University of Glasgow

Senate – Thursday 16 November 2006

Revised Report of the Academic Structures Working Group

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Summary

The Academic Structures Working Group's initial report was considered by the Senate in June 2006. At the Senate's request, the Working Group reconvened during summer 2006 to give further consideration to its recommendations and to consult further with the Faculties.

The Working Group has reviewed the University's academic systems: its academic year, programme and course structures, examination scheduling, programme/course information system, and student record system. It has found major problems in all these academic systems, both individually and in the way they interact. These problems cause real difficulties for both students and staff in many parts of the University. Students who are taking two or more subjects encounter clashes between examinations in one subject and lectures in another subject. Academic staff, particularly those who design or coordinate joint programmes, are forced to divert significant time to working around system problems. Administrators, particularly those who work in the student support services, are hampered by the complexities and inconsistencies of our systems. All these difficulties translate into real costs to the University.

The Working Group has considered how to reform our academic systems to make them work better both individually and collectively. The Working Group has been guided by both educational and administrative considerations, with educational considerations being paramount. Students should benefit from a variety of programmes whose structures and timetables are simpler, more consistent, and more transparent than now. Freed from working around system problems, academic staff should be able to devote more time to actual teaching and research. Staff and students alike should benefit from simpler and better information systems.

This revised report has been influenced by the Working Group's consultations before and after the June Senate meeting. It now recommends that the University should choose one of three models for the academic year, of which its preferred option is Model E1 (the "Edinburgh model", based on two 11-week teaching periods and two examination periods, now modified to allow more revision time before examinations). It recommends that the University should adopt a common programme structure (based now on a wider range of possible course sizes) underpinned by a generic undergraduate regulation. It also recommends a wider but still small range of possible examination durations. The Working Group's recommendations are listed in full below.

The University has changed its academic year several times in the last decade, and the Working Group is well aware that these changes have been time-consuming. The Working Group accepts that the reforms it is recommending will also be time-consuming, but believes that these short-term costs will result in long-term educational benefits and cost savings. Above all, it believes that these reforms should lead to a period of stability.

In its deliberations about the academic year, the Working Group has made a conscious effort to be staff- and student-friendly wherever possible. For both students and staff, the recommended academic year would be better aligned with public holidays and school holidays than the current one. For academic staff it would regularise the annual cycle of teaching, assessment, and research, and indeed it would lengthen the time available for research in the summer.

Recommendations

All the recommendations are reproduced here. They are numbered according to their paragraph numbers in the main report.

The *core* recommendations are of the highest priority, and should all be considered together because they are closely inter-related.

The remaining recommendations can be considered individually.

Core recommendation 16: The University should adopt a uniform academic year in which teaching and examination periods are cleanly separated. There should be no examinations during teaching periods. There should be no timetabled classes such as lectures, tutorials, or laboratories during examination periods.

Core recommendation 29: The University should adopt either Model K, Model E1, or Model E2 for its standard academic year, as from September 2008. The Working Group's preferred option is Model E1.

Core recommendation 30: If Model E1 or E2 is adopted, 12-week courses should be shortened to 11 weeks, and 24-week courses to 22 weeks, not later than September 2008.

Recommendation 33: The University should negotiate more flexible leave arrangements, so that teaching can continue as normal on public holidays that fall in teaching periods, especially the September weekend holidays. To facilitate more flexible leave arrangements, the University should change its leave year from October–September to September–August or August–July, to align it with the academic year.

Recommendation 34: The arrangements for orientation week should continue to accommodate enrolment sessions for those courses that need them.

Recommendation 37: The end of the academic year should be defined to be the end of the week immediately preceding the orientation week of the following academic year. All taught masters dissertations and summer teaching should be completed by the end of the academic year.

Recommendation 39: The University should accept that some programmes, mainly but not exclusively in the Faculties of Education, Medicine, and Veterinary Medicine, cannot at present fit exactly into the standard academic year. In the short term, these faculties in consultation with the Senate Office (and in consultation with FBLS in the case of Medicine) should adopt academic years aligned as closely as possible with the standard academic year. In the longer term, these faculties should take full account of the standard academic year at the next major revisions of the programmes concerned. Any exception to the standard academic year should be approved only if no student will be disadvantaged relative to other students in the same class.

Core recommendation 48: The University should adopt simple, clear, and consistent definitions of what it means by *programme* and *course*.

Core recommendation 59: The University should adopt a common programme structure, based on the following principles:

(a) All programmes should be credit-rated, and should be structured in terms of compulsory and elective courses.

(b) Each course should normally be valued at 10, 15, 20, 30, 40, or 60 credits. Exceptions should be permitted only where there is clear educational justification.

(c) Each course should be assessed in the same academic year as it is taken. Exceptions should be permitted only where there is clear educational justification.

(d) Faculties should retain the right to decide whether their own courses are long or short.

(e) Faculties should retain the right to decide whether their own semester-1 courses are examined in the winter or spring examination period.

Core recommendation 60: The University should develop a generic undergraduate regulation that enshrines the common features of all undergraduate programmes and the common features of each type of programme (general, designated, honours, integrated masters, or professional). The generic undergraduate regulation should be supplemented by a specific regulation for each degree (such as BSc or MA). These new regulations should be in place by September 2008.

Core recommendation 61: The common programme structure should be phased in as follows:

(a) All existing honours-options should become courses in their own right by September 2007.

(b) Undergraduate courses not conforming to recommendation 59(b) should be replaced by small courses by September 2007 (level 1), September 2008 (level 2), September 2009 (level 3 or 3H), or September 2010 (level 4H).

(c) Any remaining postgraduate courses not conforming to recommendation 59(b) should be replaced by small courses by September 2007.

(d) Nevertheless, an extension may be permitted where a course not conforming to recommendation 59(b) has recently undergone major revision, in which case the course should be replaced by small courses when its next major revision is due (but not later than September 2011).

(e) All new courses proposed after September 2006 should be required to conform to recommendation 59(b).

Recommendation 63: In line with existing policy, every honours, professional, and taught masters programme should include at least one compulsory course that is clearly identifiable as independent work (by including a word such as "project" or "dissertation" in the course title). An honours project or dissertation should normally be worth 20, 30, or 40 credits, and a masters dissertation should be worth 60 credits.

Recommendation 65: While recognising the essential differences between professional programmes and other undergraduate programmes, the University should ensure that all its professional programmes comply with the Scottish Credit & Qualifications Framework and the European Qualifications Framework.

Recommendation 75: The duration of every examination should be 1 hour, 1.5 hours, 2 hours, or (only in the spring examination period) 3 hours, including reading time.

Recommendation 76: The winter examination period should be organised on the basis of three examination slots per weekday during normal working hours. However, no student should be expected to take more than two examinations on the same day. If Model E1 is adopted, the first half-week of the winter examination period should be set aside for revision.

Recommendation 77: The duration of examinations in each course should be regulated. The regulation should take into account not only the course's credit value but also the weighting of examinations in the course's assessment scheme.

Recommendation 78: The University should ensure an adequate supply of examination accommodation, by making all suitable halls available in all examination periods.

Recommendation 80: The University should further consider the possibility of holding resit examinations in the early summer.

Core recommendation 85: The University should develop or acquire a new and well-resourced programme/course information system based on the agreed definitions of *programme* and *course*. The database should contain programme specifications, course specifications, related administrative data, and eventually degree regulations. A web interface should enable staff, students, visitors, and applicants to view this information. All on-line and printed publications should be generated automatically from the database.

