

LEARNING,  
TEACHING  
AND  
STUDENT SUPPORT  
bulletin



July 2017

18 October 2017  
29 November 2017  
24 January 2018  
14 March 2018  
9 May 2018  
20 June 2018

**T**his bulletin contains a digest of the policy work undertaken on behalf of the Learning and Teaching Committee this year and changes which will come into effect on 1 August 2017, plus an update on a number of on-going projects. Please read through the contents and come along to one of our two briefing sessions in which we will summarise the changes and look forward to receiving questions or providing clarification.

### Briefing sessions

**11 July 2017**  
10-12 SCI 0.31

**12 September 2017**  
14-16 Queens 1.03

Dr. Andrea Blanchflower  
*Director of Student and  
Academic Services*

Dr. Clive Matthews  
*Academic Director  
of Taught Programmes*

Helena Gillespie  
*Academic Director  
for Widening  
Participation*

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## Introduction of Compensation to Bachelor's and Integrated Masters (BIM) Courses

Senate approved LTC's recommendation for the introduction of compensation to courses where students:

- Fail only one module, of not more than 20 credits (30 credits in the final year); AND
- The failed module is not designated as Core (must be passed); AND
- The student has achieved an aggregate for the year of at least the pass mark, including the failed module mark.

Schools have considered their courses and declared which modules are core and which are eligible for compensation in each year. Details of the modules and guidance for students is available [online](#).

In operating this regulation, eligible finalists are awarded the compensation automatically, but have the opportunity to go to reassessment if they wish to; they can still attend Graduation. All continuing students are sent to reassessment, but if they are eligible for compensation, they can opt out of reassessment if they wish to.

## Introduction of Grade Point Average (GPA) to BIM Courses

This year has seen the introduction of GPA for undergraduate students. Continuing students receive an indicative GPA annually, calculated from their Stage Average, and published on their Marks Statement.

Finalists are awarded a summative GPA calculated from their Classification Mark, which is published on their transcript. Further information including the GPA conversion table is available [online](#).

## Regulations: Master of Research (MRes)

Recommendations from the MRes Working Group were considered and approved by Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) on 16 March 2016; these included the adoption of a common structure for MRes degree programmes for entry from 2017/18. This would consist of 180 credits in total, split with a dissertation module of 100 credits (incorporating research training) and a taught element of 80credits (4x20), primarily focused on advanced skills training.

Please note:

1. The 100-credit dissertation is available for 2017/8, but due to the short notice, this will only apply where incoming students are happy to accept the increase in credits on the dissertation element and any resulting changes to the programme. To ensure that the University is compliant with the requirements of the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), the existing version of an MRes programme may run alongside a new one (with a 100-credit dissertation) in 2017/18. The expectation is that all MRes programmes will include a 100-credit dissertation element from 2018/19.
2. The credit weighting for the dissertation element of MRes degrees will not be explicit in the CMF regulations for 2017/18.

## IQA Update

A working group has been convened to review Internal Quality Assurance and make recommendations on the project blocks outlined below. There are no changes scheduled for 2017/8 and the group will be working on this review with a view to improving processes from 2018/9.

Please direct any enquiries to Laura Thompson

[laura.thompson@uea.ac.uk](mailto:laura.thompson@uea.ac.uk) x7374

Module evaluation (including mid-module)	Course and module update timeline (considering CMA)	IQA Streamlining (back-to-basics)	Annual Course Review Event (design)
TEF Enhancements (how to build in)	Accreditation (mapping to and replacement of IQA)	Student Representatives on Course Review Events (paid)	Major and minor changes (defining considering CMA)
Home courses definition (who owns a module)	Programme Specification Changes Tracker (how to flag multiple changes)	Annual Course Review Timeline (including accommodating necessary variations)	

## New Timeline for Module and Course Updates

A Task and Finish group was set up comprising of Academic Director for Taught Programmes, Academic Director for WP, Associate Deans for Learning and Teaching, Associate Deans for Admissions and senior staff across LTS and ARM. The Group developed a timeline, which outlined key dates in the recruitment and learning and teaching calendars and adjusted these to ensure that changes to courses were being made in timescales, which were CMA compliant.

The proposed timeline allows significant changes to be made prior to advertising and as such, means that no additional action is needed to ensure compliance. In exceptional cases changes can and will need to be made in shorter timescales. In these cases, the changes will have to be made under a managed approach consulting with LTS and ARM to develop an action plan. This will include consulting with affected students, informing applicants and potentially offering current and new course profiles at the same time.

The guidance document outlines amendments, which can be made to courses within specified timeframes without the need to inform applicants, consult with students or offer current and new course profiles at the same time. Not moving to the advised timescales will put the University at risk of not complying with CMA legislation. This presents the risk of an unlimited fine and reputational damage.

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## Course Amendments and Timescales

The following amendments can be made to courses within the specific timeframes without the need to inform applicants, consult with students or offer current and new course profiles at the same time.

