

Report from the meeting of Senate held on 7th October 2016

The Principal announced that the University had very recently been awarded Athena Swan Bronze and thanked all staff who had worked hard in preparing the submission.

1. PRINCIPAL AND VICE CHANCELLOR'S AND EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORT

Senate received an update from the Principal on a number of substantive items considered by the Executive Board, including:-

External Environment

Programme for Government

The First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has set out her programme for government with education identified as the key priority. Key issues for the Higher Education sector included a commitment to protect free university tuition, guaranteed places for care experienced young people and a review of student support. Additional funds for the maintenance of the Higher Education estate across Scotland have been made available and the possibility of a new agreement between Universities and the Scottish Government on future ambitions for the sector was raised as well.

UK Government Higher Education Bill

The UK Government's Higher Education and Research Bill is now being scrutinised at the Committee Stage in the House of Commons. GCU has been engaged with Universities Scotland regarding the legislation, which is seeking to influence the bill so that Scottish institutions are able to take part in the Teaching Excellence Framework if they choose to do so, and to ensure that the Research Excellence Framework is a UK-wide collaborative endeavour fully involving the devolved nations, rather than being run by a single agency accountable to the UK Government.

Brexit

Lord Dunlop, Parliamentary Undersecretary of State at the Scotland Office, addressed the Away Day of Universities Scotland. He reassured Universities that despite Brexit, the UK was keen to facilitate research and business opportunities for UK Universities in Europe. He stressed that the Home Office would be making Visa Applications easier for inward international University students in the future, but this approach would be for Russell Group Universities only. Following the meeting he sought the Principal out for further discussion and has accepted an invitation to visit our University in Glasgow.

SFC Outcome Agreement 2017-18

The SFC issued its guidance on the development of the new round of Outcome Agreements on 5 October 2016. The guidance was informed by the Interim Letter of Guidance from the Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science to the SFC which outlined the high level strategic objectives for the university and college sectors and the SFC. It stated that a further letter of guidance will be published to confirm budget allocations following the conclusion of the process.

The governmental strategic objectives for the higher education sector were:

- High quality effective learning;
- Widening access and implementation of the Commission on Widening Access

recommendations;

- Learning which prepares people for work and prioritises provision that meets known skills gaps;
- Internationally competitive and impactful research;
- Effective knowledge exchange and innovation;
- The underrepresentation of women on the governing bodies and at senior levels;
- Gender balance amongst student intakes for key subjects, including STEM subjects.

By 31st October, the University must complete a self-evaluation of the current Outcome Agreement. An early draft of the new Outcome Agreement must be done by 16th December, with the final version agreed by the end of March 2017.

A meeting with the SFC was scheduled for 18th October and the new Outcome Agreement would be developed in collaboration with colleagues and consultation with the Students' Association.

League Tables

The Times and Sunday Times University Good University Guide league table was published and shows GCU positioned at 99 out of 128 institutions, a fall of five places from last year's position of 94. GCU is placed 12th in Scotland, and is the top Scottish modern university for completion and research quality, and performs well in some subject areas. The Times Higher Education (THE) World University were published and GCU has been ranked within the 601 to 800 banding. The rankings list 980 of the top universities in the world. In the 2015 table GCU was the only Scottish modern university to be ranked, again within the 601 to 800 ranking. This year Edinburgh Napier University and West of Scotland University (UWS) are also ranked within this banding.

University Activities

Erasmus+ Funding

The University has been awarded almost €2million from the European Commission's Erasmus+ programme to lead two major projects that engage universities and communities from across the world. The first, Common Good First, is an innovative digital platform which seeks to identify, showcase and evaluate how communities globally are already practically solving problems that they face. The second project, the Southeast Asian Social Innovation Network will drive social innovation through unique collaborations between universities and communities in Thailand, Malaysia, Cambodia, Myanmar, Spain and Portugal. Erasmus+ supports projects which promote the internationalisation of higher education, build capacity in individuals and communities, and encourage cooperation between countries.

Advanced Highers Hub

The third year of the Advanced Higher Hub has seen an increase in the pass rate to 91%, up from last year's pass rate of 90%. The pass rate of 91% is higher than the national pass rate of 82%. The Advanced Higher Hub opened in August 2013 as the first project in Scotland to employ school teachers on a university campus, and a new two-year funding partnership between the University, the Scottish Funding Council and Glasgow City Council to continue this innovative initiative was agreed towards the end of the last academic year.

Homeless World Cup

The University served as an official event partner in the Homeless World Cup 2016, held in Glasgow. Sixty-four teams from 52 countries, came together to compete and highlight the life-changing work of the Homeless World Cup National Partner network. As the event hub, GCU hosted hundreds of participants and helped kick off the event with a parade to George Square on July 10 starting from the Glasgow campus. GCU students did a variety of volunteer work, including a group of 10 physiotherapy students who assisted players in need of physio, first aid and massage.