Recommendation 90: The University should enable on-line registration for all courses, by departments, advisers, or students as appropriate.

Recommendation 91: Each student's transcript should show the title, level, and credit value of each course completed by the student, together with the student's grade.

Background

1. The University's current academic structures are a source of confusion and difficulty for applicants, students, visitors, new members of staff, and even experienced staff. The academic structures of concern are the *academic year*, *programme and course structures*, *examination scheduling*, *programme/course information system*, and *student records and transcripts*.
2. These academic structures are all closely related to one another. Consequently, there are limits to what can be achieved by piecemeal reforms. What is now required is an integrated reform that properly aligns these academic structures with one another.
3. Our academic year is partly term-based and partly semester-based. This inconsistency is certainly confusing. More seriously, it unfairly disadvantages many of our students who may find themselves attending lectures in some courses and taking examinations in other courses, in the very same week.
4. Our programme structures are complex and idiosyncratic. They vary widely not only between faculties but also (in some cases) within faculties. This causes difficulties for students who transfer between faculties, for students on joint programmes, and for staff who design and coordinate such programmes.
5. The complexity and idiosyncrasies of our programme structures give rise to corresponding complexity and idiosyncrasies in our programme/course information system and our student records system. In particular, our existing programme/course information system does not "understand" our programme structures, and our students' transcripts vary widely in the detail they show.
6. Examination scheduling is complicated by a shortage of examination accommodation, by a shortage of examination timetable slots, and by a huge variation in examination durations.
7. The Academic Structures Working Group was constituted by the Senior Management Group in December 2005. Its remit and membership are detailed in Appendix A. In brief, it was asked to investigate and recommend changes that would bring our academic structures into closer alignment with one another.
8. The Clerk of Senate and the Convener and Clerk of the Working Group visited the University of Edinburgh in December 2005. All were impressed by the thoroughness of the reforms they have implemented during the last few years, resulting in academic structures that are simple, clear, and consistent.[1]
9. The Working Group met five times during January–March 2006. The Convener and Clerk separately consulted a number of other interested parties, listed in Appendix B, and conveyed their views to the Working Group. Members of the Working Group also informally consulted their faculty colleagues. The Working Group's initial report was discussed in May–June 2006 at a Senior Management Group meeting, at two open meetings, and at the June Senate meeting. As directed by Senate, the Working Group met again three times during July–October 2006, and consulted all faculties (at management or education committee level) during September–October 2006.

Academic year

10. Among the University's faculties, programmes, and courses, almost none is an island. In particular, the Faculties of Arts, Engineering, Information & Mathematical Sciences, Law Business & Social Sciences, and Physical Sciences deliver not only their own single-subject

[1] A single 200-page volume (generated from their programme/course information system) summarises all of Edinburgh's undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes, identifying the compulsory and elective courses that make up each programme, and also includes all the relevant regulations. This volume is a valuable resource for students, academics, administrators, and managers alike.

programmes, but also numerous joint programmes, many of which cross faculty boundaries. The Faculties of Biomedical & Life Sciences, Education, Veterinary Medicine, and Medicine also have joint programmes or joint teaching with other faculties. Table 1 illustrates the extent of cross-faculty joint programmes and joint teaching.

11. Moreover, level-1 and level-2 courses are shared by first-year, second-year, and third-year students; many level-3 courses are shared by honours and non-honours students; and many level-H and level-M courses are shared by honours and PGT students.

12. The University's current academic year (introduced in 2002) is shown in detail in Table 2. It is an untidy compromise between terms and semesters. All level-1 and level-2 courses are taught in semesters, but faculties and departments are free to decide whether level-3, level-H, and level-M courses are taught in terms or semesters.[2]

13. Local adaptations to the current academic year appear to work satisfactorily for students who are taking courses in a single subject. However, local adaptations often work badly for students who are taking courses in more than one subject.

14. In particular, the current academic year gives rise to contention in the first two weeks after the winter vacation. These two weeks serve both as examination weeks for semester-1 courses and as teaching weeks for term-2 courses. This is confusing and complicates the work of those academics and administrators who are involved in with both term-based and semester-based courses. More seriously, it disadvantages several groups of students who find that they are expected to attend lectures and take examinations in the same week (or even at the same time). Students on a joint programme are affected if one subject is taught in semesters (with winter examinations) and the other subject is taught in terms. Students in the third year of a general or designated degree programme are affected if their main subject is taught in terms and they are also taking level-1 or level-2 courses taught in semesters. PGT students are affected if they are taking both level-H courses taught in terms and level-M courses taught in semesters. The current academic year also gives rise to contention in the first four weeks after the spring vacation, affecting joint honours students if honours examinations in one subject clash with continuing lectures in the other subject.

15. The current timing of winter examinations is very awkward for semester-1 visiting students, who are generally unable to return to Glasgow for end-of-course examinations in January. In practice, special assessments (and even special classes in some courses) must be provided for these students; this is a considerable extra burden on academics, disproportionate to the small number of visiting students. Finally, we cannot guarantee residential accommodation for semester-1 students who do wish to return for examinations. The inconsistent treatment of visiting students reflects badly on the University.

16. **Core recommendation: The University should adopt a uniform academic year in which teaching and examination periods are cleanly separated. There should be no examinations during teaching periods.[3] There should be no timetabled classes such as lectures, tutorials, or laboratories during examination periods.[4]**

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[2] The pre-2002 academic year (also shown in Table 2) consisted of three 10-week terms, on to which semesters were superimposed. That proved to be extremely unsatisfactory. The most serious problem was that semester-1 teaching overlapped with term-2 teaching, greatly increasing the probability of timetable clashes for students and academics, and creating major difficulties for Central Room Bookings. The change to the current academic year eliminated that particular problem, but not the overlap of semester-1 examinations with term-2 teaching.

[3] However, in-course examinations could still be allowed at normal class times.

[4] However, a course not examined in the winter examination period should be allowed to set a reasonable amount of non-timetabled coursework during that period.

17. The Working Group surveyed the current academic years of a number of major universities in both Scotland and England. These are summarised in Tables 3A[5] and 3B. The following points are particularly worthy of note:

    - No two of these universities have the same academic year.
    - Just over half of these universities have 12-week teaching periods, and just under half have 11-week teaching periods.
    - Nearly all of these universities have winter examinations. The exceptions are Kent which has never had winter examinations, and Birmingham which has recently abandoned them.
    - Nearly all of the universities with winter examinations place them after the winter vacation. This causes their semester-2 teaching periods to extend beyond the spring vacation.

18. The Working Group discussed a number of possible models for our future academic year. These models are summarized in Table 4, and discussed in the following paragraphs. All these models are based on the following assumptions:

    - The academic year will remain at 30 weeks, including 6 weeks for examinations.
    - There will be a clean separation between teaching periods and examination periods.
    - The 3-week winter vacation[6] and 3-week spring vacation[7] will be kept, and the winter vacation will be anchored at its present time.
    - Orientation will be restricted to a single week immediately before the start of teaching.

19. *Model G1:* This model would be similar to the current academic year, except that no timetabled classes would be held during the winter examination period in January. The main issues would be:

    - Teaching would start and finish at the same time as now.
    - All semester-2 courses would be forced to extend beyond the spring vacation, even 10-week honours courses.
    - The problem of assessing semester-1 visiting students would remain.