In exceptional cases changes can be made in shorter timescales with a managed approach consulting with LTS and ARM to develop an action plan.

Course Information to include statements:

- Not all optional modules will run every year
- Some module combinations are incompatible in the timetable
- Changes may be made to modules as a result of student feedback

### 1 year\*\*

- introduce new optional modules
- remove optional modules so long as choice does not reduce significantly
- changes in timetable slot that do not impact module choice
  - changes to the teaching pattern
- update module content to keep content current and relevant to the discipline without changing learning outcomes
  - changes to formative assessment detail including changing the weighting balance so long as weighting balance of the overall course compulsory modules does not change
  - changes to summative assessment detail including changing the weighting balance so long as weighting balance of the overall course compulsory modules does not change

### By 31 July\*

Changes to:

- reading lists
- coursework titles
- formative assessment detail but not weighting balance between assessment types
- summative assessment detail but not weighting balance between assessment types
- module outlines (some fields only)

### 2 years\*\*\*

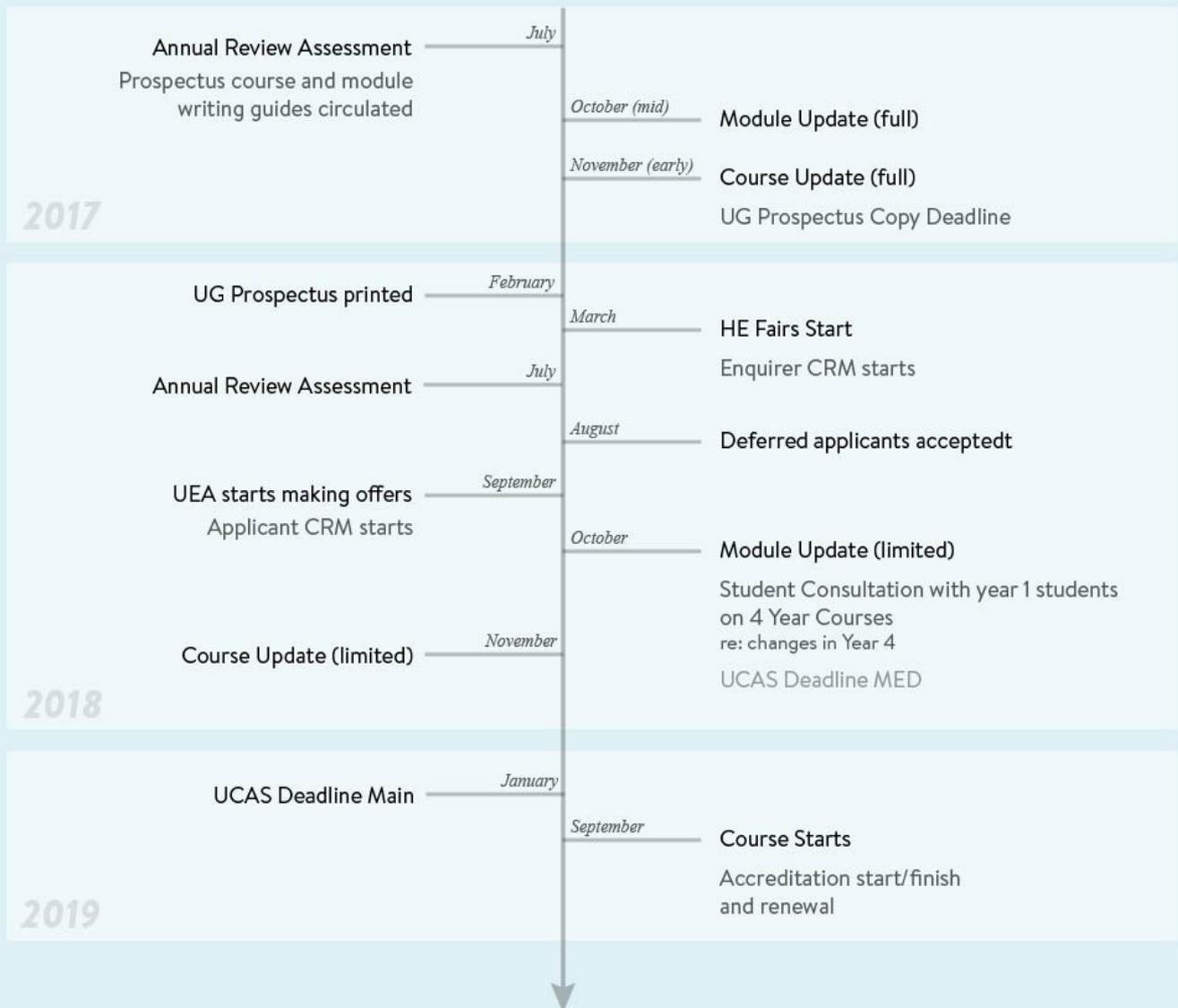
Changes to:

