

## UNIVERSITY SENATE

### Minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2019

**Present:** Prof I Cameron, Dr S Dolan, Prof C Donaldson, Mr J England, Dr M Ferguson, Miss E Fulton, Mr D Halliday, Ms J Hulme, Dr C Khamisha, Ms S Kubasik, Prof J Lennon, Dr S Lodge, Prof G Loffler, Mr T McAlear, Dr J McCallum, Mr B McConville, Dr K McPherson, Mrs W Mazzucco, Dr C Miller, Prof J Miller (Chair), Prof A Morgan (by telephone), Prof A Nelson, Dr S Ogden, Dr A Pierotti, Mr B Smith, Prof S Smith, Prof B Steves, Dr K Thomson, Dr M Tong, and Prof B Wood.

**Apologies:** Dr T Boutaleb, Prof A Britton, Mr N Clark, Dr D Chalmers, Prof P Gillies, Dr D Lukic, Prof M Mannion, Prof B Steves, Prof. V Webster.

Mrs C Hulsen, Mr S Lopez, Ms J Main and Mrs S Mitchell.

**In Attendance:** Mr M Anderson, Director of Research and Innovation  
Ms F Campbell, Director of People  
Mrs K Roden, Deputy Director of Strategy & Planning  
Mr R Ruthven, Director Library Services

Mrs D Donnet, Clerk to Senate

**Observers:** Mr D Gallagher (Lay Governor), Mr G Jack (Lay Governor), Ms L Johnson (Executive Support), Mrs L Clark (Governance), Mr N Kayani (GSBS), Ms S Rowell, (Registry) and Mr P Taylor (Comms).

### Chairs Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed Mr David Halliday, Court member elected by professional and support staff, and Ms Sandra Kubasik, International Student representative, to their first meeting as co-opted members of Senate.

### PART A (FOR CONSIDERATION)

#### Minutes

19.051 Received The unconfirmed draft minutes of the meeting of Senate held 18<sup>th</sup> October 2019 subject to the inclusion of Professor Sheila Smith in the list of those present (**Doc S19/23/1**).

#### Matters Arising Briefing Note

19.052 Noted The Matters Arising Briefing Note (**Doc S19/01/1**).

19.053 Resolved To approve the inclusion of additional guidance on the *Complaints Handling Procedure - A guide for students*

## Principal & Vice Chancellor and Executive Board Report

- 19.054 Considered A report from the Principal and Vice Chancellor and Executive Board to update members on substantive items considered by the Executive Board since the last meeting of Senate (**Doc S19/26/1**).
- 19.056 Reported
- i. By the Chair that SFC Outcome Agreement guidance had been received and work was underway on the preparation of the final draft for submission at the end of April. The Public Spending Review would determine funding, and this would be dependent on the outcome of the forthcoming general election. Overall, it was considered that a cash flat, one-year settlement, would be a realistic expectation.
  - ii. Further information on the review of the Widening Access and Retention Fund was awaited from the SFC, however as the University was a major beneficiary of the fund, changes were anticipated. It was hoped that as there was increased requirement within the sector for widening access provision, that overall funding would be increased in order to support the maintenance of existing provision. However, given the wider financial position, that seemed unlikely.
  - iii. The Chair expressed appreciation for the collaborative approach taken by staff and students in response to the recent industrial action and the ongoing action short of a strike.
  - iv. Colleagues were invited to visit the Points of Pride exhibition that demonstrated ways in which staff had embodied GCU Values.
  - v. The results of the Staff Pulse Survey undertaken in the autumn had been received. They were being analysed and would be shared with staff in the new year.
- 19.057 Resolved To note the report and the oral updates.

## ELIR Reflective Analysis (Final Draft)

- 19.058 Noted The ELIR Reflective Analysis Final Draft. (**Doc S19/26/1**).
- 19.059 Reported The Head of Academic Quality advised that the document had been submitted on the 28<sup>th</sup> November 2019 and she expressed thanks for the collegiate response from across the whole university in assisting with the document's preparation. The Student President indicated that the Reflective Analysis captured the work the University undertook in partnership with the Students' Association.
- 19.060 Resolved Senate commended the work undertaking in the preparation of the Reflective Analysis and noted that information on the panel membership would be circulated in due course.