    The Working Group concluded that Model G1 has nothing to commend it.[8]

20. *Model G2:* This model would bring the winter examination period forward to December. There would be 12 weeks of teaching and 2 weeks of examinations before the winter vacation. The second 12-week teaching period would fit between the winter and spring vacations. A 4-week examination period would be left between the spring and summer vacations. The main issues would be:

    - Teaching would start and finish two weeks earlier than now. The spring vacation would be two weeks later than now.

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[5] For simplicity, the Glasgow column in Table 3A shows only the semester pattern.

[6] The winter vacation could be shortened to 2 weeks. To make this possible, the last week before the vacation must commence on 16±3 December, and the first week after the vacation must commence on 6±3 January. The effects of this would be to delay the start in September by about half a week on average, and to advance the spring and summer vacations by about half a week on average.

[7] The spring vacation could not be shortened without a damaging impact on field trips (in Archaeology, Biology, and Geographical & Earth Sciences).

[8] Delaying the spring vacation by 2 weeks would allow semester-2 10-week honours courses to be completed before the spring vacation, but would not solve the other problems.

- In semester 1, 12 weeks of teaching and 2 weeks of examinations without a break would be very demanding on students.
- The spring examination period would be short and inflexible.

The Working Group concluded that Model G2 has little to commend it.

21. *Model K ("Kent model"):* This model would abolish winter examinations altogether, enabling two 12-week teaching periods to fit between the summer, winter, and spring vacations. The main issues would be as follows:

    - Teaching would start and finish at the same time as now. The spring vacation would be two weeks later than now.
    - Teaching in long (two-semester) courses would be uninterrupted (except by the winter vacation).
    - Faculties and departments would have no flexibility in the timing of examinations: all courses including semester-1 courses, unless assessed entirely by coursework, would have to be examined in the spring examination period.
    - Special winter examinations would nevertheless have to be provided for some small groups of students: semester-1 visiting students, and PGT students on programmes that run from January to December.
    - Abolishing the winter examination period would tend to increase the number of in-course examinations held during teaching periods. These are known to affect students' attendance in other courses.

    The Working Group believe that winter examinations are desirable, at least for some groups of students. However, it concluded that Model K would be feasible.

22. *Model E1 ("Edinburgh model"):* This model would shorten the teaching periods to 11 weeks each. There would be 11 weeks of teaching, and 2 weeks of revision and examinations, before the winter vacation. The second 11-week teaching period would fit between the winter and spring vacations. A 6-week examination period would be left between the spring and summer vacations, but the first week would be primarily for revision and the last week would be primarily for examiners' boards. The main issues would be as follows:

    - Teaching would start one week earlier than now, but the last examinations would take place two weeks earlier than now. The spring vacation would be one week later than now.[9]
    - Existing 12-week courses would have to be shortened to 11 weeks, and 24-week courses to 22 weeks.
    - Teaching in long courses would be interrupted by a 2-week revision and examination period. That period could still be used for in-course examinations or coursework (but not for timetabled lectures, tutorials, or laboratories).
    - Faculties and departments would retain the flexibility to use winter examinations for semester-1 courses or not. They could adopt different patterns for non-honours, honours, and PGT courses.
    - In the winter examination period, the start of examinations would be delayed to set aside half a week of revision time.[10]

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[9] This fits well with the new timing of the spring vacation in schools.

[10] The winter examinations could be compressed into one-and-a-half weeks by fitting in three examination slots per day (see paragraphs 67–68 and Recommendations 72–73 under *Examination Scheduling*). Thus the Monday and Tuesday of the first examination week could be set aside for revision. In the unlikely event that 8 days proved insufficient to schedule all winter examinations, or if it were desired to set aside more than two weekdays

- Finishing examinations one week before the end of the academic year would reduce encroachment of examiners' boards into the summer vacation, and thus protect research time.

The Working Group concluded that Model E1 would be both attractive and feasible. It has been tested in the University of Edinburgh for two years, and seems to have worked well.

23. *Model E2 ("Edinburgh variant model"):* This would be similar to Model E1, except that the revision week would be moved from spring to winter. The main issues would be similar, except:

    - Teaching would start two weeks earlier than now, but the last examinations would take place three weeks earlier than now.
    - A full revision week before the winter examinations would be more useful to students than one before the spring examinations (given that the spring vacation is already available for revision).
    - Teaching in long courses would be interrupted by a 3-week revision and examination period.

    The Working Group concluded that Model E2 would be feasible, although such an early start would be problematic.[11]

24. An earlier start to the academic year, either 1 week (Model E1) or 2 weeks (Model E2), would have an impact on our admissions processes, given the fixed timing of publication of school results (for undergraduate admissions) and of degree results in other universities (for postgraduate admissions[12]). International student admissions are further complicated by the time needed to secure funding and obtain visas. The Working Group was advised by both RAPS and IPS that they could cope easily with a start 1 week earlier, but less easily with a start 2 weeks earlier. The impact of a future Post-Qualification Admissions system remains uncertain.[13] Similarly, the Working Group was advised by Accommodation Services that they could cope easily with a start 1 week earlier, but less easily with a start 2 weeks earlier. Finally, an earlier start would have an impact on the advising system for first-year students; it appears that some faculties are better positioned than others to cope.

25. Shortening existing 12-week and 24-week courses (Model E1 or E2) would clearly be a major step, given that a significant loss of learning outcomes would be unacceptable. Whether we could deliver the same learning outcomes in 11 or 22 weeks is a key educational issue. Some courses might compensate for a loss of lecture time by increased reliance on private study (reading or e-learning). Courses with computing laboratories might compensate for the loss of a weekly laboratory session by increased reliance on open access, but courses with supervised scientific laboratories probably could not compensate in this way. Given the national agenda to maintain laboratory and fieldwork provision in the sciences, departments should be strongly encouraged not to cut such provision. The Working Group fully acknowledges that it would be difficult to shorten some courses, and that departments would need adequate time to plan such changes.

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for revision, other small adjustments could be considered to Model E1: examinations could be held on the Saturdays of the winter examination period, and/or on the first day or two of the winter vacation; or the first teaching period could be advanced by half a week (so that each teaching week would run from Thursday to Wednesday).

[11] In future, moreover, it would be relatively easy to change from Model E1 to Model E2, or *vice versa*.

[12] A particular concern is that medical degree results in some European countries are published in late summer.

[13] The relatively minor changes starting in 2008 will have no impact on the academic year. But if the subsequent 2010 review recommends a genuine PQA system, it would have a major impact on the academic years of all UK universities. It would probably be opposed by the universities for that very reason.

26. A revision period between teaching and examinations in semester 1 would be highly desirable, in order to encourage students to attend classes right up to the end of the teaching period. A half-week revision period (Model E1) might be adequate, but a full-week revision period (Model E2) would be better if feasible. Apart from the obvious benefit to students, a full week would improve the balance between the semesters: 14+15 weeks in Model E2, as opposed to 13+16 weeks in Model E1.