- course title; course learning outcomes; additional course costs; course assessment design and relative weightings of assessment type
- programme specifications; course descriptions; compulsory modules; option ranges; number of optional modules within an option range
- module titles; which modules can be compensated; module pre, post and co-requisites; module assessment design;
- module learning outcomes
- module descriptions; semester pattern of the module; semester to year long or vice versa; timetable slot that impact module choice
- accreditation status of the course

\* As result of a Annual Review of Assessment and Moderation and student feedback

\*\* As part of Limited Module Update

\*\*\* As part of Full Module Update



## Review of Study Abroad

A review of Study Abroad chaired by John Tully, HUM Senior Faculty Manager has been undertaken during 2016/17. The project's main aim was to review processes to ensure they are effective and sustainable and to enhance the visiting and outbound student experience. Three key areas have been reviewed and a series of recommendations will be forthcoming. The three areas are finance, quality assurance and processes. The project group has analysed data and consulted with students and over 70 colleagues. A number of quick fixes have been identified (or made) to address finance, planning and operational issues. Options to address more complex issues are being explored in depth and will form the basis of the project report, due in the autumn. Evidence collected during the review, outside the project's scope, has been provided to other project and academic leads – such as on reassessment policy, the international partnerships process and online module enrolment.

## Review of Code of Practice for Placement and Work-based Learning

A Working Group was set up in 2016/17 for this purpose, with the aim of creating a University Policy for Placement and Work-based Learning, which would outline the University's expectations for this type of provision. Chaired by Clive Matthews, Academic Director of Taught Programmes, the Working Group had student and academic staff representatives from the 4 Faculties, uea | su officers and representatives from the professional services (ARM re Study Abroad Office, CCEN, LTS, PGR Service). Input was also sought from other key stakeholders: the Visa Policy, Operations and Compliance Manager and the Head of Equality and Diversity.

The draft Policy, and its key elements, has been introduced to Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committees by Clive Matthews (FMH, SCI, HUM) and Becky Fitt (SSF).

The Policy is based on the expectations and indicators identified in the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education Quality Code for Higher Education (2012); in particular, Chapters B3 (Learning

and Teaching), B4 (Enabling Student Development and Achievement) and B10 (Managing Higher Education Provision with Others). It also draws on principles of good practice for placements outlined in the Work Based and Placement Learning Association's (ASET) Good Practice Guide for Work Based and Placement Learning in Higher Education (2013).

The draft policy will go to the University's Learning Teaching Committee for consideration in October 2017, with implementation proposed for the 2018/19 academic year. The Policy provides the framework for placement and work-based learning; it will be supported by two guidance documents one concerning taught programmes and the other postgraduate research programmes. These documents will provide further explanation and examples of effective practice. With the breadth and scope of placement and work-based learning opportunities, additional course-level information will be provided by Schools and, where relevant, the Study Abroad Office.

## Self-Certification

Following the previous review and recommendations made by the Self-Certification Working Group and the resolution of LTC, the Working Group re-convened to consider the concerns raised and present a new set of recommendations. The Working Group included representation from the Faculties, Student Union and LTS.

1. The group again concluded that whilst Self-Certification presented some practical concerns around the delayed or fragmented submission, marking and return of coursework, it was a necessary process. The extension length would be such that it was likely that the marking would still be ongoing of the work submitted without extension and so not present a significant delay or disruption to this process.

The purpose of Self-Certification is to cover unforeseen, short-term problems, which could impact on a student's ability to submit their coursework but where obtaining evidence is either impractical or impossible. This includes minor illnesses, urgent family emergencies, urgent caring responsibilities and personal circumstances such as bereavement.

Self-Certification availability is mixed across the sector with differing viewpoints on its necessity, practicality and appropriateness. The key view of the Working Group is that whatever our ultimate viewpoint on this is, it is problematic to not allow Self-certification when it has already been available.

The arguments presented at UEA to not allow any Self-Certification and presented by others in the sector as to why they do not allow this are based around trust. Concerns over strategic and dishonest use were carefully considered by the Working Group. The group determined that whilst the minority may abuse such trust this should not be used as a justification for removing a much-needed mechanism for students who are genuinely in need of a short-term extension where Self-certification may be the only practical solution.

Concerns have been raised that the use of Self-Certification at UEA has increased and with it the problems outlined have increased. For the most recent two complete years (2014/15 and 2015/16) the number of Undergraduate Self-certifications has increased by 297, a 5.8% increase. However, the number of active Undergraduate students has increased by 7.4% so proportionally Self-certification has decreased marginally.

2. The recommendation to extend the number of Self-Certifications allowed in an academic year is to reasonably accommodate that the circumstances this could cover can easily occur more than once in a year without demonstrating a persistent problem. Students may experience short-term illness and other personal circumstances within the same year and struggle to provide evidence for these.

