

## **Report from the meeting of Senate held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February**

### **1. Principal and Vice Chancellor's and Executive Board Report**

In addition to noting the topics that were covered in the Principal's report, Senate discussed the Office for Students' ongoing consultation on the future of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). Whilst some Scottish HEIs had taken part in previous rounds, sector indications were that most Scottish institutions would not participate in the upcoming TEF exercise as the sector was committed to the well-established quality enhancement approach. Senate was informed that the sector was in a transitional phase in relation to metrics with as it was the final year of the HESA performance indicators and the final year of the current NSS, so it was not clear how this would impact metrics in the future. It was acknowledged that international students in particular refer to league tables, so it was important that clarity around quality assurance was clear for applicants. Senate agreed with the recommendation that the University should not participate in the forthcoming TEF exercise.

The Principal highlighted that a recently published independent report by BiGGAR Economics on the economic and social impact of the University concluded the University contributed more than £1.7 billion to the global economy while supporting 14,360 jobs globally. Within Glasgow in 2020/21 the University generated £612m in Glasgow and supported 5,390 jobs. The independent assessment found that the University was a valuable asset to Glasgow, bringing economic and employment opportunities, and working to address the deep-rooted economic, social and health inequalities in the City. A like-for-like comparison, undertaken by BiGGAR Economics in 2013-14, showed GCU's quantifiable impact had grown by 17%, due primarily to the growth of its core activities, its graduate impact, health and social care impacts and international reach. The report highlighted that the University's specialist research centres and units informed and advised government departments and organisations on policies aimed at improving society, the economy and public services at a national and international level. Senate welcomed the report's findings.

### **2. Response to Covid 19**

The Chief Operating Officer reported the University continued to follow Scottish Government guidance. The current regulations would remain in force until 21<sup>st</sup> March, however it was a rapidly changing environment. The University's Covid 19 Response Committee continued to meet on a regular basis and liaise with the trade unions and Students' Association. The University had a licence to distribute lateral flow tests and this would be in place until the end of March at least. The number of cases in Caledonian Court remained low with support available for those self-isolating, and there had been no reported transmission within the teaching environment. The growing numbers of staff and students returning to campus was very encouraging, and there was good compliance regarding the wearing of face coverings. The importance of adhering to the regulations was stressed especially as many students would be on placements with vulnerable groups, and on campus there would be staff, students and members of the public with increased vulnerability that may not be visible. The University was participating in the hidden disability scheme and lanyards were available to those who required them.

### **3. Strategy for Learning 2030**

The PVC Learning and Teaching introduced a report that outlined the general principles of the evaluation of the Strategy for Learning 2030, highlighting its dual role in allowing monitoring progress (against KPIs) and building an evidence base of success/impact. The report also considered how evaluation would be integrated into the operationalisation of the Strategy for Learning.

In discussion it was raised that time spent gathering data would detract from other activities and reassurance was given that the intention was to maximise the use of data already gathered and to minimise the need to undertake additional data gathering. Senate noted the report.

#### **4. Senate Standing Orders**

Senate agreed to recommend to Court a proposal to make an amendment to the Senate Standing Orders in relation to the eligibility for nomination as the Senate Governor on Court.

As the Standing Orders are currently drafted this eligibility requires that a Senator must have “at least one further year of their term to run at the point of election”. As the nomination normally takes place in May and the start of the term on Court would normally commence on 1st August, it is proposed to amend this eligibility requirement to be “at least one further year of their term to run at the start of the term of office on Court” in order to ensure that the successful nominee would serve at least one full year on Court.

Due to the induction required for new governors, it is also proposed that any Senator who is standing for nomination who has not previously served as the Senate Member to Court, and who will only have one further year of their current Senate term to run, must also be eligible to stand for one further term on Senate. This would mean that any Senators approaching their fourth year of their second (and final) term of office as a Senator, would not be eligible to be nominated.

The proposed changes above are indicated in tracked changes in **Appendix 1** to this report attached and relate to page 17, section 7.5 of the [Standing Orders](#). The Standing Orders will also be amended to reflect the change in the Department of Governance’s name to the Department of Governance and Legal Services.

Court is requested to **approve** the proposed changes to the Senate Standing Orders as recommended by Senate.

#### **5. Senate Disciplinary Committee Annual Report**

Professor Alison Britton, Chair of Senate Disciplinary Committee (SDC), introduced the SDC Annual report for 2020/21. She informed Senate that all SDC meetings had been held virtually and that this had worked well as it was important that students were given the opportunity to participate in proceedings. There had been an increase in academic misconduct, thought to be the result of challenges associated with the Covid-19 pandemic. Whilst this did not excuse breaches of the Code of Student Conduct, the SDC had been mindful of any mitigating circumstances in its disposals. There had also been an increase in cases of gender based violence (GBV) being considered by SDC, and it was hoped that this was due to increased support, awareness and reporting of GBV.

The need to ensure that students were aware that support was available was highlighted, as was ensuring students knew what support was available to report concerns around inappropriate behaviour. Senate noted the update and that the Code of Student Conduct was undergoing review to provide better scope to respond to the broader range of cases being referred for consideration.

#### **6. Complaints Annual Report**

Senate noted the Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) 2020/21 annual report. The report highlighted that the number of recorded complaints in 2020/21 was within normal parameters and that there had not been an overall increase in complaints because of any changes as a result

of the Covid 19 pandemic, although this had featured in some complaints. A key element of the CHP was learning from complaints and the report highlighted enhancements and changes made as a result of complaints.

## **7. Reports from Standing Committees**

Senate noted reports from the following standing committees: -

- Academic Policy and Practice Committee on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2022
- University Research Committee 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2022
- International Committee held on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2022
- Glasgow School for Business and Society held on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2022
- The School of Computing Engineering and the Built Environment held on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2021 and 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2022
- The School of Health and Life Sciences held on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2021 and 8<sup>th</sup> December 2021

## **8. Research Degrees Committee**

Senate approved the award of 6 PhDs, 1 PhD by previous publication and 1 Prof D.

## **9. Programme Withdrawal – MSc Digital Brand Marketing and PgC Strategic HRM for Business Executives**

Senate approved the withdrawal of the MSc Digital Brand Marketing and PgC Strategic HRM for Business Executives. It was highlighted that the programmes have never recruited any students and had not been offered as part of the portfolio for at least four years.

## **10. Other Matters Approved/Noted/Received for Information.**

- Honorary Appointments
- Recent academic staff appointments.
- The summary report from the meeting of University Court held on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2022
- An update on research success in Trimester A 21/22

**The next scheduled meeting of Senate will be held on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2022**