

**PROFESSIONAL SERVICE REVIEW: REGISTRY AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT – 6-7 FEBRUARY 2023:
Action Plan: Updated Version, 1 November 2023 (v1, 14 March 2023)**

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UNIVERSITY CONSIDERATION		Proposed Action	Target Date for Completion	Responsibility	Progress Update – March 2024
1.	Conclude its budgetary review process and addresses the under-resourcing in RAS or provides a clear steer on the activities that should be stopped to fit current capacity.	<p>Under-resourcing in RAS was initially addressed through the Service Effectiveness Programme in 2022/23, with additional fixed-term posts funded in Academic Operations and a temporary role replaced by an open-ended Quality Enhancement Officer, focusing on the student learning experience. The new Global Director of Student Experience & Academic Registrar (GDSE+AR) is engaged in formalising the RAS processes for resource consideration, including BAU and AP2.0, and is developing a 3-5 year strategy and plan for the Directorate. Data from the annual Uniforum/Cubane exercise provides sector-wide benchmarking and is informing further resource allocation. At the 3+9 reset, the fixed-term posts in Academic Operations will be submitted as open-ended with additional open-ended posts to address the under-resourcing.</p> <p>Activities were stopped as a result of Voluntary Redundancy in 2020/21, which impacted staff and student experience. RAS is not able to stop further activities at this time. In addition to addressing under-resourcing, the Service Effectiveness Programme and Digital Transformation initiative are facilitating streamlining and process improvements, with further enhancements planned through the Single Student Platform Project.</p>	January 2024	<p>Global Chief Operating Officer</p> <p>Global Director of Student Experience & Academic Registrar</p>	
2.	Review the potential for investing additional resource in a PGR student experience enhancement post.	While the AP2.0 request for a PGR Enhancement Officer has not been funded due to reprioritisation, the former L+T Project Officer, which was funded for 18 months via AP2.0, has been reshaped as a Quality Enhancement Officer (Student Learning Experience), focusing on the PG student experience (including PGR). The postholder took up post on 2 October. The establishment of the Graduate School from January 2024 will provide a further enhancement of PGR-related support.	<p>June 2023 October 2023</p> <p>January 2024</p>	<p>Academic Quality</p> <p>Deputy Principal (Research + Impact)</p>	
3.	Review the telephony to ensure the student helpline is an appropriate part of the response rather than the primary contact point for all manner of enquiries.	<p>The student helpline is operating well with the Manager of the Student Service Centre managing the staff rota and also circulating a helpful briefing at the start of each week identifying key University activities which may result in calls to the helpline (e.g. tuition or accommodation fee invoices being issued, exam timetables being released).</p> <p>The main University contact number also has introduced improved first level options to direct calls appropriately.</p> <p>With students on-campus and with an increase in drop-in support sessions, the greatest demand now tends to occur during periods when students are not on campus – in particular the Summer vacation period around results release times and in the lead up to the new academic year.</p> <p>The Directorate is evaluating the approach to the student helpline and staff resourcing to embed the helpline as Business as Usual.</p>	March 2024	RAS and Estates	