3. The recommendation for a Self-Certification extension to be 72 hours arises from LTC (document reference: LTC15M007) where most supported this timescale. This also supports the requirement that students with short term, infectious illnesses are not permitted to come into contact with other students due to the risk of contamination for 72 hours.

The Working Group considered how to fairly and practically determine the extended submission date for coursework given that the day the extension is sought can influence the actual additional time available. An extension on a Monday would require submission on Thursday whereas an extension on a Wednesday would require submission on Saturday and so by default Monday. The group felt that the only pragmatic solution was that all extensions are for 72 hours with work submitted the next working day. The extension length doesn't change but work can only be submitted when the University is open.

4. The recommendation for a Self-Certification extension to cover all coursework due within the extension period is based on the assumption that if one deadline is compromised by illness etc. then additional deadlines will also be.

5. The group raised specific concerns about the use of Self-Certification for practical work such as laboratory demonstrations and presentations where the use would cause disruption and complex rearrangements. It was agreed that the definition of coursework for Self-Certification extensions should be strengthened to exclude practical work.

LTC considered and approved the following recommendations

(document reference: LTC16D106):

- a. the University should continue to offer students extension by Self-Certification (for 2017/18 onwards);
- b. the number of Self-Certifications possible if required should be extended from one per academic year to two. One can be used at re-assessment if not used previously (for 2018/19 onwards);
- c. a Self-Certification extension will have a duration of 72 hours with work to be submitted before 3pm the next working day (for 2018/19 onwards);
- d. any item of coursework that has a deadline within the Self-Certification period will be covered by the extension (for 2018/19 onwards);
- e. only coursework can be covered by Self-Certification and the definition of coursework should be strengthened to exclude practical work such as lab demos and presentations (for 2017/18 onwards).

Both the policy and guidance will be in place for the academic year 2018/19. The changes were originally proposed for 2017/18 but the associated systems developments have to necessarily delay implementation. Recommendations 1 and 5 can be implemented for 2017/18, as they are not dependant on development time. A minor rewrite of the policy and guidance will be made to accommodate this change for 2017/18 with the full rewrite postponed until 2018/19.

Please direct any enquiries to Laura Thompson  
[laura.thompson@uea.ac.uk](mailto:laura.thompson@uea.ac.uk) x7374

## Blackboard online marking

In 2016/17 the project group implemented the automation of import and export of data between our two core systems SITS and Blackboard. Moving to the automation away from the previous assisted process has enabled the project to grow.

29% of work submitted electronically during 2016/17 has been marked online via Blackboard.

Developments currently under way in phase two of the project are:

1. Reassessment online marking – on track for testing and implementation for reassessment submission August 2017 for those modules submitted via Blackboard during 16/17.
2. Auditable anonymisation – Currently in development and testing phase for roll out in September 2017. The aim of this functionality is to automate the anonymisation of work prior to marking.

3. Formative work – CTEL have had a number of requests for formative work to also be submitted online. Up until now, these requests have been managed on a manual basis. However, this is not sustainable moving forward with increasing demand so the aim is to automate the creation of formative submission points for next academic year. This development is subject to the completion of 1. and 2.

If you would like to get involved and find out more about Blackboard online assessment and feedback for SOY 2017 please register interest at your Hub or alternatively contact: CTEL -

The Centre for Technology Enhanced Learning  
open from 8am to 5pm, five days a week.

**“29% of work submitted electronically during 2016/17 has been marked online via Blackboard.”**

## Changes of submission of work for assessment policy

A summary of the main changes:

1. The Policy will include statements about submitting the correct file type for electronic submission. An increasing number of students are submitting incorrect file types, which cannot be opened (Blackboard) or printed (eVision). Wording added to the policy to state that incorrect files will not be marked and will be considered a non-submission. The online guidance for students will be amended to reinforce the importance of checking file type.
2. Specifying a 30-working day turnaround time for dissertations, projects etc.

There will be further discussions of penalties during 2017/18 including a potential change to a percentage deduction rather than a straight deduction of marks as well as the scale to be used, to be brought in for 2018/19.

## Use of Outlook calendars to support and remind academics about forthcoming deadlines

Strengthening our support for academic staff, LTS will begin using Microsoft Outlook calendar and email reminders to ensure all academic staff receive ample notifications about meeting various deadlines in the academic year.

## Appeals and Complaints

The University regularly reviews all policies in accordance with a fixed schedule of reviews overseen by LTC. The review of the Academic Appeals and Complaints regulations arises from that schedule and such regular review minimises the risk of retaining regulatory structures that no longer support the needs of students and the University.

