

Educational Oversight: desk-based analysis of the Free Church of Scotland t/a Edinburgh Theological Seminary, January 2022

Outcome of the desk-based analysis

1 From the annual return and documentary evidence, the monitoring team concludes that the Edinburgh Theological Seminary (ETS; the Seminary) is continuing to maintain academic standards and the quality of student learning opportunities since the January 2021 [Higher Education Review \(Alternative Providers\)](#).

Changes since the last QAA review

2 There have been no significant changes in the management, course structure or accommodation at ETS since the Higher Education Review (Alternative Providers) (HER(AP)) in January 2021. There are currently 97 students undertaking courses at the Seminary: 61 undergraduate - 47 full-time equivalent; and 36 postgraduate - 21 full-time equivalent. ETS employs 21 staff, all but eight of whom are part-time. All courses continue to be validated and awarded by the University of Glasgow.

Findings from the monitoring visit

3 The outcome of this desk-based review was reached after reading the Annual Monitoring Return and the accompanying evidence. The HER(AP) in January 2021 identified one area of good practice which the Seminary continues to develop (p

opportunity for staff to attend appropriate courses and conferences, and the opportunity for sabbatical leave to pursue more in-depth development activities. An electronic log system has been introduced where staff can record the development activities they undertake and where they are asked to comment on their experience. This, and future development, is discussed at the staff appraisal which takes place bi-annually and is detailed in the Staff Appraisal Policy.

7 Progression and success data is reported to and discussed annually at the Board of Examiners and is generally good. Cohort sizes at the Seminary are small, so percentage data can be dramatically skewed by the actions of one individual. The impact of the restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic has directly resulted in the withdrawal of at least two students from the 2019-20 cohort of the Master of Theology in Missiology, due to changes in family circumstances or ill health. In other programmes for the same cohort, one student has transferred to a PhD programme, and another has deferred. Progression for the 2020-21 cohorts is 100% for all programmes except the full-time B.Th. programme where three students have withdrawn. Timely completion has been affected by students changing between full and part-time study. Those students who have completed their programmes have all achieved their award and of the 10 students completing in June 2021, three achieved Merit and

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