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RAS wide	1. The development of Key Performance Indicators derived from the University's strategic plan to help drive the development of service delivery and prioritisation for busy teams.	A strategy and vision for RAS aligned to Strategy 2025 is drafted. The strategy and vision is centred on service excellence, continuous enhancement, global connectivity and data-driven decision-making, and includes Directorate-wide objectives around service standards. Once finalised, each Division will set objectives and KPIs to feed into the annual PDR process.	January 2024 April 2024	Global Director of Student Experience & Academic Registrar	
	2. The simplification of routes through teams where there is an overlap of similar activities taking place to provide clarity for both students and staff.	The major redevelopment of the RAS SharePoint site, the regular RAS Newsletter and the wide range of briefing/information sessions, including for specific groups and committees, have been instrumental in clarifying RAS-related services and contacts. There remain areas within RAS where further clarification of responsibilities is required, e.g. partnerships/partnership students. RAS will complete service definition work and create a Service Catalogue for stakeholders as part of the wider Service Catalogue initiative under Service Effectiveness. In the longer term, the Single Student Platform will provide significant enhancement in terms of simplification of routes.	September 2023 January 2024 April 2024 2024/35	RAS Senior Team	
	3. That during the on-going embedding of the restructure to consider the merit of a small number of centrally managed but locally deployed staff to support communication and feedback to and with academic staff and schools.	The location of RAS staff who provide School-specific support is currently being considered by the GCOO and GDSE+AR in relation to general admin for academic staff, and is also being considered in the context of the University's "organisation and management" response to student and staff feedback. The SoSS student experience team (recently expanded to include the pilot Student Advisors), is providing a model for further consideration of "locally deployed, centrally managed". Additionally, RAS continues to develop further its approaches to engaging with Schools, including meetings with School management teams and regular briefing sessions on RAS and accessing services/information. Institutional plans for a single, University-wide helpdesk aim to simplify and streamline queries from staff and students.	End of 2023/24	Global Chief Operating Officer Global Director of Student Experience & Academic Registrar	
	4. Explore means to make the best use of available resources for shared service delivery recognising the benefit of a one team approach across multiple campuses.	There are various examples of "one team approaches" across RAS service areas, including: Mitigating Circumstances, Boards of Examiners, Academic Review, SSCs and SID. Additionally, teams can be deployed at short notice from different campuses to assist with service challenges at another campus. Expansion of the global one team approach is a key priority in the emerging RAS Strategy/Plan.	ongoing	RAS Senior Team	
	5. Explore the creation of a formal approach to closing the feedback loop with academic staff who refer students to central services.	The University is currently investigating the introduction a unified service desk for all student and staff queries, providing a single point of contact, and which will provide responses/updates on queries.	Timeline TBC: dependent on IS priorities which are under review.	Academic Operations/ Student Life	

			Unified Service desk model project not yet started.		
Personal Tutoring	1. Develop an agreed process with Schools for the allocation of personal tutees that is respectful of necessary disciplinary differences.	The Personal Tutor allocation process has been adapted to suit the needs of particular disciplines, groups of students and campus locations. While there remain some issues with regard to timing, there have been key improvements since the allocation has been taken over by Academic Operations and areas of best practice identified. To further enhance the approach, Academic Operations will work with the Schools to map the different methodologies required by disciplines with the aim to take full ownership of the process. Further developments will be progressed as part of the outcomes of the Review of Personal Tutoring and the development of a new student advisory model for the University.	September 2023 September 2024 2023/24	Academic Operations Academic Operations RAS Senior Team	
	2. Explore how to increase engagement in the training for personal tutors across all campuses.	In-person training has been re-introduced for Personal Tutoring. Further developments in training, retraining and tracking engagement with training will be progressed as part of the outcomes of the Review of Personal Tutoring and the development of a new student advisory model for the University.	September 2023	Student Experience Team	
	3. In addition to the above the Personal Tutoring Working Group should consider: a. Exploration of suitable technology to support the personal tutor system including monitoring of engagement. b. The level of support provided to direct entry students who may require additional contact in the 2 nd and 3 rd years. c. Exploration of the reasons why students do not attend personal tutoring sessions. d. Explore the role of Personal Tutors in proactively supporting disengaged students and the measuring of the impact of personal tutoring on student retention. e. The clarity of understanding of the personal tutoring role and responsibilities amongst staff and students. f. The introduction of incentives for higher performing personal tutors. g. Recognition of the workload associated with the personal tutoring role. h. Explore the value of students having a Personal Tutor who has subject specific knowledge.	The Review of Personal Tutoring has made a range of recommendations around all of the areas highlighted by the RAS review, which were approved by UCLT in April 2023, and these are being taken forward in 2023/24 in conjunction with the SoSS pilot of Student Advisors. The new SoSS Student Advising team was recruited during August 2023 and the majority of the team started in October 2023. The student advising programme will launch officially in January 2024.	2023/24	RAS Senior Team	
Student Success Advisors	1. Review the benefits and feasibility of increasing the Student Success Advisors pool to pick up elements of the Personal Tutoring role.	The Review of Personal Tutoring has made a range of recommendations around a new student advisory system, which introduces the new role of Student Advisor and reframes the Personal Tutor as an Academic Advisor. Under this new model, the non-academic aspects and academic admin aspects of the PT role will be undertaken by the Student Advisor role, who will be entirely School-focused. The new approach is being piloted in SoSS in 2023/24 and will be developed for a phased roll out from 2024/25 pending University investment. This will necessitate a review of the role of the existing Student Success Advisors, an early outcome of	2023/24	RAS Senior Team	