27. Abolishing winter examinations (Model K) would abruptly reverse a 10-year-old trend. Whether winter examinations are desirable or not is a key educational issue. There appears to be no clear consensus at Glasgow (nor indeed at other UK universities). Some argue that courses at levels 1 and 2 should be examined immediately to encourage students to learn continuously and to give them early feedback on their performance. Others argue that such early feedback on semester-1 courses might be counter-productive for the weaker first-year students, tending to increase drop-out rates. Some who argue for winter examinations in levels 1 and 2 also argue against them at levels 3 and 4. Similarly, there are arguments both for and against winter examinations in PGT programmes. The Working Group found that what little research has been done on this issue (mainly in the Netherlands) suggests that frequent assessment tends to improve students' performance.

28. In summary, Models K, E1, and E2 would all be major improvements over the current academic year, but they all have both strengths and weaknesses. There is no ideal solution. The University should make a choice based on its collective judgement of the strengths and weaknesses of each model.

29. **Core recommendation: The University should adopt either Model K, Model E1, or Model E2 for its standard academic year, as from September 2008. The Working Group's preferred option is Model E1.**

30. **Core recommendation: If Model E1 or E2 is adopted, 12-week courses should be shortened to 11 weeks, and 24-week courses to 22 weeks, not later than September 2008.**

31. Shorter teaching periods would make it critically important to avoid any disruptions of teaching. Public holidays that fall in teaching periods disrupt weekly classes (particular laboratory sessions) that are timetabled on Mondays or Fridays, disadvantaging students who are taking these classes. In particular, the September Friday and Monday holidays would always fall in the first teaching period. The Easter Friday and Monday holidays would sometimes fall in the second teaching period, but only infrequently if Model E1 or E2 were adopted.[14]

32. Many courses need to allocate students to tutorial or laboratory groups before the start of teaching. In semester 1, these courses hold "enrolment sessions" during orientation week to enable tutorial and laboratory groups to start promptly in week 1.

33. **Recommendation: The University should negotiate more flexible leave arrangements, so that teaching can continue as normal on public holidays that fall in teaching periods[15], especially the September weekend holidays. To facilitate more flexible leave arrangements, the University should change its leave year from October–September to September–August or August–July, to align it with the academic year.**

34. **Recommendation: The arrangements for orientation week should continue to accommodate enrolment sessions for those courses that need them.**

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[14] If Model E1 or E2 were adopted, Good Friday would fall in the second teaching period about once in 7 years, and Easter Monday about once in 60 years; arguably this disruption to teaching would be infrequent enough to be acceptable. If Model K were adopted, on the other hand, these frequencies would rise to about once in 2 years for Good Friday and about once in 7 years for Easter Monday.

[15] Note that this recommendation does not affect public holidays that occur in examination periods (which can be accommodated by examination scheduling), nor those that occur during vacations.

35. Taught masters students complete their dissertation work during the summer vacation. In effect they have a 12-month academic year. There is no university-wide policy on deadlines for submission of dissertations, however, and sometimes the outgoing cohort of students overlaps with the incoming cohort. In addition, the summer vacation is used for undergraduate teaching (clinical work mostly) in the Faculty of Medicine, and for summer schools in some other faculties.

36. The Working Group considered proposing a "summer semester", within which all such teaching activities would be expected to fall. However, it concluded that it would be sufficient to define a clear end-date for the academic year, by which date all taught masters dissertations and summer teaching should be completed. In order to avoid overlap between successive academic years, the natural end-date would be in the week before orientation, as shown in Table 4.

37. **Recommendation: The end of the academic year should be defined to be the end of the week immediately preceding the orientation week of the following academic year. All taught masters dissertations and summer teaching should be completed by the end of the academic year.**

38. Some programmes by their nature are unable to fit exactly into the current standard academic year. Most notably, programmes in Dentistry, Medicine[16], Nursing, and Veterinary Medicine have non-standard academic years that are constrained by the timing of clinical work. Likewise, programmes in Education have non-standard academic years that are constrained by the timing of school placements. For the same reasons, such programmes might be unable to fit exactly into the new standard academic year. Nevertheless, in consultations the faculties concerned indicated willingness to align their academic years as closely as possible with the new standard academic year.

39. **Recommendation: The University should accept that some programmes, mainly but not exclusively in the Faculties of Education, Medicine, and Veterinary Medicine, cannot at present fit exactly into the standard academic year. In the short term, these faculties in consultation with the Senate Office (and in consultation with FBLS in the case of Medicine) should adopt academic years aligned as closely as possible with the standard academic year. In the longer term, these faculties should take full account of the standard academic year at the next major revisions of the programmes concerned. Any exception to the standard academic year should be approved only if no student will be disadvantaged relative to other students in the same class.**

Programme and course structures

40. The University's current programme structures are complex and idiosyncratic. They vary widely not only between faculties but also (in some cases) within faculties. This causes difficulties for students transferring between faculties, for students on joint programmes, for staff who design or coordinate such programmes, and for others (such as visitors and applicants) who simply want to understand what we do. This also causes difficulties for our programme/course information system and student records system.

41. The following terminology is used in this report:

    - A course of duration 20–24 weeks is said to be *long*; a course of duration 10–12 weeks is said to be *short*; a course of duration 5–6 weeks is said to be *very short*.
    - A course of 40 credits or less is said to be *small*; a course of 60–120 credits is said to be *large*.[17]

[16] The non-standard academic year in Medicine in turn has an impact on FBLS, as a consequence of joint teaching.

[17] Note that small courses may be long, short, or very short. Large courses are invariably long.

- A programme composed entirely of small courses is said to be *fine-grained*; a programme that includes one or more large courses is said to be *coarse-grained*.

42. At present, we have many long courses, many short courses, and a few very short courses. The Working Group believes that a mixture of long and short courses, even within the same subject, is educationally justifiable.

43. Nearly all our PGT programmes are now fine-grained, except for the 60-credit dissertation.

44. Most of our general and designated degree programmes are fine-grained. The main exceptions are the designated degree programmes in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, each of which includes an 80- or 120-credit level-3 course. The general degree programme in Social Sciences includes a 60-credit level-3 project.

45. Our honours programmes vary enormously in terms of granularity:

    - In Accountancy & Finance, Engineering, and Law, all honours programmes are fine-grained.
    - In Arts and Social Sciences, the regulations imply that honours programmes are coarse-grained: each single honours programme must include a 120-credit junior honours course and a 120-credit senior honours course. In reality, however, all junior and senior honours courses are now subdivided into honours-options (typically 20 or 30 credits).
    - In the Sciences, the regulations similarly imply that honours programmes are coarse-grained: each single honours programme must include a 120-credit junior honours course and a 120-credit senior honours course. In reality, there is no consistent pattern. In Computing Science, Mathematics, and Statistics, junior and senior honours courses are subdivided into honours-options (typically 10 or 15 credits). In Geography and Psychology, the Arts/Social Sciences pattern is followed. In Biology, senior honours courses are subdivided into very short intensive honours-options, but junior honours courses are undivided. In Chemistry and Physics, both junior and senior honours courses are undivided.

46. Thus we find a complex situation in which some programmes are structured as a two-level hierarchy (programme/course) while others are structured as a three-level hierarchy (programme/course/honours-option).

47. Formally, honours-options are subdivisions of large courses. In practice, they are courses in all but name, at least where they are separately assessed. Indeed, they are often made available as independent courses to visiting students and to students from other faculties[18].