There is no indication that the regulations require rewriting in full. However, there are a small number of sections, which could be reviewed for clarity, some raised by schools via the FLTQC consultation. Initial recommendations from the review, approved by LTC in June are as follows:

1. To address where our own regulations do not reflect the OIA principles explicitly.
  - a. Providing evidence of where learning from appeals and complaints has been applied to enhance the student experience.
  - b. Ensuring information and guidance is clear and easy to find/understand.
2. Review the wording within the regulations to clarify areas identified as unclear or contradictory, paying particular attention to section 4 ‘The Nature of the Appeal/Complaint’.
3. Amend the regulations to ensure they match corresponding policy documents for Moderation and Double-marked work, Plagiarism and Collusion and instructions to students for submitting extenuating circumstances evidence.
4. To consider working with the Student Union Advice Centre so that their guidance document for students is the main source of assistance online for students.
5. To consider how consistency across Extenuating Circumstances Panels and Faculty Appeals and Complaints Panel may be achieved. A working group will be established to review this.
6. To learn from past precedent and resolve cases at ECP level or earlier for given circumstances where possible. For example, where a student’s work was submitted prior to the 3pm deadline but did not complete uploading until after 3.01pm, therefore resulting in a ‘late submission’. This is outside of the students control and should not require an extension request or appeal to be raised. CIS development work may be required to help display the appropriate information within the current report.
7. To ensure that the University training for FACP members is held, where possible, outside of the teaching semester. Training to be run twice, in order for all to attend.

## Contract Cheating

The following email was sent to all students in March 2017 to raise awareness of contract cheating and discourage students from following this route. It gives a good overview of the issues.

‘Contract cheating occurs when a student asks someone (either paid or unpaid) to produce a piece of academic work on their behalf. In recent years, a number of internet based companies known as “essay mills” have sprung up supplying written assignments of almost any kind, which the student can submit as their own work. Not only do these essay mills aggressively advertise their services on the web but often through noticeboards situated around universities and through targeted e-mails.

Contract cheating compromises the fairness of the assessment process and devalues the hard work of those students who do not cheat. Further, it brings into question the trustworthiness of the final qualification since it inaccurately represents the student’s achievements, knowledge, skills and attributes. This not only potentially devalues the worth of any degree but could have serious consequences for the public where the degree is used for purposes of accreditation as in the health professions.

Because contract cheating cannot happen by accident, it is treated as one of the most severe forms of academic misconduct and is likely to lead to expulsion from the University when discovered. The effects on your future career could be severe. Essay mills only seek to profit from your anxieties and uncertainties about assessments and certainly do not have your best interests at heart. If you have concerns about completing any of your assessments you should talk to your module organiser, academic adviser or the Learning Enhancement Team in Student Support Services.’

The University has experienced Essay Mills advertising their services in person on campus, students making allegations against other students about their use and a specific module assessment question being published on an Essay Mill website offering answers for a fee.

A task-and-finish group is being scheduled chaired by Laura Thompson, Head of Learning and Teaching (Quality) to assess and raise student awareness of the issues, consider amendments to current discipline regulations and processes and consider whether changes can be made to assessments to reduce the risk of contract cheating.

## Attendance Monitoring

### Swipe card attendance monitoring

Further technical development in this area has been put “on hold”, following discussions with Clive Matthews and Helena Gillespie in August 2016. Further work would need to be carried out on the policies and procedures associated with attendance monitoring by swipe card, if there was a desire to introduce it.

### The University’s escalation procedures to report on whether staff are complying with attendance monitoring procedures

In response to one of the recommendations made by the internal auditors in May 2016, LTS has put escalation procedures in place for Heads of Schools to report on whether Module Organisers have completed registers in eVision, whether colleagues have had meetings with students who had unacceptable levels of attendance etc.

Whilst some Schools (predominantly in Health-related/professional subjects) have always closely monitored whether colleagues have completed registers/met with students who have missed tuition, this year saw the first time in which the University’s escalation procedures were rolled out universally in all Schools, and that Heads of Schools are asked to report to

FLTQCs after each semester, where the data will eventually be passed annually to the University LTC. The information relating to the 2016-17 academic year will be considered by LTC in December 2017.

### The University’s enrolment and monitoring of international students holding a Tier 4 Visa

Working closely with colleagues in the International Students Advisory Team (ISAT) and Student Visa Compliance Team (SVC), LTS carried out a review of its current procedures for enrolment and monitoring of international students holding a Tier 4 Visa.

Two changes to LTS’s procedures are likely to be introduced from September 2017:

- (i) An amendment to guidance notes for LTS staff on handling concessions, so that if it is an interruption to studies/repeat/course transfers for Tier 4 students, this will always be a concession and staff in Schools and LTS should always liaise with ISAT/SVC colleagues when considering these cases.
- (ii) All staff should strongly encourage Tier 4 students to seek advice from the ISAT team if they are considering an interruption to studies. LTS staff will do this as a matter of routine but School-based colleagues should also encourage students to seek guidance when compiling concessions.