## GCU London School Board Annual Report 2018/19

- 19.061 Approved The GCU London School Board Annual Report 2018/19 (**Doc S19/27/2**).

## PART B (FOR FORMAL APPROVAL)

### Mitigating Circumstances Policy Update

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|--------|-----------|--|
| 19.062 | Received  | Proposed amendments to the University's Mitigating Circumstances Policy ( <b>Doc APPC19/17/01</b> ).   |
| 19.063 | Reported  | By the Head of Academic Quality that amendments to the Mitigating Circumstances Policy had been considered and agreed by the Academic Policy and Practice Committee (APPC). These amendments included an element of additional, discretionary consideration to Assessment Boards; a refresh of School Mitigating Circumstances Boards; reframing of retrospective mitigating circumstance and a review of the Personal Tutor Statement template. Additionally, a root and branch review of the approach to mitigating circumstances, in order to reflect fundamental changes in the sector, was underway.  |
| 19.064 | Discussed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. The Student President raised concern the proposed, revised changes had not been considered by the Student Action Group for Engagement (SAGE). In particular a number of concerns about the potential detrimental impact of the proposed amendments to retrospective mitigating circumstances had been raised within the Students' Association following APPC consideration of the matter. Student Senators requested additional time for consultation with the Students' Association on the proposed changes to retrospective mitigating circumstances, but were supportive of the other proposed changes to the policy whilst the root and branch review was underway.</li><li>ii. It was further requested by Student Senators that electronic submission be included in a refreshed Mitigating Circumstances Policy.</li><li>iii. The Head of Academic Quality stressed that even with the proposed changes to retrospective mitigating circumstances, Boards would always act with compassion and in the best interest of students, and that changes were aimed at making the process easier for students. Additionally, the University wide mitigating circumstances board would continue to consider more complex cases, and that no student in extremis would be disadvantaged. Whilst noting these reassurances, the Student Senators remained concern that the changes to retrospective mitigating circumstances could severely disadvantage students.</li><li>iv. Whilst some of the proposed changes were welcomed by Senate, the decision to make changes to the policy in advance of the conclusion of the wider root and branch review was queried.</li></ul> |
| 19.065 | Resolved  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) That no changes be made to the Mitigating Circumstances Policy and that the existing policy be applied during the forthcoming assessment period.</li><li>b) To request that a revised policy be submitted to the next meeting of Senate, if possible, and that it be submitted to SAGE prior to APPC and Senate.</li><li>c) Consideration be given to including electronic submission to the refreshed policy.</li></ul>  |

### **Programme Withdrawals: Biological and Biomedical Sciences (BIO) Programme Withdrawals**

- 19.066 Received A report detailing the rationale behind proposed changes to the Department of Biological and Biomedical Sciences (BIO) Programme (**Doc APPC19/25/01**).
- 19.067 Approved The withdrawal of:
- BSc (Hons) Microbiology
  - MSc Biomolecular and Biomedical Sciences
  - MSc Clinical Microbiology
  - MSc Food Bioscience
  - MSc Pharmacology

### **Programme Withdrawals: U2B - BA (Honours) Counselling and BA (Honours) Cognitive Behavioural Therapy programmes.**

- 19.068 Received A report detailing the rationale behind the withdrawal of two programmes from the University to Business Education (U2B) catalogue (**Doc APPC19/26/01**).
- 19.069 Approved The withdrawal of BA (Honours) Counselling and BA (Honours) Cognitive Behavioural Therapy programmes.