48. **Core recommendation: The University should adopt simple, clear, and consistent definitions of what it means by *programme* and *course*.**

49. For example, a programme could be defined as "a set of compulsory and elective courses leading to a stated award, with stated aims, intended learning outcomes, and assessment scheme". A course could be defined as "a self-contained unit of study on a particular topic, with stated level, credit value, aims, intended learning outcomes, pre- and co-requisites, learning and teaching methods, and assessment scheme". Requiring every course to be self-contained would eliminate a perennial source of confusion for students, staff, the programme/course information system, and the student records system.

50. Well-designed small courses make suitable building blocks for a variety of programmes. Large courses are less suitable as building blocks, and they tend to be difficult to adapt.

51. A fine-grained programme structure tends to facilitate development of variants of an existing programme.[19] It is often enough to develop a few new courses to replace courses in the

[18] For example, a law student can take modern language honours-options; an electronic engineering student can take computing science honours-options; a medical student can take biology honours-options.

existing programme. If a sufficient variety of courses already exist, a new programme can sometimes be developed simply by packaging these courses in a different way.

52. A fine-grained programme structure also tends to facilitate development of new joint programmes.[20] This can be done either by selecting a subset of the existing courses that are most suitable for students on the joint programme, or by allowing the students to choose for themselves among the existing courses. Similarly, a new integrated programme can be developed by selecting a subset of the existing courses and augmenting them by a few new integrative courses.

53. A fine-grained programme structure enables individual programmes to be as prescriptive or as flexible as desired. A completely prescriptive programme would consist of a fixed set of compulsory courses. A flexible programme would consist of a mixture of compulsory and elective courses. A flexible programme is not necessarily loosely-structured: each course can specify other courses as pre- or co-requisites, ensuring progressive learning.

54. A common criticism of fine-grained programmes is that they tend to compartmentalise students' learning. In practice, however, all large courses are subdivided informally into course-components, taught and assessed by different lecturers, so the risk of compartmentalisation is there too. Lecturers always have to address this tendency by underlining the connections between the branches of the subject.

55. Our Dentistry, Medicine, and Nursing undergraduate programmes are tightly-integrated, the educational justification being that a clinical programme must impart a coherent body of knowledge to all students, which (it is claimed) could not successfully be decomposed into small courses. On the other hand, our Veterinary Medicine undergraduate programme demonstrates that it is possible to impart a coherent body of knowledge through a set of manageably small courses, by the simple expedient of making all these courses compulsory.

56. The FBLS undergraduate programmes include tightly-integrated 120-credit level-3 courses (followed by level-4H courses that are partly composed of honours-options). Although the FBLS programmes are scientific rather than clinical, FBLS believes that these integrated courses are educationally justified. The Working Group acknowledges that the case for retaining these integrated courses deserves careful consideration.

57. In general, the structure of a fine-grained programme is explicitly specified in terms of the titles, levels, and credit values of the compulsory and elective courses that make up the programme (and these courses are themselves specified in the course catalogue). This structure tends to be more transparent than the structure of a coarse-grained programme.

58. In summary, the advantages of fine-grained programme structures heavily outweigh their disadvantages. A large majority of the University's programmes are already fine-grained in practice. Making all our programmes fine-grained would be a significant step towards aligning our programme structures.

59. **Core recommendation: The University should adopt a common programme structure, based on the following principles:**

    (a) All programmes should be credit-rated, and should be structured in terms of compulsory and elective courses.[21]

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[19] This has been demonstrated vividly by the recent rapid development of new PGT programmes in Law Business & Social Sciences.

[20] This is demonstrated by the fact that the subjects participating most freely in joint programmes all have fine-grained programme structures: Computing Science, Geography, Law, Mathematics, Psychology, Statistics, and all subjects in Arts and Social Sciences.

[21] Note that the same course can be compulsory in one programme and an elective in another programme.

(b) Each course should normally be valued at 10, 15, 20, 30, 40, or 60 credits. Exceptions should be permitted only where there is clear educational justification.

(c) Each course should be assessed in the same academic year as it is taken. Exceptions should be permitted only where there is clear educational justification.

(d) Faculties should retain the right to decide whether their own courses are long or short.

(e) Faculties should retain the right to decide whether their own semester-1 courses are examined in the winter or spring examination period.

60. **Core recommendation: The University should develop a generic undergraduate regulation that enshrines the common features of all undergraduate programmes and the common features of each type of programme (general, designated, honours, integrated masters, or professional). The generic undergraduate regulation should be supplemented by a specific regulation for each degree (such as BSc or MA). These new regulations should be in place by September 2008.**

61. **Core recommendation: The common programme structure should be phased in as follows:**

(a) All existing honours-options should become courses in their own right by September 2007.

(b) Undergraduate courses not conforming to recommendation 59(b) should be replaced by small courses by September 2007 (level 1), September 2008 (level 2), September 2009 (level 3 or 3H), or September 2010 (level 4H).

(c) Any remaining postgraduate courses not conforming to recommendation 59(b) should be replaced by small courses by September 2007.

(d) Nevertheless, an extension may be permitted where a course not conforming to recommendation 59(b) has recently undergone major revision, in which case the course should be replaced by small courses when its next major revision is due (but not later than September 2011).

(e) All new courses proposed after September 2006 should be required to conform to recommendation 59(b).

62. It is already University policy that every honours, professional, and taught masters programme should include a project or dissertation. Some projects and dissertations might be large enough to be valued at more than 60 credits. Similarly, some integrated masters programmes include year-long work placements, which are valued at 120 credits. These are examples of courses with non-standard credit values for which there is clear educational justification.

63. **Recommendation: In line with existing policy, every honours, professional, and taught masters programme should include at least one compulsory course that is clearly identifiable as independent work (by including a word such as "project" or "dissertation" in the course title). An honours project or dissertation should normally be worth 20, 30, or 40 credits, and a masters dissertation should be worth 60 credits.**

64. The professional programmes in the Faculties of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine differ from the University's other undergraduate programmes in a number of respects: they are five years in duration; they are relatively self-contained; some of them (Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing) consist of very long and tightly-integrated courses; some of them (Dentistry, Medicine) are not yet credit-rated.

65. **Recommendation: While recognising the essential differences between professional programmes and other undergraduate programmes, the University should ensure that all its professional programmes comply with the Scottish Credit & Qualifications Framework and the European Qualifications Framework.**

Examination scheduling

66. The current 2-week winter examination period is full to capacity. One problem is a chronic shortage of examination accommodation. Another problem is the increasing number of semester-1 end-of-course examinations (now including honours course examinations in Engineering). Moreover, some long courses hold mid-course examinations during this period.

67. On the other hand, the current official 4-week spring examination period has not yet reached capacity. Some honours examinations currently take place *before* the official spring examination period. This practice would have to cease whichever model we adopt for the academic year. Nevertheless, the Registry is confident that all honours examinations could be accommodated in the 4-week examination period envisaged by Model E1 or E2.

68. If the new academic year is to be stable, it is important to ensure that no examination period is overloaded. At present we have two examination slots per weekday, a total of 10 examination slots per week, which is barely sufficient given the availability of examination halls. The Working Group considered various options for increasing capacity, which are discussed in the following three paragraphs.

69. *Saturday examinations:* Holding examinations on Saturdays (as in the University of Edinburgh) would allow 12 examination slots per week, increasing capacity by 20%.

70. *Evening examinations:* Holding examinations on weekday evenings would allow 15 examination slots per week, increasing capacity by 50%. This increase in capacity would enable us to compress the examination periods, even if we ensure that no student has more than two examinations on the same day.

