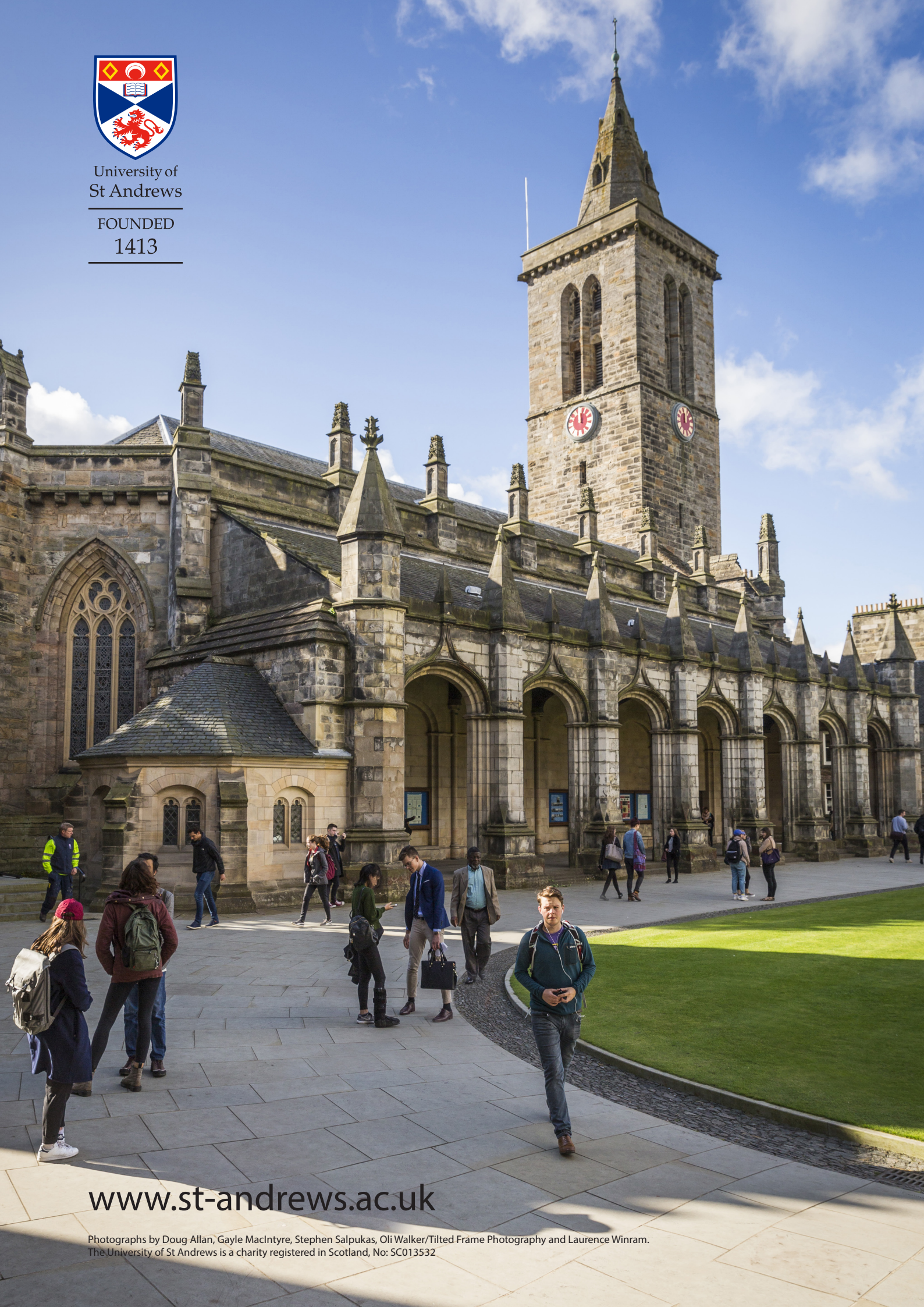
AAG	Academic Assurance Group
AAM	Annual Academic Monitoring
AES	Academic English Service
AIR	Academic Induction Resource
AIS	Advance Information Set
AMG	Academic Monitoring Group
ASDP	Academic Staff Development Programme
BAME	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic
CAG	Curriculum Approvals Group
CAPOD	Centre for Academic, Professional and Organisational Development
CEED	Centre for Educational Enhancement and Development
CHER	Centre for Higher Education Research
COWA	Commission on Widening Access
CRS	Common Reporting Scale
CSA	Collaborations & Study Abroad
DLHE	Destination of Leavers from Higher Education
DoEd	Director of Education (Student Sabbatical Officer)
DoPGR	Director of Research Postgraduate Programmes
DoPGT	Director of Taught Postgraduate Programmes
DoSDA	Director of Student Development and Activities
DoT	Director of Teaching
DoWell	Director of Wellbeing
ED&I	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee
ELIR	Enhancement-led Institutional Review
ELT	English Language Teaching
EUA	European University Association
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FE	Further Education
HE	Higher Education
HEA	Higher Education Academy
HEAR	Higher Education Achievement Report
HoS	Head of School
IC	International committee
LTC	Learning & Teaching Committee
MEQ	Module Evaluation Questionnaire
MMS	Module Management System
NSS	National Student Survey
PGR	Postgraduate Research
PGRC	Postgraduate Research Committee
PGT	Postgraduate Taught
PRES	Postgraduate Research Experience Survey
PSC	Professional Skills Curriculum
PSRB	Professional, Statutory & Regulatory Body
PTES	Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
QE	Quality Enhancement
RA	Reflective Analysis
RCS	Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
RDF	Researcher Development Framework
REF	Research Excellence Framework
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RUK	Rest of UK

SALTI	St Andrews Learning and Teaching Initiative
ScotGEM	Scottish Graduate Entry Medicine programme
SCQF	Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework
SFC	Scottish Funding Council
SHEEC	Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee
SIMD	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
SRC	Students' Representative Council
SSCC	Student Staff Consultative Committee
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths
TEAL	Technology Enhanced Active Learning
TEF	Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework
TEL	Technology Enhanced Learning
TGAP	Training in Good Academic Practice
TRAM	Teaching, Research & Academic Mentoring Scheme
URLT	University-led Reviews of Learning & Teaching
UUKi	Universities UK International
VLE	Virtual Learning Environment



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