LTS staff will explore how we record the attendance of Tier 4 students while on placement/working, and plan to come up with proposals for implementation from September 2018.

## UEA Mental Health Strategy

The UEA Plan 2016-20 states the objective of “Growing a student community with an excellent student experience” and investing “in wider student support and advisory services; in particular, addressing issues of mental health, diversity and access to facilities, working in partnership with our students to ensure that we deliver the strongest possible student experience that embraces both prevention and support”.

An essential part of an excellent student experience and academic achievement is the promotion of good mental health among all student and staff members of the UEA community.

Effective support and the promotion of mental health and wellbeing need to be delivered as part of a clearly articulated vision that is carried through all aspects of implementation.

To ensure consistency of Vision with delivery we have produced the following for consideration by LTC:

1. A Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategic Plan, detailing the key strategy principles and the key strategic objectives, actions, and KPIs for achieving the Vision and Values for Student Mental Health and Wellbeing at UEA.
2. A Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy, setting out the key principles and operational framework for Mental Health and Wellbeing at UEA to be managed, co-ordinated and promoted by the UEA Wellbeing Service Team.
3. An Implementation Plan, detailing specified actions, nominated leads and timescales required to implement the Strategic Plan and Policy.

The Strategic Plan for Mental Health is underpinned by three broad strategic developments:

1. Immediate steps taken to improve University-wide support for student mental health and measure outcomes.
2. Ensuring new University governance for student mental health and wellbeing.
3. Developing further closer links with Norfolk & Suffolk NHS Trust and other statutory providers to support UEA students more effectively.

In terms of the ways in which University-wide support for student mental health will be delivered in the 2017-2022, UEA will:

1. Apply and evaluate, against explicit KPIs, and on an annual basis, the effectiveness of its Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategy, Policy and Implementation Plan;
2. Create a UEA culture in which Student Wellbeing sits at the centre of the academic and social development experience of students at the University, by accepting, adopting and evaluating Inclusive Curriculum Design and a “Whole-University” Wellbeing Awareness Culture;
3. Develop Student Life Skills through an education process to increase Student Wellbeing;
4. Enable better Social Connections and Engagement within the UEA student community;
5. Recognise through a new focus on Learning Skills that academic performance is substantially based on both good learning skills and good mental health;
6. Identify Students at Risk – training for all stakeholders in recognition & referral procedures;
7. Increase Student Resilience and Self-Reliance – strengthening students’ emotional equilibrium;
8. Address Alcohol and Substance Misuse – reducing risks of negative behaviour and of self-harm and harming of others.

# Fitness to Study and Return to Study

## Fitness to Study

The University's process for managing Fitness to Study contains a final stage, which deals with circumstances where a student is not fit to study, but is unwilling or unable to acknowledge this and to follow the advice that they should interrupt their study. However, the current regulations manage this final stage by referring the student to a Senate Student Disciplinary Committee Panel hearing under Regulation 13. This can cause undue distress to students who are likely to already be suffering significant mental and/ or emotional distress. The new regulations will help minimise this distress in terms of the impact of the University's procedures on students.

In future, rather than being required to attend a disciplinary hearing, a Fitness to Study Panel will be used to review the case. This revised panel will make a decision based on the paperwork and has the power to require a non-disciplinary but mandated interruption to study.

The full regulations will be available shortly on the Portal (document reference: LTC16D133).

## Return to Study

Student Services have worked closely with representatives from other departments within the University in recent months to streamline and enhance the Return to Study process. The new processes do not require any amendment to regulations and do not place any new requirements on academic staff.

The main changes relate to the agreements between services that have been established regarding time-lines for each step of the process, clarity about which area of the organisation is responsible for progressing each step, revised and improved template letters and establishing particular steps that are appropriate for specific modes of study.

The new process is supported by appropriate flow-charts and guidance notes that have been discussed and refined through discussions with those members of staff, particularly in LTS and PGR Service who will be delivering the new service.

The flow charts and guidance have been distributed to all relevant staff and will be made available on the Student Services Website for the beginning of academic year 2017-18.

## Student Representation

The Student Representation Code of Practice has been updated two years after its implementation in 2015. This review has been led by the Students' Union in partnership with and support from colleagues from the University. The review was prompted by several factors:

- i. Changes in Students' Union leadership structure which have created the new role of School Convenor
- ii. The election of reps now takes place centrally and online through the Union website (uea.su)
- iii. Recognition of the need for a separate, but linked, Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research students for their Graduate Student Staff Forums
- iv. Recognition of the need for more clarity and consistency in the training and responsibilities of Student Partnership Officers
- v. Evaluation and feedback on the Code of Practice since it was reviewed and implemented in 2015

Whilst the current Code of Practice, implemented in 2015, has led to far greater consistency of practice across schools, there is still some variation and areas requiring further improvement. It is hoped that the changes to the Code of Practice will allow for representation to become more embedded both

within individual schools and across the University more generally. For some Schools the content of the Code represents little change to current practice, whereas for others this represents a significant shift in behaviour. These cultural shifts will not be brought about by implementation of the Code alone, and a supporting action plan will address the wider activities and changes that need to be considered.

