

UNIVERSITY SENATE

Minutes of the meeting held on 23.02.22

Present: Professor P Gillies (Chair), Dr B Ahmed, Professor B Alkali, Dr K Bannigan, Dr T Boutaleb, Ms J Burt, Ms F Campbell, Professor M E Farrag, Dr K Fryer, Dr L Grey, Ms J Hulme, Mr N Kayani, Dr C Khamisha, Mr S Latta, Professor J Lennon, Professor G Loffler, Mr T McAlear, Dr B McConville, Dr K McPherson, Professor M Mannion, Mrs W Mazzucco, Dr C Miller, Professor J Miller, Professor G Morison, Professor A Nelson, Dr N Northway Ms T Nyariki, Dr S Ogden, Dr A Pierotti, Professor A Robertson, Professor A Simmers, Professor B Steves, Dr K Thomson, Dr O Uthmani and Mr V Waters

Apologies: Mr J England, Dr M Ferguson, Mr A Kilpatrick, Dr V Ness, Dr A O'Hagan, Professor O Pahl, Mr A Rahoo and Mr B Smith

In Attendance: Mr A Anderson, Director of Research and Innovation
Professor A Britton, Chair of the Senate Disciplinary Committee,
Mrs C Hulsen, Director of Strategy and Planning,
Mr A MacKinlay, Associate Academic Registrar (QA and Enhancement)
Ms J Main, Director of Student Life
Mrs S Mitchell, COO
Mr R Ruthven, Director of Library Services

Mrs D Donnet, Clerk to Senate

Observers: Mr P Brown (Governance and Legal Services), Mrs J Burns (Executive Support), Mrs L Clark (Governance and Legal Services), Mr C Fitch (Lay Governor), Ms S Freund-Pickavance (Lay Governor), Mr D Gallagher (Lay Governor), Mr I Kerr (Lay Governor), Mrs L McGinley (Governance and Legal Services), Dr L Reather (People Services)

Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to 150th meeting of University Senate. The Chair congratulated Professor Alastair Robertson, PVC Learning and Teaching, Fiona Campbell, Vice-Principal People and Student Wellbeing and Professor Anita Simmers, Dean of the School of Health and Life Science on their recent appointments.

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting

1.1 Senate **noted** the minutes of the meeting of Senate held on 8th December 2021 that had previously been approved by circulation and agreed an amendment to paragraph 11.1 so that it read:-

“Senate approved a proposal to provide a generic exit award for post graduate students within the School of Health and Life Sciences. There was already one exit award within the School, MSc Life Sciences, however this did not align to the current Nursing and Community Health and AHP programmes

within the School. This new generic award would be at PgC, PgD and Masters level and entitled, MSc Health and Social Care Studies.”

ACTION: Clerk to Senate to revise previously approved minutes.

2. Matters Arising

- 2.1 Senate **noted** a report on the matters arising from the Senate meeting on 8th December 2021 and the actions taken since that meeting to address them.

3. Principal & Vice Chancellor and Executive Board

- 3.1 Senate **noted** a report from the Principal & Vice-Chancellor that provided an update on substantive items considered by the Executive Board since the last meeting of Senate as well as informing on issues relating to learning, teaching, research and the wider higher education sector.

- 3.2 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 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 referred to league tables, so it was important that clarity around quality assurance was clear for applicants. Senate **agreed** that the University should not participate in the forthcoming TEF exercise.

- 3.3 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.

4. Response to Covid-19

- 4.1 Senate **noted** an update from the Chief Operating Officer who reported that the University continued to follow Scottish Government guidance. The current regulations would remain in force until 21st March, however it was a rapidly changing environment. The University’s Covid 19 Response Committee continued to meet on a regular basis and liaised 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.

- 4.2 The importance of adhering to the regulations was stressed especially as many students would be on placements with vulnerable groups and there would be staff, students and members of the public on campus with increased vulnerability that may not be visible.

4.3 Senate was informed that the University was participating in the hidden disability scheme and lanyards were available to those who required them.

5. Strategy for Learning 2030

5.1 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.

5.2 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.

5.3 Senate **noted** the report.

6. Senate Standing Orders

6.1 Senate considered a report proposing amendments to the Senate Standing Orders in relation to the eligibility for nomination as the Senate Governor on Court.

6.2 The current Standing Orders required that to be eligible, 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 was 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.

6.3 Due to the induction required for new governors, it was also proposed that any Senator who was standing for nomination who had not previously served as the Senate Member to Court, and who would 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.

6.4 It was further proposed that the Standing Orders also be amended to reflect the change in the Department of Governance’s name to the Department of Governance and Legal Services.