		which will be to clarify that their role is focused at the institution-level only.			
	2. Ensure an equivalence of responsibility across the campuses for the roles.	A standard remit for the role of Student Advisor is being developed as an outcome of the Review of Personal Tutoring, and will be based on an evaluation of 2023/24 SoSS pilot. The Student Advisor role will be exclusively School-based. This will necessitate a review of the role of the existing Student Success Advisors, an early outcome of which will be to clarify that their role is focused at the institution-level only. The review will additionally provide an opportunity to standardise the institution-level Student Success Advisor role across locations, which had become differentiated based on differing campus needs.	2023/24	RAS Senior Team	
	3. Ensure there is clarity and awareness of the role of the SSAs amongst students and staff including developing a service level agreement (SLA) supported by clear management data on service delivery.	A service level agreement (SLA) will not be adopted, rather a clear specification of the role of the Student Success Advisors, and a specification of service definitions for all areas within RAS, which will include a revised approach to the current RAS A-Z, ensuring that it is more accessible and user friendly. Additionally, there will be KPIs for all RAS relating to response times for student and staff queries. The Student Service Centre already gathers, analyses and makes use of service data for enhancements, eg on appointments, referrals.	2023/24	RAS Senior Team	
	4. Devise a method of collecting and classifying the queries referred by the SSAs to other teams to identify where better messaging to students is required to help reduce the number of queries arising in the first place.	The University is currently investigating the introduction of a unified service desk for all student and staff queries, providing a single point of contact. The FAQ functionality within SID has been further developed as an interim arrangement.	Unified Service desk model project not yet started.	March 2024	
Student Service Centres/Ask HWU	1. The interface for Ask HWU is reviewed to ensure it is written with no assumed knowledge.	The Student Portal has been redeveloped by the supplier to be more accessible and user friendly. All FAQs are being reviewed to ensure their usability by students. Students will be included in the review.	January 2024	Academic Operations, Student Life, Off Campus Students. Information Services	
	2. All required student services should review their staffing arrangements to ensure their presence in the Edinburgh Student Service Centre as a priority.	The co-location of all Student Services, including Finance, at the GRID for enrolment in September 2023 has provided a model for further consideration of similar approaches at the Edinburgh Campus. Student feedback has been very positive regarding the one-stop shop approach. Staffing levels for RAS and the division of student-support responsibilities between RAS teams are being reviewed. The goal is to emulate the success of the GRID enrolment event in the SSC during term-time.	September 2023 January 2024	Academic Operations, Student Life	
	3. Ensure the Student Service Centre service level agreements are clear to all students and set at reasonable timescales to avoid slow response and contact more than once.	A service level agreement (SLA) will not be adopted, rather a clear specification of service definitions for all areas within RAS, which will include a revised approach to the current RAS A-Z, ensuring that it is more accessible and user friendly. Additionally, there will be KPIs for all RAS relating to response times for student and staff queries.	2023/24	RAS Senior Team	