### **Programme Withdrawal: Nursing and Community Health - PgC Education in Academic and Practice Settings (PgC EAPS)**

- 19.070 Received A report detailing the rationale behind the suspension in 2019/20 then withdrawal from 2020 of the PgC Education in Academic and Practice Settings (PgC EAPS) (**Doc APPC19/27/01**).
- 19.071 Approved The suspension then withdrawal of the PgC Education in Academic and Practice Settings (PgC EAPS).

### **Honorary Degrees Committee Membership 2019/2020**

- 19.072 Approved The updated membership of the Honorary Degrees Committee 2019/2020. (**Doc S19/28/1**).

### **APPC Terms of Reference**

- 19.073 Approved The updated terms of reference for the Academic Policy and Practice Committee noting that this had been revised to include the Assessment Regulations Sub-Committee, formally the Assessment Regulations Working Group, as a new sub-committee of APPC. (**Doc APPC19/01/02**)

### **Terms of Reference and Standard Operations of Progression & Award Boards and Associated Activities**

- 19.074 Considered A report by the Academic Registrar on The Terms of Reference and Standard Operations of Progression & Award Boards and associated activities (**Doc APPC19/16/1**).
- 19.075 Discussed i. Concern was raised about the requirement for 70% attendance by academic staff at Progression and Awards Boards (PABs) for quoracy, as this could be very challenging, especially in very large departments. Whilst the importance of attending PABs was acknowledged, the 70% quoracy did not recognise that not

all academic staff in departments were involved in teaching and that it would not be appropriate for research only staff to attend.

ii. Further clarity around activities relating to PAB pre-meetings was requested.

- 19.076 Agreed As the Academic Registrar was overseas on University business, it was not possible to respond to the matters raised at the meeting. It was agreed to discuss the issues raised with him on his return, and given the potential urgency of the changes in light of the forthcoming assessment period, take Chairs' action as appropriate.
- 19.077 Noted The Chair indicated that where a report author was unable to attend Senate, then a suitably briefed nominee, who is able to respond to questions, should attend in their place.

### **PART C (FOR INFORMATION)**

#### **Chair's Action - Research Degree Award Approval.**

- 19.078 Received Chair's Action approving the award of Doctor of Philosophy to Saif Nasser Ali Nasser Alsaedi – A Critical Study on the Impact of Mobile Technology on Abu Dhabi Police General Headquarters Operations (**Doc S19/29/1**).

#### **Academic Appointments**

- 19.079 Received A paper on academic appointments made since the last meeting of Senate (**Doc S19/30/1**).

#### **Minutes of Academic Policy and Practice Committee**

- 19.080 Received The confirmed minute of the meeting of the Academic Policy and Practice Committee held on 11th September 2019 (**Doc APC19/13/01**).

#### **Minutes of University Research Committee**

- 19.081 Received The confirmed minute of the meeting of the University Research Committee held on 4th September 2019. (**Doc REC19/06/01**).

#### **Minutes of International Committee**

- 19.082 Received The confirmed minute of the meeting of the International Committee held on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2019 (**Doc IC19/09**)

#### **School Boards Minutes**

- 19.083 Received The confirmed minutes from the undernoted School Board:

School of Health and Life Sciences held on:  
21st June 2019 (**Doc HLS/SB/19/001/01**)

#### **Report of University Court**

- 19.084 Received The summary report from the meeting of the University Court held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2019 (**Doc S19/31/1**).

## Professional Recognition of Teaching and Support Learning

19.085 Received An annual update on the progress of staff achieving professional recognition as part of the University's KPI for 75% of staff to hold higher level qualifications including professional recognition of teaching (**Doc S19/32/1**).

## Honorary Appointments

19.086 Received Notification of the following honorary appointments awarded by the University Executive Board:

<b>Title</b>	<b>Post</b>	<b>School</b>
Honorary Professor	Dale Franzen	GSBS
Honorary Professor	Don Franzen	GSBS
Honorary Professor	Dianne Dain	WISE Centre

## Date of Next Meeting

19.087 Received Notification that that the next meeting of University Senate for Session 2019/20 will be held on Friday 6th March 2020 at 9.30am in The Lantern..