71. *Shorter examination slots:* Fitting three examination slots into normal working hours would also increase capacity by 50%. This increase in capacity would likewise enable us to compress the examination periods, even if we ensure that no student has more than two examinations on the same day. However, examination durations would have to be limited to 2 hours or slightly longer.

72. At present we have a huge variety of examination durations (1h, 1h15m, 1h40m, 1h45m, 1h30m, 2h, 2h15m, 2h30m, 3h, 3h45m, and 4h). This variety seriously complicates examination scheduling, since it is undesirable to schedule examinations of different durations in the same hall at the same time.

73. The Working Group considered the educational implications of abolishing longer examinations. It could find no compelling reason to retain very long examinations, but consultations suggested that an educational case could be made for retaining 3-hour examinations in some courses.

74. The Working Group believes that we tend to over-examine our students. An existing guideline limits end-of-course examinations for non-honours courses to 1 hour per 10 credits. This guideline has never been formalised, nor has it been extended to honours or PGT courses. Moreover, it takes no account of the weighting of examinations in the course's assessment scheme (as little as 50% in some courses).

75. **Recommendation: The duration of every examination should be 1 hour, 1.5 hours, 2 hours, or (only in the spring examination period) 3 hours, including reading time.**

76. **Recommendation: The winter examination period should be organised on the basis of three examination slots per weekday during normal working hours. However, no student should be expected to take more than two examinations on the same day. If Model E1 is adopted, the first half-week of the winter examination period should be set aside for revision.**

77. **Recommendation: The duration of examinations in each course should be regulated. The regulation should take into account not only the course's credit value but also the weighting of examinations in the course's assessment scheme.**

78. **Recommendation: The University should ensure an adequate supply of examination accommodation, by making all suitable halls available in all examination periods.**

79. The timing of resit examinations is important. Enough time must be allowed after the resit examinations to allow marking, examiners' board meetings, progress committee meetings, and advisory meetings to be completed before the restart of teaching. At present, resit examinations finish just three weeks before the restart of teaching, which is barely sufficient. The Working Group considered the idea of moving resit examinations from late summer to early summer. It believes that this idea is worthy of further consideration, but its possible impact on staff holidays must be borne in mind.

80. **Recommendation: The University should further consider the possibility of holding resit examinations in the early summer.**

Programme/course information system

81. The University has no single repository of information about its programmes and courses:

    - Degree regulations reside in the University Calendar.
    - Programme information resides partly in the CCIMS database and partly in programme specifications (which overlap). Some programmes are also described in the University Calendar.
    - Course information resides in CCIMS. Summary course information, derived from CCIMS, is published in the Undergraduate Course Catalogue and Study Abroad Course Catalogue. Supplementary course information is also held in the Registry and Central Room Bookings databases.

82. Although CCIMS contains a vast amount of information (too much in fact), paradoxically it does not capture all relevant information. In particular, CCIMS does not "understand" the internal structures of large junior and senior honours courses that are subdivided into either honours-options or course-components. Moreover, CCIMS data can be viewed only by specifically authorised staff. The University has decided in principle to replace CCIMS by a new system.

83. The new programme/course information system will benefit from a common programme structure, based on simple and clear definitions of the entities *programme* and *course*. Eliminating courses that are not self-contained, and hybrid entities such as honours-options that have some but not all the attributes of a course, will avoid undesirable complications.

84. The new programme/course information system and the scrutiny process will also benefit from a clear distinction between a *programme specification* (principally its title, award, aims, intended learning outcomes, structure expressed in terms of compulsory and elective courses, and assessment scheme) and supplementary administrative data about that programme. Similarly, they will benefit from a clear distinction between a *course specification* (for example, its title, level, credit value, aims, intended learning outcomes, pre- and co-requisites, learning and teaching methods, and assessment scheme) and supplementary administrative data about that course.

85. **Core recommendation: The University should develop or acquire a new and well-resourced programme/course information system based on the agreed definitions of *programme* and *course*. The database should contain programme specifications, course specifications, related administrative data, and eventually degree regulations. A web interface should enable staff, students, visitors, and applicants to view this information. All on-line and printed publications should be generated automatically from the database.**

Student records and transcripts

86. The University's student records system is also closely tied to the definitions of *programme* and *course*. Confusion about what we mean by a course inevitably leads to confusion about what should appear in students' records and transcripts.

87. At present, on-line registration for courses is supported by WebSurf. Some honours-options are classified as independent courses. Others are not, and on-line registration for such honours-options is not yet possible. Since information about students' choices of honours-options is required for examination scheduling, the Registry must collect that information by other means, directly from departments.

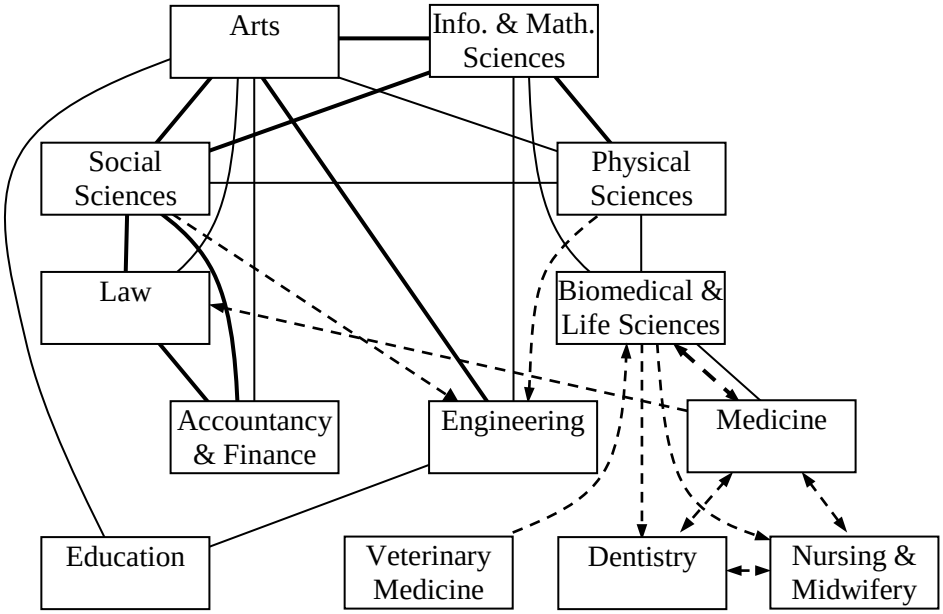
88. Transcripts are important information for current students, as records of their progress. They are even more important for graduates (and prospective employers), as they profile the students' performance in much more detail than an award classification. Although the University is committed to coarse-grained award classification (first/second/third or distinction/merit/pass), it is equally committed to the transcript, and in that spirit is working towards full compliance with the requirements of the European Diploma Supplement.

89. A transcript can provide a detailed profile of the student's performance only to the extent that different aspects of the student's learning are assessed and recorded separately. For example, a coarse-grained honours programme will generate an uninformative transcript, with a single grade for junior honours and a single grade for senior honours; whereas a fine-grained honours programme can generate a much more informative transcript with a grade for each course, including a grade for the honours project or dissertation.

90. **Recommendation: The University should enable on-line registration for all courses, by departments, advisers, or students as appropriate.**

91. **Recommendation: Each student's transcript should show the title, level, and credit value of each course completed by the student, together with the student's grade.**

Table 1 Cross-faculty joint programmes and teaching



This diagram shows the extent of connections due to joint programmes and teaching that cross faculty (or school) boundaries.