It is also recognised that some Schools may operate highly effective practices not covered within the Code, and provision is included to enable Schools to continue these practices where students agree these are effective. Monitoring and evaluation will enable this to be assessed.

The key changes and points of particular note are summarised below:

- i. To improve the training and support provided to Student Partnership Officers and others involved in student representation.
- ii. The addition of a separate, but parallel, Code of Practice for PGR Representation and resulting clarification on the roles and responsibilities of Student Partnership Officers for ensuring Representation on the Graduate Student Staff Forum.

iii. The addition of a SSLC Evaluation Framework to allow for continued and partnered evaluation of the committees and representation system within schools.

iv. In line with the restructure of uea|su's Leadership Structure, the addition and explanation of the role of School Convenors within the representation structure.

v. Addition of the Students' Union's reward scheme for representatives

vi. Removal of the original development plan, and addition of an Action Plan and a requirement for FLTQCs and LTC to monitor progress against it.

vii. Communication and easy access to information is key to ensure SSLC's and student representation function effectively. The previous CoP referred to a University wide Student Representation Blackboard site which, although has been developed, is not being used effectively. The recommendation is therefore to explore alternative ways for this information to be made available – possibly along the lines of the Student Zone in SCI – in consultation with Schools and Faculties and uea|su.

## Do Something Different Week

Do Something Different Week (DSDW) took place 27 February to 3 March in 2017. This was a week of activities and events aimed at undergraduate students, to encourage them to do something outside of their usual field of study or with people they would not usually spend time with.

Standard teaching was suspended for week 7 of the semester in order for this to take place. It was the UEA's inaugural attempt at such a week and rather than try to force a theme, the decision was made to find out what students wanted to attend and what colleagues would like to run.

Students were asked to give a score of between 1 and 10 (1 being low, 10 being high) of how likely they were to recommend the event to others. Of the 680 response cards reviewed, over 95% awarded a score between 7 and 10. The qualitative feedback is also positive.

Recommendations of the Learning and Teaching Committee have been approved by the Executive Team and Senate:

1. the DSDW will run again in 2017/18. This will provide a baseline and year on year comparison to enable valid assessment of its impact and value to the student experience;
2. a planning committee will be created, chaired by LTS, with student membership, to help create and plan DSDW going forward;
3. that the week is run in the same format as during 2016/17, on a voluntary basis, for all undergraduate students. This will minimise disruption to the teaching timetable, to allow teaching patterns to continue to operate in the usual way and to ensure the inclusion of the week does not have a negative impact on the student experience. Taught postgraduate students are welcome to attend events as their timetables permit;

that consideration is given to how buy-in from Schools to DSDW can be improved;

5. that DSDW be combined with the Global Opportunities week and other such similar events;
6. that DSDW is scheduled in week 6 going forward

## Reading Lists Update

TALIS Aspire is the online reading list system used at UEA. It holds reading lists for a large number of UEA modules, providing the resources students need in a single easy-to-use location. Library staff can also use this to efficiently check and order stock to ensure courses are well resourced.

In May 2017, the Learning and Teaching Committee approved a mandate for the use of TALIS for essential course texts, i.e. core reading, across all modules where reading lists are relevant. This is to ensure fairer provision of library resources across all disciplines and to accelerate the growth of embedded digital learning at UEA.

Core readings are defined as the materials students are expected to read over the duration of the module in order to be able to fully participate in lectures and seminars, and will obviously vary across disciplines. The minimum level of compliance would be a reading list containing the core readings for each week. More details of the mandate can be found [here](#)

### Timescales

- Academic colleagues are being asked to comply with this mandate from the 2017/18 academic year, with an indicative target of 31st July 2017 for new lists, and rollover of existing lists. This is to enable sufficient time for new books and eBooks to be ordered for the start of teaching in Semester 1 and for students to get access to their reading prior to the semester.
- Existing published 2016/17 reading lists have been rolled over for the 2017/18 academic year. These will need to be republished to be visible to your students. See the [rollover support](#) pages for more details
- If you don't yet have a list for your module, library staff are now located in CTEL off the main walkway to provide training and support in setting lists up. Please [contact lib.reading@uea.ac.uk](mailto:lib.reading@uea.ac.uk) or see our [get started](#) web pages.