6.5 Senate **agreed** to recommend to Court the proposed amendments to its Standing Orders.

Action: Revisions to Senate Standing Orders to be submitted to Court for approval.

7. Senate Disciplinary Committee Annual Report 2020/21

7.1 The Chair of Senate Disciplinary Committee (SDC), Professor Alison Britton, 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.

7.2 In discussion, in relation to the increase in academic misconduct the need to ensure that students were aware that academic and wellbeing support was available was highlighted so that students who were experiencing issues were not tempted to cheat. It was also important that students were supported in

reporting misconduct, and Senate was advised that those students involved in the reporting and disciplinary process were informed of and encouraged to engage with the range of support services provided by the University and the Students' Association.

- 7.3 The Director of Student Life informed Senate that the University had recently launched Report and Support, an online platform that allowed students to make either named or anonymous reports of inappropriate behaviour, including GBV and racism and gain access to support, both in person or online. Report and Support would also be rolled out to staff and members of the public in the coming months. It was raised that tackling reports relating racism was challenging however it was important to ensure that the reporting and investigative processes were inclusive and supportive.
- 7.4 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.

8. Complaints Annual Report 2020/21

- 8.1 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.
- 8.2 In discussion, the varying numbers in different areas of reported frontline complaints was queried and it was acknowledged that whilst there was confidence that complaints were being responded to appropriately at frontline stage, as demonstrated by the stable rate of stage 2 complaints, there were varying rates of these complaints being recorded appropriately and this was an area that needed further development. Further, there were also areas by their nature that dealt with a high number of students who had experienced issues, some elements of which were beyond the University's control.
- 8.3 It was highlighted that the updated Complaints Handling Procedure introduced in 2021 included the option for complaints to be "resolved" as well as "upheld" and "not upheld" and that this had assisted in making the complaints process less adversarial. It was intended that the Department of Governance and Legal Services would introduce a mediation service and once in place, this may be of benefit to the increasing number of complex complaints being received, as well as being of wider benefit to the University.

9. Standing Committee and School Board Summary reports

- 9.1 Senate **noted** reports from the following standing Committees and School boards:-
- 9.2 Academic Policy and Practice Committee (APPC) held on 26th January 2022. In summarising the business covered in the report, reference was made by the PVC Learning and Teaching to additional support required for the increased numbers of international students and in particular those who arrived after the start of the semester. Further discussions on key elements would take place.
- 9.3 University Research Committee held on 2nd February 2022. Key elements of this report included the arrangements for publishing the REF 2021 results, the interim report of the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) commissioned Research Bureaucracy Review, and notification that the University had become a signatory of the Declaration On Research Assessment (DORA) and a short life working group had been established to consider if any actions were needed to support staff in responsible research assessment under DORA and the Leiden Manifesto.
- 9.4 International Committee held on 27th January 2022. The Deputy Vice Chancellor reported the University's continued success in international recruitment.

- 9.5 Glasgow School for Business and Society School Board held on 19th January 2022.
- 9.6 The School of Computing Engineering and the Built Environment School Boards held on 8th December 2021 and 2nd February 2022.
- 9.7 The School of Health and Life Sciences School Boards held on 6th October 2021 and 8th December 2021.

10. Research Degrees Committee

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

11. Programme Withdrawal

- 11.1 Senate **approved** the withdrawal of the MSc Digital Brand Marketing and PgC Strategic HRM for Business Executives. The Dean of GSBS informed Senate that the programmes had never recruited any students and had not been offered as part of the portfolio for at least four years.

12. Honorary Appointments

- 12.1 Senate received notification that the following honorary appointments had been awarded by Executive Board:-

Post	Title	School
Honorary Professor	Tom Steele	BEAM Research Centre, SCEBE
Honorary Lecturer	Karen Moore	SHSL
Honorary Professor (extension)	Harry Ritchie	GSBS

13. Academic Appointments

- 13.1 Senate received a paper on academic appointments made since the last meeting of Senate.

14. Summary Report of Court

- 14.1 Senate received the summary Report of the meeting of University Court held on 17th February 2022.

15. Research Report

- 15.1 Senate received the Research Summary Report for Trimester A 2021/22.

16 AOCB

- 16.1 It was raised that more cognisance of mental health issues and autism post Covid and pastoral support and mandatory training in particular, would be helpful. The Director of Student Life advised that the University had a good understanding of autism and neurodiversity and had undertaken a huge amount of activity on this and discussions had taken place with the Students' Association on supporting students with autism. Should any area wish training or awareness raising, then this could be arranged on request.

- 17. Senate noted that the date of the next meeting was Wednesday 8th June 2022**