

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN  
UNIVERSITY EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
**ONLINE EDUCATION FORUM UPDATE**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER**

This paper provides an update on the Online Education Forum.

Members of the UEC are asked to **note** the paper.

**2. PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION BY /FURTHER APPROVAL REQUIRED**

|  | <b>Board/Committee</b> | <b>Date</b>     |
|--|------------------------|-----------------|
| Previously considered/approved by              | UEC                    | 16 January 2024 |
| Further consideration/<br>approval required by |                        |                 |

**3. RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Following the first meeting of the Online Education Forum, members of the UEC are invited to **note** the updates provided.

**4. DISCUSSION**

- 4.1 Further to the approval of the establishment of the Online Education Forum by the UEC on 16 January 2024, membership was finalised (see Annex A) and the first meeting was held on 21 February 2024.
- 4.2 The first meeting started by discussing the revised [Principles of Education](#) from an online delivery perspective. It was agreed that collating examples of good practice and case studies within each of the five Principles would be helpful for those who are new to teaching online, and also to encourage more consistency within different courses. It was also suggested that, as part of Principle 5: Accessibility & inclusivity, it should be highlighted which practices are mandatory to ensure students are not being discriminated against.
- 4.3 The Forum then discussed what sort of support Schools would benefit from in order to expand and enhance their online offering. It was suggested that sub-groups of the Forum to carry out some of this work and then present it at a later meeting. Some suggestions included:
- Doing a sector review to see what is being done at other institutions and help drive standards up.
  - Embedding more online-specific guidance and resources within the Programme Management Process.
  - Setting up a peer review or buddy system for those who would like to get feedback on their online course from a trusted colleague.
- 4.4 An open session on “Developing and Delivering Online Education” took place on 8 February, with staff and students of online courses from across different disciplines presenting on their teaching and learning experiences, followed by an overview of the support available for those who are contemplating delivering an online course. Further events will be arranged for the future, with current topic suggestions being inclusivity and

accessibility of online courses, making online courses more engaging and interactive for students and monitoring engagement aligned to on campus processes.

- 4.5 The Forum considered the first draft of a new institutional extension policy currently being developed, focusing particularly on how it would impact the online learning experience. This highlighted the importance of embedding the perspective of online education from the start when developing a new policy or guidance.

## **5. FURTHER INFORMATION**

Further information is available from Kirsty Kiezebrink, Dean of Educational Innovation ([k.kiezebrink@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:k.kiezebrink@abdn.ac.uk)), and Isabella Fausti, eLearning Adviser ([isabella.fausti@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:isabella.fausti@abdn.ac.uk)).

27 February 2024

**Freedom of Information/Confidentiality Status:** Open

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN  
ONLINE EDUCATION FORUM  
**REMIT AND COMPOSITION**

**1. COMMITTEE TITLE**

Online Education Forum

**2. DATE OF ESTABLISHMENT**

January 2024

**3. CHAIR AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT AREA**

Chair: Dean for Educational Innovation

Clerk: Academic Services and Online Education

**4. PURPOSE**

A Forum to enable focused discussion in regard to the delivery of online education, the pedagogic approach, the associated online student experience both academic and non-academic and the support of staff delivering online provision.

**5. REMIT**

The Online Education Forum support the delivery of a high-quality student learning experience for all online learners aligned with consistent institutional pedagogic approaches to the delivery of online learning. In doing so, the Forum will:

- Inform the principles to underpin the University's approach to the delivery of online education;
- Consider ways to enhance the academic student experience provided to online learners to ensure it meets their particular needs;
- Consider the non-academic needs of the online learners to ensure that they are appropriately supported and feel part of the wider University community;
- Review feedback from online learners (e.g. from the Aberdeen Student Experience Survey) and identify areas for improvement
- Ensure that consideration is given to issues of accessibility and inclusivity in the delivery of online education;
- Ensure that staff involved in the delivery of online education feel supported and informed;
- Promote the sharing of good practice from online education to inform on campus delivery and vice versa.
- Ensure that there is active representation of the online learning community.

**Members' Responsibilities:**

Each academic member will ensure that they consult with their own School, through their School Education Committee and other forums, on relevant matters, and provide feedback into the Forum which represents the views of their School.

**6. COMPOSITION AND QUORUM:**

Chair: Dean of Educational Innovation

Membership: Dean for Student Support & Experience

Academic representative from each School (ideally someone who has responsibility for, or close involvement in, the delivery of online education)

AUSA Representative

Head of Online Education

Development Officers (Online Education)

Representative from the Centre for Academic Development

Representation from the Experience, Engagement & Wellbeing Team

Marketing Manager (Online Education)

Clerk (from Academic Services and Online Education)

**ACCOUNT TO BE TAKEN OF EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IN MEMBERSHIP**

**7. MEMBERSHIP**

|  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| Chair/Dean for Educational Innovation          | Kirsty Kiezebrink            |
| Dean for Student Support & Experience          | Jason Bohan                  |
| Academic representative from each School:      |                              |
| Biological Sciences                            | Martin Barker                |
| Business                                       | Yakubu Abdul-Salam           |
| Divinity, History, Philosophy and Art History  | Katy Hockey                  |
| Education                                      | Charlaine Simpson            |
| Engineering                                    | Nina Nikora                  |
| Geosciences                                    | Joshua Wright                |
| Language, Literature, Music and Visual Culture | Chris Gray                   |
| Law  | Gloria Alvarez               |
| Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition       | Leone Craig                  |
| Natural and Computing Science                  | Bill Harrison                |
| Psychology                                     | Kevin Allan                  |
| Social Science                                 | Johan Rasanayagam            |
| AUSA Representative                            | TBC                          |
| Head of Online Education                       | Rob Cummins                  |
| Development Officers (Online Education)        | Jane Melhuish and Ian Clarke |
| CAD Representative                             | Catherine Ogilvie            |
| Experience, Engagement & Wellbeing Team        | Duncan Stuart                |
| Marketing Manager (Online Education)           | Susan Bryce                  |
| Clerk:   | Isabella Fausti              |

**8. REPORTING LINE/PARENT COMMITTEE AND INTERFACE WITH OTHER COMMITTEES**

Formal reporting line: University Education Committee  
 Interface with other committees: SSEC

In addition to formal meetings of the Online Education Forum, the group will also organise open sessions to provide space for sharing of good practice in regard to online education.

**9. FREQUENCY AND TIMING OF MEETINGS**

The Group will meet at least five times per year preceding each meeting of UEC. Additional meetings may be arranged, as required.

Meetings between 10am – 4pm in accordance with University Policy.

**10. PUBLICATION OF PAPERS**

Cognisance will be taken of the University's Publication Scheme and Agenda papers will be made available on web pages/StaffNet where possible.

**11. DATE ESTABLISHMENT OF GROUP APPROVED/RECORDED BY UMG:**