Withdrawal Rates from Informatics

A lengthy report on student withdrawal from Edinburgh, based on those withdrawing during their first year in 2003/4, has been prepared (contact Barbara if you want to see the full report). Relevant points for this committee:

- Informatics had the (equal) highest withdrawal rate across the University, at 8.7%. The overall rate is 4.2%. N.B. this is before the new Informatics I course.

- Students from under-represented social groups and entering via non-traditional routes were slightly more likely to withdraw; withdrawers also had on average less contact with the University prior to entry, and were more likely to have entered through Clearing.

- 47.2% gave 'Course not what I expected' as one reason for withdrawing. Some reported that they were ill-informed on content, structure or teaching by the prospectus or other University information sources. "Provide more (or better) information on what the courses involve" was the most popular suggestion (50.7%) for how the University could help students stay on course. "More information on the relevance of my course to future careers" was also suggested by 25.5%.

- A number of other factors were also important, including: difficulties coping; dissatisfaction with the social environment, financial and personal problems. Of the recommendations for actions to address retention the only other one directly relevant to recruitment is "improving the match between 1st year courses and admissions qualifications"

B. Webb 05/09/05