

Report from the meeting of Senate held on 11th October 2013

1. PRINCIPAL AND VICE CHANCELLORS 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

National Student Survey Results 2013

The key results from the NSS 2013 survey were (figures in brackets show performance comparison to previous year):

- 84% overall satisfaction (-1)
- 65% academic feedback (+8)
- 63% Students' Association (+8)

The very significant improvements in feedback and Students' Association were very welcomed and that the overall NSS results represented a positive step forward.

Post -16 Education (Scotland) Bill

The University has fed into the progression of the Higher Education Bill through Universities Scotland to secure a number of amendments to the Bill. This included engagement via the HE Sector (Principal's Panel) and intensive engagement with politicians during the Bill's progress through the Scottish Parliament. There was a focus on retaining the importance of responsible autonomy of institutions and changes were secured to section 2 of the Bill on University Governance. In addition amendments were secured to Section 14 of the Bill as follows:

- The review of Further and Higher Education, which restricts the ability of the SFC to decide on the number of fundable higher education institutions (potentially through mergers) and for there to be interference in specific programmes provided by institutions.
- Widening access provision, including these being seen as an agreement between the SFC and each University, rather than them being something specified by the SFC. That definitions of the socio-economic groups to be included in agreements needs to be agreed by the SFC and individual institutions, and an amendment which transferred the duty to consult Unions and Students' Associations from the SFC to each University.
- Clarification was received on the meaning and intention of the reference to RUK fees in the Bill.

The Bill has since become law and received Royal Assent in August 2013.

United Nations Global Compact and Principles of Responsible Management Education Award

GCU is a signatory to the UN's Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) and was invited to join the PRME Champions' Group at a UN Global Compact Summit in New York following an invitation from the UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon. The University was also presented with an award at the PRME Summit for "Recognition of Excellence in (SIP) Reporting". The Principal commended this outstanding achievement, and praised the work of all who contributed to the report.

University Activities

Launch of the British School of Fashion

The University officially launched the GCU British School of Fashion based on the London campus. A range of executive and postgraduate programmes will seek to nurture and develop new talent to work in the business of fashion. The launch was attended by a host of leading figures from within fashion business including the CEO of M&S, Marc Bolland and Hannah Coffin of Needle & Thread.

Fresher's Address

The University held a very successful Fresher's Address as part of the wider programme of events for Fresher's Week. Recent Honorary Graduate Lily Cole was the keynote speaker. It has been agreed that GCU students will be part of the beta testing, for Lily Cole's pioneering social economy gift giving website Impossible.com. GCU students are only the second group of students to do so after the University of Cambridge. The Student President Matt Lamb was commended by the Principal for his work in driving forward this activity.

GCU Strategy: 2020

University Court will be provided with initial thoughts on the development of the 2020 Strategy at its meeting in November. There will also be wide consultation and input from all stakeholders to the final strategy document.

International Activities

New York Update

The University has now signed the lease for the property in Wooster Street for the GCU New York Campus. Recent developments include the launch of the GCU hub in New York by Chancellor Yunus on 26th September. The University received good coverage of the event with items on CNN and Bloomberg TV. Other Speakers at the event included The Vice President GCU New York (Cara Smyth), Matt Lamb Student President and Alastair Burt MP, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

PACE University New York

Discussions are ongoing regarding a potential collaboration with PACE University New York to be delivered at the GCU London Campus

Algeria

Cherif Merrouche, Senior Lecturer in GSfBS provided an overview of his visit report to the Executive Board on potential to form a partnership with the L'Ecole Supérieure De Commerce (Algeria). Work is currently underway on preparing a Memorandum of Understanding for this partnership. This development is a result of the visit by the Principal and PVC International and External Relations in December 2012 following an invitation from the British Ambassador in Algeria.

China and Malaysia

The Executive Dean and PVC L&T presented the findings of his international visit report on China and Malaysia which took place in May 2013. Further discussion on the spread of activity in these areas and the need to consider spend versus income and return, to enable analysis of trends will be undertaken. He also provided an overview of the meeting with the University of Jinan and noted potential for developing fashion and luxury brand marketing programmes in China.

2. PORTFOLIO REFRESH

Senate considered and approved the portfolio refresh submissions from the GSfBS, SEBE and SHLS. The aim is to ensure that the new Strategy for Learning is fully embedded in new programme design. In addition the opportunity to internationalise the curriculum and provide language opportunities

will be fully explored. There were some operational challenges in delivering this initiative however Senate was reassured that these will be resolved.

3. DIGNITY AT WORK AND STUDY POLICY

Senate approved a new Dignity at Work and Study Policy. The general principles in developing the new policy were compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and that it outlines the University's commitment to equality and diversity and upholding dignity and respect for all.

4. THE REF 2014

Senate noted a paper on the REF 2014. The paper outlined the proposition so far and that there would be final amendments to the submission following the appeal process. The PVC Research thanked all staff from both academic and support departments for their hard work and support. The Principal acknowledged the contribution from all Research active staff including those who have not been selected for inclusion in this submission. The outcome from the REF 2014 submission is due in December 2014.

5. SFC OUTCOME AGREEMENTS

Senate noted two papers on SFC Outcome Agreements. Firstly, it noted the self-evaluation report on the SFC Outcome Agreement for 2012-13 and progress to date. The report provides both qualitative and quantitative analysis in line with the SFC guidance. It covers widening access, articulation and regional collaboration on nursing provision. Commentary is also provided on retention of students, patterns of provision and equality and diversity. Secondly, Senate noted the GCU approach to preparing the Outcome Agreements for 2014-2015. The guiding principles of our approach will include alignment with the GCU Strategy and key performance indicators; communication and engagement with staff throughout the negotiations, and illustrating our impact using case studies to demonstrate how we make a difference. The submission date for the Outcome Agreement is January 2014. Finally, Senate noted that this will be the last one year Outcome Agreement, with effect from 2015-16 agreements will be developed on a 3 year basis.

7. SOME OTHER MATTERS CONSIDERED AND APPROVED

- Annual School Board reports for session 2012-13.
- Annual Report from Senate and its Standing Committees
- Approval of Professor Mannion as Vice Chair of Senate
- Honorary and Visiting Appointments
- The award of 19 PhDs and 1 MPhil and 3 ProfD qualifications.
- Senate membership and Terms of Reference for session 2013-14
- The membership of the Honorary Degrees Committee 2013-14

8. OTHER MATTERS NOTED

- Academic staff appointments
- Court highlights from the meeting held on 23rd September 2013
- The confirmed minutes of the Academic Policy Committee (May 2013) and the Research Committee (May 2013).
- Date of next meeting Monday 2nd December 2013