Business in the Community Award

At the annual Responsible Business Gala in London, known as the ‘Oscars’ of responsible business, the University received the Education Award for its long-running widening access programme, the Caledonian Club. The University is the first Higher Education institution to win in this category in the Business in the Community Awards, which were established as part of the Prince’s Responsible Business Network to create a fairer society and more sustainable future. The Caledonian Club has, over the past eight years, worked with more than 12,000 nursery, primary and secondary school pupils and 3,000 of their parents, to raise basic life skills and the aspirations of those from the most disadvantaged communities in Glasgow. The London Club has engaged with over 600 pupils and over 200 parents from the University’s campus in Spitalfields.

The Herald Higher Education Awards

The University was presented with the Enhancing Student Learning Award at The Herald’s 2016 Higher Education Awards. The award was in recognition of ‘Chaotic Environment’ a simulated learning experience, delivered to GCU student nurses undertaking the Learning Disabilities Nursing Studies programme. Through the innovative teaching simulation, the students learn community learning disability nursing practice in a more realistic and challenging environment. By simulating ‘chaos’, the students can better understand a patient’s deteriorating mental health and have to make decisions about how they are going to respond to the situation that they find themselves in.

World Health Organisation Nursing Conference

GCU hosted a midwifery and nursing conference for global healthcare leaders and practitioners on behalf of the Global Network of WHO Collaborating Centres for Nursing and Midwifery. The theme of the 11th Biennial Conference was ‘Strategic Conversations: The contribution of Nursing & Midwifery towards Global Health.’ The Principal delivered the welcome address, and other speakers included Chief Nursing Officer Professor Fiona McQueen, Dr Jim Campbell, Director of Human Resources for Health at the WHO, and Professor John Daly, Secretary General of the Global Network WHO Collaborating Centres.

International Social Innovation Conference

The University hosted the 8th International Social Innovation Research Conference (ISIRC) along with partners including the Universities of Oxford and York, and the Scottish Government. The ISIRC is the foremost gathering of practitioners and scholars in the field of Social Innovation. The Principal delivered the official welcome to the conference and a keynote address was given by Angela Constance MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Communities, Social Security and Equalities. The conference attracted over 200 delegates from over 30 countries.

CGI Graduate Level Apprenticeships

The University is part of a collaboration delivering Scotland’s first Information Computer Technology Graduate Level Apprenticeship programme, in partnership with Skills Development Scotland and CGI, a leading employer in the IT sector. Successful candidates will be offered a full-time job with CGI on a starting salary of £14,000 and the opportunity to achieve a BSc (Hons) in Software Development for Business from GCU. At least ten graduate apprentices are expected to begin the four-year honours degree course in January 2017.

Chancellor Yunus at the Rio Olympics

Chancellor Yunus was involved in the recent Rio Olympics as he delivered a keynote speech to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and carried the Olympic Torch during the final leg of its journey through Rio. His keynote address was entitled “Athletics, Social Business and SDGs – the New Vision of the World.” Professor Yunus was a guest of honour at the IOC President’s dinner, joining 400 leaders of the sports world and distinguished guests including UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, French President François Hollande and HM King Willem-

Alexander of the Netherlands.

GCU New York

The Principal informed Senate that significant progress had been made in the licence application. Over 100 New York institutions had been consulted on the application and arising from this there had been 3 objections and one note of concern. Following a meeting with one of the objectors, Fashion Institute of Technology, their objection had been withdrawn and they had written to the Board of Regents, who will make the final decision on the application, indicating their support and that they would be working with GCU NY on the Fair Fashion Initiative. One of the objections had been received on the grounds of unfair competition, however this was not an eligible ground for objection.

The Vice President of GCU NY was due to meet with the Chair of the Board of Regents and this was considered to be a hugely positive move. Additionally, a number of letters of advocacy had been sent on the University's behalf by influential individuals who supported the University's work in New York. Prior to making a decision, the Board of Regents would undertake a site visit and it was hoped that this would happen before Christmas.

2. SENATE AND STANDING COMMITTEES ANNUAL REPORTS 2015-16

The annual report outlining Senate's work in 2014-15 in relation to fulfilling its terms of reference was considered and noted. Senate also noted annual reports from Academic Policy Committee, Research Committee, International Committee and Equality and Diversity Committee.

3. SCHOOL BOARD ANNUAL REPORTS 2015-16

Senate received the School Board Annual Reports for 2015-16 from the Glasgow School for Business and Society, the School of Health and Life Sciences, the School of Engineering and Built Environment, GCU London and GCU Lead. Senate was advised that the main function of the GCU Lead Board was to ratify the recommendations of the recognition of the panel for the conferment of professional recognition in teaching and supporting learning, and this was now included in the Learning and Teaching Sub-Committee's revised Terms of Reference agreed at Academic Policy Committee on 14th September 2016. Senate therefore agreed to disband the GCU Lead Board.

4. NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY 2015

Senate considered an overview of the results of the 2015 National Student Survey. The University had not performed as strongly as expected in this year's NSS and had experienced a decrease in six of the eight categories.

