UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN 2040 COMMITMENTS IN THE CATALOGUE OF COURSES

1. **PURPOSE OF THE PAPER**

As part of the ongoing implementation of Aberdeen 2040, it is proposed that taught courses within the University which align with the four commitments within the 2040 strategy are identified as such in the Catalogue of Courses.

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

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<th>Board/Committee</th>
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<td>Previously considered/approved by</td>
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3. **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

UEC is asked to approve the proposal to incorporate the Aberdeen 2040 commitments into the Catalogue where appropriate, and comment on the proposed definitions to be used.

4. **DISCUSSION**

The identification of the four commitments within Aberdeen 2040 (to be an inclusive, interdisciplinary, international and sustainable university) provides the opportunity for taught courses within the University to be ‘badged’ to highlight where the course is considered to align with the commitment. Introducing a system to do this would permit staff and students to recognise courses contributing directly to education associated with those Themes. This will allow students who, for example, have a particular interest in sustainable development to easily determine which courses suit their interest.

The Catalogue of Courses currently highlights where a course is recognised as Sustained Study i.e. courses which taken together as part of the requirements for curriculum breadth are recognised as such at graduation. Using this existing functionality, and expanding it, would make it possible to increase the number of labels in use to include the 2040 themes of Inclusive, International, Interdisciplinary and Sustainable. This would permit the Catalogue to be structured and searchable in ways which align clearly to the Aberdeen 2040 Themes. The system of highlighting options in this way helps to make the course choice process as clear as possible for students.

Eventually it is anticipated that gathering this information for new courses will be possible through the Curriculum Management System (CMS). To make a change in the fields gathered as part of CMS will not be a quick change and so it is proposed that in the short term the data is inputted to the Catalogue directly by the Curriculum Team.

Suggested below are possible ‘definitions’ which would enable judgements to be made about the labelling of courses. Clearly some courses will straddle more than one theme and so would appear under more than one category.

Badging courses in this way will enable course content to be monitored to ensure that coverage of all four themes is being achieved. It is not expected that all courses will fit within one or more of the themes. Courses will need to meet criteria to ensure alignments are appropriate, and that subject matter is genuinely contributing to the theme.
The first step in the process will be to seek submissions requesting alignment for current courses through the Schools. At this stage it is anticipated that it may be possible to develop this functionality and gather the information required for courses to be delivered in 2022/23. As part of taking this work forward the following draft definitions are proposed. The Committee is asked to discuss and provide feedback on the proposed definitions:

**Inclusive**

It is expected that all courses are inclusive in their approach to delivery and therefore the focus is not on this aspect of inclusivity but on:
- The subject of the course relates to inclusive issues, for example exploring equality, diversity or human rights

**International**

- Delivered in another country as part of an exchange programme
- Delivered with another country through an approach such as Collaborative Online International Learning
- The subject of the course relates to international issues and explores international perspectives

**Interdisciplinary**

- Delivered from a number of disciplinary perspectives giving students the opportunity to learn about a given subject area from a number of perspectives
- Delivered by a number of discipline experts with different student disciplines sitting alongside each other in the (virtual or physical) classroom – learning with and from each other

**Sustainable**

- The subject of the course relates to sustainability issues

5. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

Further information is available from Ruth Taylor, Vice-Principal Education ruth.taylor@abdn.ac.uk or Rachael Bernard, Academic Registrar r.bernard@abdn.ac.uk

21 February 2022

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