A solid line connecting two faculties (or schools) signifies that they share one or more joint programmes. A broken line signifies that one contributes teaching to another. A thick line indicates a particularly strong connection.

Table 2 The current Glasgow University academic year (and its predecessor) in detail

	Pre-2002 academic year		**Current academic year**	
W/c (median)	semester-based courses	term-based courses	**semester-based courses**	**term-based courses**
06-Sep	resits			
13-Sep				
20-Sep				
27-Sep			**1**	
04-Oct			**2**	**1**
11-Oct	1	1	**3**	**2**
18-Oct	2	2	**4**	**3**
25-Oct	3	3	**5**	**4**
01-Nov	4	4	**6**	**5**
08-Nov	5	5	**7**	**6**
15-Nov	6	6	**8**	**7**
22-Nov	7	7	**9**	**8**
29-Nov	8	8	**10**	**9**
06-Dec	9	9	**11**	**10**
13-Dec	10	10	**12**	
20-Dec				
27-Dec				
03-Jan				
10-Jan	11	1	**exams**	**1**
17-Jan	12	2	**exams**	**2**
24-Jan	exams	3	**1**	**3**
31-Jan	1	4	**2**	**4**
07-Feb	2	5	**3**	**5**
14-Feb	3	6	**4**	**6**
21-Feb	4	7	**5**	**7**
28-Feb	5	8	**6**	**8**
07-Mar	6	9	**7**	**9**
14-Mar	7	10	**8**	**10**
21-Mar				
28-Mar				
04-Apr				
11-Apr	8		**9**	**exams**
18-Apr	9		**10**	**exams**
25-Apr	10	exams	**11**	**exams**
02-May	11	exams	**12**	**exams**
09-May	12	exams	**exams**	**exams**
16-May	exams	exams	**exams**	**exams**
23-May	exams	exams	**exams**	**exams**
30-May	exams	exams	**exams**	**exams**
06-Jun	exams	exams		
13-Jun	exams	exams		
20-Jun				
27-Jun				
04-Jul				
11-Jul				
18-Jul				
25-Jul				
01-Aug				
08-Aug				
15-Aug			**resits**	
22-Aug	resits		**resits**	
29-Aug	resits		**resits**	

(The actual w/c date can vary by ±3 days from the median.)

Table 3A Academic years in selected Scottish universities

W/c (2006-07)	**Aberdeen** *y* = 31wks *t* = 12+12wks *e* = 2+3wks	**Dundee** *y* = 29wks *t* = 11+11wks *e* = 2+5wks	**Edinburgh** *y* = 29wks *t* = 11+11wks *e* = 2+5wks	**St Andrews** *y* = 30wks *t* = 11+11wks *e* = 2+2wks	**Stirling** *y* = 29wks *t* = 11+11wks *e* = 2+3wks	**Strathclyde** *y* = 31wks *t* = 12+12wks *e* = 2+4wks	**Glasgow** ***y* = 30wks *t* = 12+12wks *e* = 2+4wks**
04-Sep				resits			
11-Sep		orientation	orientation		1	orientation	**orientation**
18-Sep	orientation	1	1	orientation	2	orientation	**orientation**
25-Sep	1	2	2	1	3	1	**1**
02-Oct	2	3	3	2	4	2	**2**
09-Oct	3	4	4	3	5	3	**3**
16-Oct	4	5	5	4	6	4	**4**
23-Oct	5	6	6	5		5	**5**
30-Oct	6	7	7	6	7	6	**6**
06-Nov	7	8	8		8	7	**7**
13-Nov	8	9	9	7	9	8	**8**
20-Nov	9	10	10	8	10	9	**9**
27-Nov	10	11	11	9	11	10	**10**
04-Dec	11	exams	exams	10	exams	11	**11**
11-Dec	12	exams	exams	11	exams	12	**12**
18-Dec							
25-Dec							
01-Jan							
08-Jan			1	(exams)		exams	**exams**
15-Jan	exams	1	2	exams		exams	**exams**
22-Jan	exams	2	3		resits	1	**1**
29-Jan	1	3	4			2	**2**
05-Feb	2	4	5	1		3	**3**
12-Feb	3	5	6	2	1	4	**4**
19-Feb	4	6	7	3	2	5	**5**
26-Feb	5	7	8	4	3	6	**6**
05-Mar	6	8	9	5	4	7	**7**
12-Mar	7	9	10	6	5	8	**8**
19-Mar	8	10	11	7	6	9	
26-Mar		11			7	10	
02-Apr							
09-Apr				8	8		**9**
16-Apr	9		(exams)	9	9	11	**10**
23-Apr	10	exams	exams	10	10	12	**11**
30-Apr	11	exams	exams	11	11		**12**
07-May	12	exams	exams			exams	**exams**
14-May		exams	exams	exams	exams	exams	**exams**
21-May	exams	exams	(exams)	exams	exams	exams	**exams**
28-May	exams				exams	exams	**exams**
04-Jun	exams						
11-Jun					resits		
18-Jun		graduations	graduations	graduations			
25-Jun					graduations		**graduations**
02-Jul	graduations					graduations	**graduations**
09-Jul							
16-Jul							
23-Jul							
30-Jul							
06-Aug	resits	resits				resits	
13-Aug	resits	resits	resits			resits	**resits**
20-Aug			resits		resits		**resits**
27-Aug							**resits**

(*y* = academic year duration up to end of exams; *t* = duration of teaching periods; *e* = duration of exam periods)

Table 3B Academic years in selected English universities

W/c (2006-07)	**Birm'ham** *y* = 28wks *t* = 11+11wks *e* = 5wks	**Kent** *y* = 30wks *t* = 12+12wks *e* = 6wks	**Leeds** *y* = 28wks *t* = 11+11wks *e* = 2+3wks	**Liverpool** *y* = 28wks *t* = 12+12wks *e* = 2+2wks	**Manchester** *y* = 30wks *t* = 12+12wks *e* = 2+3wks	**Newcastle** *y* = 30wks *t* = 12+12wks *e* = 2+3wks	**Nottingham** *y* = 28wks *t* = 12+11wks *e* = 2+3wks
04-Sep				resits			resits
11-Sep							
18-Sep		orientation	orientation	orientation?	orientation?	orientation?	
25-Sep	orientation?	1	1	1	1	1	orientation
02-Oct	1	2	2	2	2	2	1
09-Oct	2	3	3	3	3	3	2
16-Oct	3	4	4	4	4	4	3
23-Oct	4	5	5	5	5	5	4
30-Oct	5	6	6	6	6	6	5
06-Nov	6	7	7	7	7	7	6
13-Nov	7	8	8	8	8	8	7
20-Nov	8	9	9	9	9	9	8
27-Nov	9	10	10	10	10	10	9
04-Dec	10	11	11	11	11	11	10
11-Dec	11	12		12	12	12	11
18-Dec							
25-Dec							
01-Jan							
08-Jan		1	exams	exams			12
15-Jan	1	2	exams	exams	exams	exams	exams
22-Jan	2	3	1	1	exams	exams	exams
29-Jan	3	4	2	2	1	1	1
05-Feb	4	5	3	3	2	2	2
12-Feb	5	6	4	4	3	3	3
19-Feb	6	7	5	5	4	4	4
26-Feb	7	8	6	6	5	5	5
05-Mar	8	9	7	7	6	6	6
12-Mar	9	10	8	8	7	7	7
19-Mar	10	11		9	8	8	8
26-Mar	11	12		10			
02-Apr							
09-Apr							
16-Apr			9		9		
23-Apr			10	11	10	9	9
30-Apr		exams	11	12	11	10	10
07-May		exams		exams	12	11	11
14-May	exams	exams	exams	exams	(exams)	12	(exams)
21-May	exams	exams	exams		exams	exams	exams
28-May	exams	exams	exams		exams	exams	exams
04-Jun	exams	exams			(exams)	exams	
11-Jun							
18-Jun							
25-Jun							
02-Jul			graduations?	graduations	graduations		
09-Jul					graduations		graduations
16-Jul	graduations						graduations
23-Jul							
30-Jul							
06-Aug							
13-Aug						resits	
20-Aug					resits	resits	
27-Aug				resits	resits		resits