- Overall satisfaction has decreased by 2% to 83%
- Satisfaction with teaching has decreased by 2% to 83%
- Assessment and feedback remained at 66%
- Academic support had decreased by 2% to 78%
- Organisation and management has decreased by 1% to 73%
- Learning resources has increased by 1% to 88%
- Personal development has decreased by 1% to 84%
- The Students' Association has decreased by 2% to 68%

There were a number of programmes that had performed particularly well, with 24 programmes achieving 90% satisfaction or above. At School level there was some variation in overall performance with SHLS performance decreasing by 5% to 84%, SEBE improved by 1% to 80% and GSBS remained at 86%. An in depth analysis of the results had been undertaken, including the open comments provided by participants.

Senate was advised that that work had already begun with staff and students to address issues

raised in the survey in order to improve the student experience so these improvements could be reflected in the 2017 survey. Senate endorsed the actions being taken and noted there were areas of excellence across the University and that there was a need to share good practice and to continue to work closely with students. This was reiterated by the Student President who welcomed the work and partnership approach undertaken.

5. POLICY APPROVAL: FITNESS TO PRACTISE AND RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

Senate approved the revised School of Health and Life Sciences Fitness to Practise Policy, and an amended Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy,

6. REVISED QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT HANDBOOK

Senate considered the revised Quality Enhancement and Assurance Handbook that had been updated to take account of external changes and as a result of consultation and feedback from academic colleagues. The revised handbook was one of the actions agreed as part of the Academic Pillars work which was approved at Senate in June 2016. Substantial parts of the Handbook remained unchanged, and the aim was to clarify and provide additional information where needed. The Handbook reasserted that the University was a programmes based university and importantly it clarified, deepened and reasserted the policies and procedures in relation to programme boards and programme leaders. Work was on going in relation to module credit rating and teaching hours and this would be reported back to the December meeting of Senate.

It was clarified that there was no change to the processes involved in programme approval but the timeline had been articulated. Any new programmes should only be put forward if aligned with the University Strategy and where it had been demonstrated there was demand. Any urgent case for the introduction of a new programme could be accommodated.

There was some concern regarding Section 6 of the Handbook relating to Programme Review, and in particular regarding 6.2 which outlined the steps involved in discontinuing an approved programme. It was agreed that further clarification would help staff and that consultation on this should continue, with revised wording reported back to the December meeting of Senate.

Senate agreed to approve the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook subject to further discussions outlined above and that the results of these discussions be reported back to Senate in December.

7. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR OF SENATE DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

Senate approved the appointment of Professor Alison Britton as Chair of Senate Disciplinary Committee for a period of 3 years commencing 1st November 2016. It was further agreed to proceed to appoint the Vice-Chair of the Senate Disciplinary Committee.

8. OTHER MATTERS APPROVED

- The appointment of Professor James Miller, Deputy Vice Chancellor Strategy as Vice Chair of Senate for the period up to 1 August 2017.
- Senate composition and membership for 2016/17.
- The Academic Policy Committee Terms of Reference, Composition and Membership for Session 2016/2017 and to amend the name of the Committee to Academic Policy and Practise Committee.
- Following recommendations from the Higher Degree Committee, Senate confirmed the award of 1MPhil, 15 PhDs, 1 PhD by previous publication and 1 ProfD.
- Chair's Action approving the
 - appointment of Professor Elaine McFarland to fill a GSBS vacancy on the

Senate Disciplinary Committee. It was noted that Professor McFarland had very recently retired from the University so steps would now be taken to fill this vacancy.

- extension of Mr Michael Bromby, Glasgow School for Business and Society, as Vice-Chair of the Senate Disciplinary Committee until the process of appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Senate Disciplinary Committee was concluded.
- The undernoted honorary appointments were noted

Title	Post	Field of expertise	School
Mrs Elaine Ross	Honorary Research Fellow	Infection Prevention & Control	SHSL
Dr Eleanor Anderson	Honorary Senior Research Fellow	Control of Antimicrobial Resistance in Scotland	SHLS
Margaret Curran	Honorary Professor	Social Justice, Media & Politics	GSBS
Gordon Matheson	Honorary Professor	Local Government & Politics	GSBS

9. OTHER MATTERS NOTED

- Recent academic staff appointments.
- The confirmed minutes of the Academic Policy Committee held on 11th May 2016
- The confirmed minutes of the Research Committee held on 18th May 2016.
- The confirmed minute of the meetings of the International Committee held on 12 May 2016 and 16th June 2016.
- The confirmed minutes of the GCU Lead Board of 19th May 2015, 29th October 2015 and 30th March 2016.
- The highlights of the University Court held on 23rd June 2016 and 22nd September 2016.
- The revised Senate and Standing Committee Calendar of Meetings for Session 2016/17 including venues.
- The Annual statement on Enhancement led Internal Subject Review and Quality Assurance Arrangements for the Academic Session 2015-2016.

Date of the next meeting of Senate is Friday 9th December 2016.