

Report from the meeting of Senate held on 6th December 2019

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

Senate received 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.

Additionally, Senate was informed

- SFC Outcome Agreement guidance had been received and work was underway on preparing 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.
- 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.
- 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.

The DVC Strategy, who Chaired the meeting, expressed appreciation for the collaborative approach taken by staff and students in response to the industrial action and the ongoing action short of a strike. The Chair also encouraged colleagues to visit the Points of Pride exhibition that demonstrated ways in which staff had embodied GCU Values.

2. ELIR Reflective Analysis (Final Draft)

Senate noted the ELIR Reflective Analysis Final Draft. The Head of Academic Quality advised that the document had been submitted on the 28th 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. Senate commended the work undertaking in the preparation of the Reflective Analysis.

3. Mitigating Circumstances Policy Update

Senate considered a report proposing amendments to the University's Mitigating Circumstances Policy. Senate was advised that 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.

The Student President and other student Senators expressed concern about the potential detrimental impact of the proposed amendments to retrospective mitigating circumstances, and highlighted that the revisions had not been considered by the Student Action Group for Engagement (SAGE). Accordingly Senate agreed that no changes be made to the to the Mitigating Circumstances Policy and that the existing policy be applied during the forthcoming assessment period, and that a revised policy be submitted to SAGE and the next meeting of Senate if possible.

4. Programme Withdrawals

Having considered the rationale behind the proposals, Senate agreed the following programme withdrawals:-

Biological and Biomedical Sciences (BIO) Programme

BSc (Hons) Microbiology
MSc Biomolecular and Biomedical Sciences
MSc Clinical Microbiology
MSc Food Bioscience
MSc Pharmacology

U2B

BA (Honours) Counselling
BA (Honours) Cognitive Behavioural Therapy programmes.

Nursing and Community Health

PgC Education in Academic and Practice Settings (PgC EAPS)

5. Terms of Reference and Standard Operations of Progression & Award Boards and Associated Activities

Senate considered a report detailing proposed changes to the Terms of Reference and Standard Operations of Progression & Award Boards and Associated Activities. In discussion, clarity on a number of issues was requested and it was agreed to discuss the issues raised with the Academic Registrar, who was overseas on University business and unable to attend this meeting, and given the potential urgency of the changes in light of the forthcoming assessment period, take Chairs' action as appropriate.

A revised Terms of Reference and Standard Operations of Progression & Award Boards and Associated Activities was subsequently approved by Chair's action.

6. Other Matters Approved

- The GCU London School Board Annual Report 201/19.
- The updated membership of the Honorary Degrees Committee 2019/2020.
- 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.

7. Other Matters Noted

- 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.
- Recent academic staff appointments.
- The confirmed minutes of APPC held on 11th September 2019.
- The confirmed minutes of the Research Committee held on 4th September 2019.
- The confirmed minute of the meetings of the International Committee held on 19th September 2019.
- The confirmed minutes from the School of Health and Life Sciences School Board held on 21st June 2019.
- Honorary Appointments.
- Summary report from the meetings of the University Court held on 22nd November

2019.

- 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

Date of the next scheduled meeting of Senate is Friday 6th March 2020