Student Voice	1. Establish a systematic, pan-institutional approach to closing the feedback loop to students using appropriate and effective communication channels.	Significant actions have been taken in this area, including communications via Staff News, Survey SharePoint site and “You Said, We Did”. With the addition of a new Quality Enhancement (Student Learning Experience) post within the Academic Quality, there is now greater resource to focus on developing during 2023/24 “a systematic, pan-institutional approach to closing the feedback loop to students”. The University has engaged an external consultant to conduct a review of the effectiveness of the institutional processes for student voice, including “closing the feedback loop”. From this review, in addition to recommendations, it is intended that there will be a documented, agreed approach to “closing the feedback loop”.	June 2023 September 2023 November 2023	Academic Quality Student Representative Bodies Staff supporting SRBs UCLT	
	2. The publication of a comprehensive calendar of all student surveys issued across the institution.	The 2023/24 Student Survey Calendar has been approved by UCLT and is now published at https://heriotwatt.sharepoint.com/sites/registry-academicenhancement/SitePages/Student-Surveyts.aspx The new Student Experience and Satisfaction Group will provide a more focused forum for institutional management of surveys. Campuses can add in any location-specific surveys.	June 2023 September 2023	Academic Quality	
	3. Review the reasons for low student survey response rates, consider and implement alternative ways of gathering student feedback, promote survey completion and provide additional reassurances to students about the confidentiality of responses.	These actions have been progressed through the UCLT and in conjunction with the three Student Representative Bodies. The University has diversified its range of institutionally managed approaches to student voice in addition to student surveys, including Change Week, In-Person Check-In’s. The Check-In will be conducted in-person in class, as students have highlighted that they engage more effectively with “just-in-time” and when the survey is promoted by someone whom they know. A Student Voice website is under development (delayed due to staff resourcing), bringing all these approaches into one place. Further steps have been taken in conjunction with Strategic Planning to inbuild anonymity and reassure students of confidentiality.	June 2023 September 2023 November 2023	Academic Quality Student Representative Bodies Staff supporting SRBs UCLT	
	4. The review of the annual, non-NSS survey that was postponed at the start of the pandemic is reconstituted.	The Annual Student Survey was redesigned for 2023, ensuring more effective alignment and timing with NSS, and will be part of the externally led review of the effectiveness of the University’s student voice processes in autumn 2023. The low response rate remains an area for action, and is being addressed, in part, through reducing the number of institutional surveys to two per semester for each student. A proposal will be made to UCLT to consider reducing the Annual Survey questions to focus on key areas of action emerging from NSS and thereby allowing completion in class time.	April 2023 2023/24 October 2023	Academic Quality Student Representative Bodies UCLT	
	5. Consider ways in which students and staff are made aware of the Student Partnership Agreement, including during induction.	The three Student Representative Bodies and Academic Quality have collaborated to produce a series of “Achieved in Partnership” and “Developed in Partnership” stamps to promote awareness of the SPA and its achievements. A Student Voice stand was provided at the Welcome Week Fair on the Edinburgh and Scottish Borders Campus to raise awareness of the SPA and other forms of student voice. This will be rolled out to all campuses for 2024/25 Welcome Fairs. Promotion of the SPA has been planned in as key action for the 2024 SPA.	June 2023 September 2023	Academic Quality Student Representative Bodies Staff supporting SRBs	
	6. Work with the student representative bodies to simplify, clarify, and disseminate definitions and responsibilities of all the student representative roles.	Proposed Formal Response The UCLT has approved an Academic Representation Policy, as proposed by the three SRBs, and guidance on this to support implementation is currently in progress. A Student Voice website is	June 2023 November 2023	Academic Quality Student Representative Bodies	

		<p>under development (delayed due to staff resourcing) and will have a specific section on Academic Representation, and will include the standard roles and responsibilities descriptors for each post. Additionally, a standard remit for Student-Staff Liaison Committees is being relaunched, following a pandemic-related hiatus. PGT/R representation will be further enhanced following the appointment of a new Quality Enhancement Officer in October 2023. Representation of online and partnership students, which was last reviewed in 2019, needs to be reconsidered.</p>		<p>Staff supporting SRBs UCLT</p>	
	<p>7. Creation of in-depth analysis for the survey results, allowing staff to drill down into the data.</p>	<p>Proposed Formal Response The Academic Quality and Strategic Planning Teams have collaborated to create a wide range of student survey data dashboards via PowerBI, which contain data for all institutional surveys, from course-level to institutional. The survey dashboards have been received very positively by the whole institutional community, as they are accessible to academic and Professional Services staff. The Sabbatical Officers in all three SRBs have access to the data too, with support in its analysis and use being provided by the Quality Enhancement Officer (Student Learning Experience).</p>	<p>June 2023</p>	<p>Academic Quality Strategic Planning</p>	