(*y* = academic year duration up to end of exams; *t* = duration of teaching periods; *e* = duration of exam periods)

Table 4 Possible models for the Glasgow standard academic year

	Model G1	**Model G2**	**Model K** ("Kent model")	**Model E1** ("Edinburgh model")	**Model E2**
W/c (median)	*y* = 30wks *t* = 12+12wks *e* = 2+4wks	*y* = 30wks *t* = 12+12wks *e* = 2+4wks	*y* = 30wks *t* = 12+12wks *e* = 6wks	*y* = 29wks *t* = 11+11wks *e* = 2+4wks	*y* = 29wks *t* = 11+11wks *e* = 2+4wks
06-Sep		orientation		end academic year	orientation
13-Sep		1	end academic year	orientation	1
20-Sep	orientation	2	orientation	1	2
27-Sep	1	3	1	2	3
04-Oct	2	4	2	3	4
11-Oct	3	5	3	4	5
18-Oct	4	6	4	5	6
25-Oct	5	7	5	6	7
01-Nov	6	8	6	7	8
08-Nov	7	9	7	8	9
15-Nov	8	10	8	9	10
22-Nov	9	11	9	10	11
29-Nov	10	12	10	11	revision
06-Dec	11	exams	11	revision, exams	exams
13-Dec	12	exams	12	exams	exams
20-Dec					
27-Dec					
03-Jan					
10-Jan	exams	1	1	1	1
17-Jan	exams	2	2	2	2
24-Jan	1	3	3	3	3
31-Jan	2	4	4	4	4
07-Feb	3	5	5	5	5
14-Feb	4	6	6	6	6
21-Feb	5	7	7	7	7
28-Feb	6	8	8	8	8
07-Mar	7	9	9	9	9
14-Mar	8	10	10	10	10
21-Mar		11	11	11	11
28-Mar		12	12		
04-Apr					
11-Apr	9				
18-Apr	10			revision	exams
25-Apr	11	exams	exams	exams	exams
02-May	12	exams	exams	exams	exams
09-May	exams	exams	exams	exams	exams
16-May	exams	exams	exams	exams	
23-May	exams		exams		
30-May	exams		exams		
06-Jun					graduations
13-Jun		graduations		graduations	graduations
20-Jun		graduations		graduations	
27-Jun	graduations		graduations		
04-Jul	graduations		graduations		
11-Jul					
18-Jul					
25-Jul					
01-Aug		resits			resits
08-Aug		resits		resits	resits
15-Aug	resits	resits	resits	resits	resits
22-Aug	resits		resits	resits	
29-Aug	resits		resits		end academic year

Appendix A Remit and Membership

The remit of the Academic Structures Working Group was:

- To review experience with the current academic year, and the external constraints on it (such as admissions, field trips, and holidays).
- To review the course/programme structures in different faculties, and how these structures relate to the academic year and to other relevant issues (such as lecture and examination timetabling, the course/programme information system, student records, degree awards, and transcripts).
- To investigate how the course/programme and academic year structures could be brought into closer alignment (recognising that it might be infeasible for the Faculties of Education, Medicine, and Veterinary Medicine to share a common academic year with the other faculties).
- To bring forward proposals for change, based on the foregoing, and in accord with the University's Strategic Plan and Learning & Teaching Strategy.

Its members were:

Prof David Watt (Department of Computing Science, Convener)

Prof Noreen Burrows (Dean of Law Business & Social Sciences)

Prof John Chapman (Department of Physics & Astronomy)

Dr Geoffrey Moores (FBLS) – replaced in July 2006 by Prof Roger Downie (FBLS)

Dr Thomas Munck (School of History)

Mrs Eleanor Waugh (Faculties of Science, Clerk)

Dr Arthur Whittaker (Department of Mechanical Engineering)

Appendix B Consultations

The Convener and Clerk of the Working Group have consulted the following:

Dr Jack Aitken (Head of Senate Office)
Dr Ian Allison (Chief Adviser, Faculties of Science)
Prof Michael Anderson (Senior Vice-Principal, University of Edinburgh)
Mrs Fiona Andrews (Head of Recruitment Admissions & Participation Service)
Mr David Bennion (Registry)
Dr Vincent Bissell (Dental School)
Dr James Brown (Recruitment Admissions & Participation Service)
Ms Helen-Marie Clayton (Dental School)
Prof James Conroy (Dean of Faculty of Education)
Mr Matt Davies (VP Education 2005–06, Students' Representative Council)
Prof Christine Edwards (Faculty of Medicine Graduate School)
Ms Jan Hulme (Academic Secretary)
Dr John Lewis (Chief Adviser, Faculty of Law Business & Social Sciences)
Dr Heather Lloyd (Chief Adviser, Faculty of Arts)
Mrs Christine Lowther (Head of Registry)
Mr John McColl (Convener of Examinations Timetabling Group)
Mrs Joan McDowell (Head of School of Nursing & Midwifery)
Prof James McKillop (Head of Medical School)
Mrs Caroline Mallon (Medical School)
Ms Lesley MacInnes (Director of Accommodation Services)
Ms Shona Morrison (President 2006–07, Students' Representative Council)
Ms Cula Murphy (Central Room Bookings)
Prof Anton Muscatelli (Vice-Principal Strategy & Advancement)
Prof Andrew Nash (Clerk of Senate)
Ms Sharne Procter (Head of International & Postgraduate Service)
Prof Stuart Reid (Dean of Faculty of Veterinary Medicine)
Ms Tania Sprott (Faculty of Medicine Graduate School)
Prof Martin Sullivan (Faculty of Veterinary Medicine)
Ms Sarah Tomlinson (VP Welfare 2005–06, Students' Representative Council)
Prof Mark Ward (Director of Studies, Crichton Campus)
Prof Eric Wilkinson (Faculty of Education)
Ms Mhairi Wilson (VP Education 2006–07, Students' Representative Council)

The Convener, Clerk, and other members of the Working Group consulted all Faculties during September–October 2006:

Faculty of Arts Management Group
Faculty of Biomedical & Life Sciences Undergraduate Education Committee and others
Faculty of Education Management Group
Faculty of Engineering Management Group
Faculty of Information & Mathematical Sciences Management Group
Faculty of Law Business & Social Sciences
Faculty of Medicine Management Group
Faculty of Physical Sciences Management Group
Faculty of Veterinary Medicine Management Group