## Increasing Focus on Success and Progression for Widening Participation of Students

The Office for Fair Access (OFFA) is the independent regulator of widening participation (WP) in higher education with the mission to ensure that “everyone with the potential and ambition to succeed in higher education should have equal opportunity to do so, whatever their income or background.” There has been a recent shift in governmental and sector focus from entirely on access to higher education to considering the whole student lifecycle including retention, success and progression of WP students. In light of this, UEA commits each year, through the submission of an Access Agreement, to spending a proportion of additional fee income (e.g. of the £3250 above the basic £6000 fee level for home UG students) in order to enable, not only access to HE, but also success and progression for WP students including those from low participation neighbourhoods (LPN), with low household income, mature students with no previous HE experience, disabled students (including students with mental health issues and specific learning difficulties), looked-after children, care leavers and estranged students, black and minority ethnic groups and, specifically, young white males from LPN or low household income.

Developments in the sector generally, and at UEA specifically, are driving increasing importance of widening participation to learning and teaching at UEA including the fact that there are performance gaps across the student lifecycle between some WP groups and non-WP groups, regulatory demands, and related reputational implications (including the considerable part played by WP characteristics in the Teaching Excellence Framework) and the close links between WP and the setting of fee levels.

Access Agreement funding can be used to support teaching and learning enhancements. Funds have to be spent on support above and beyond regulatory or statutory expectations. Funds should be spent on new activity or on enhancing existing activity. Funds can be spent in two different ways: full funding of initiatives targeted specifically at supporting WP students only or proportional funding of initiatives to support the whole student body or a broad range of students; in both cases, these should target specific areas of WP need and/or performance gaps.

Update on the current situation at UEA and plans for moving forward:

1. Monitoring of UEA performance highlights higher non-continuation of mature and disabled students and lower good honours for a broad range of WP characteristics as key areas for action.
2. UEA has invested in specific dedicated capacity to work on widening participation issues in terms of success a progression in the form of the Widening Participation team based in Finance, Planning and Governance. The initial focus of work for this new team will include
  - a. Growing the knowledge base including detailed analysis of performance at Faculty and School level and reviews of best practice. The team will be visiting FLTQCs and having specific meetings with representatives of each School to discuss.
  - b. Developing strategies for success, progression and evaluation of impact.
  - c. Continued/new investment in impactful initiatives.
  - d. Internal and external profile raising for WP.

For more information and/or to discuss new or existing aspects of student support that could be enhanced for WP student groups using Access agreement funding please contact  
Becky Price, Widening Participation Manager, ,  
[rebecca.price@uea.ac.uk](mailto:rebecca.price@uea.ac.uk) x3615

## Dedicated Timetabling Team

Use of a dedicated timetable team for timetable set-ups should result in much improved data quality both in terms of event definition and in terms of set up of co-taught teaching events. The benefits of this are that at the time of rooming, and follow up student scheduling, there should be fewer errors being found which, of course, take both time and effort to resolve.

This in itself should mean that more time can be devoted to finessing the room allocation so as to improve the effectiveness of rooming (i.e. that allocated venues match both in terms of cohort size and type of event).

## Room Allocation Process

Zoning: We are aiming, during the first pass at rooming teaching events, to use two core campus zones for rooming. This will be done by cutting the campus in two via an imaginary line from Estates to the Library. All Schools located to the West of this line will be given venues in the western area of the campus in TPSC, JSC, SCI, EFRY & SCI, whilst those to the eastern side of the line will be given venues in EH, TEC, C Hall, Arts, SP & BDS. There are a couple of caveats to this that should be noted;

1. Limitations in space, cohort size considerations and/or a need for specific venue types, e.g. a SCI school requiring an IT Lab in Arts, will mean that some schools will be allocated venues further away from their “home” locations
2. Where students/staff have mobility issues, this may result in venue allocations away from their “home” location. Although we deal with these cases as a priority, it is possible that zoning is not an option due to the cohort size and availability of venues, which are both accessible, and of adequate size.

## Slotting Working Group

The working group are reviewing the current slotting matrix with a view to simplifying the process of allocation of slots to modules so as to enable clash free timetables to be developed and maintained more easily. Essentially UEA uses a '12-hour time slot' as the basic top level slot (A, B, C, D & E) for allocating teaching/timetabling staff and rooms. The underlying sub slots (currently listed via a three letter coding structure) are both complex and overlap in terms of timeframes. This overlap of sub slots often leads to greater complexity in resolving issues. An analysis of module contact hours for an individual student suggests that most teaching is typically delivered within 3 hours (i.e. 1 hr lecture + 2 hours of seminar) etc.). An initial proposal therefore is to reduce the basic slot from 12 hours to 6 hours, and to simplify the coding structure so as to permit more simple and flexible timetabling. Where teaching delivery is equal to seven or more hours, it could be possible for two slots to be allocated to a module for timetabling construction purposes.

Additional work is being considered to see if a range of slot hours could be applied so that some slots have a maximum of 6 hours, whilst others are either reduced or increased. This increased range of top-level slots, incorporating a simplified single layer coding structure would enable easy identification of slots used and which would still be available as potential slots to run modules. Next steps are to design a revised matrix and to model this against current timetable requirements for the most complicated degree programmes.