

**GLASGOW CALEDONIAN UNIVERSITY
TO: UNIVERSITY COURT**

Report from the meeting of Senate held on 31st May 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 discussed

- a) The potential implications for Scotland of the Augur review of student funding for England and Wales
- b) The need to increase the visibility of Ashoka U amongst staff, and it was noted that staff would be involved in discussions about how to drive AshokaU forward.
- c) The University welcomed provision of funding for a dedicated counsellor to support Mental Health and Wellbeing for staff from September 2019 onwards.

2. Assessment Regulations Working Group

Senate considered a second set of proposals from the Assessment Regulations Working Group following consideration by APPC.

Senate approved recommendations with respect to the following:

1. Update and reframe of the GCU Student Performance Feedback Policy, its principles and applicability for Project and Dissertation submissions.
2. Additional text insert for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policy, to clarify the potential for GCU awards with Merit or Distinction.
3. Text update – roll out of threshold minimum marks to SCQF Level 8.
4. To consider the Approval of a GCU Assessment Procedures Handbook to signpost GCU assessment policies and guidelines for staff – update on the Retention of Student Work.

Senate endorsed the following:

5. Proposals for resit/resubmission processes for non-standard starts

Senate noted the following work by the Committee:

6. To establish a GCU framework to enable consistency of approach for GCU Mobility Mark Calculations, specifically to provide clarity and transparency for student in respect of grades achieved whilst on overseas exchange.
7. Clarity around the criteria for Generic Awards for both staff and students
8. To consider/update the regulations for the appointment of External Examiners to state that an industry expert must be paired with academic expert and that a programme must not appoint two

industry experts

9. Assessment Regulations Working Group – Work Plan for 2019/20 Academic Session.
10. Degree Classification and Banded Grading Task and Finish groups will continue to meet over the summer period.

3. Assessment Loading

Schools were asked to complete a 'light touch' review of module assessment loading (Academic Policy and Practice Committee – November 2018), to ascertain the number of modules falling outwith the Assessment Preparation Guidance for Academic Staff (September 2018):

At undergraduate, the norm is 20 credit modules and at Masters the norm is 15 credit modules and this has been used as the basis for the tariff for both courseworks and examinations. Variations on this should scale the loading appropriately. The tariff should thus be applied flexibly to modules with higher or lower credit weighting; for example, a 10 credit module may need slightly more than a linear scaling to half of that of a 20 credit module.

Senate considered and noted an overview of the modules within SHLS and GSBS falling out with that guidance, and rationales where applicable. Information relating to modules within SCEBE were also included.

4. Degree Classification Task and Finish Group

Senate received an interim update on the work of the Degree Classification Task and Finish Group to date. A further update will come back to Senate which will co-ordinate with ongoing work on banded marking. Senate endorsed continuation of work in these areas.

5. Senate, Standing Committee and School Board Staff Nomination and Election Rules

Senate considered and approved rules for the nomination and election of staff governors to Senate, its standing committees and School Boards. The rules codify existing practice, while clarifying what use may be made of GCU email and other campaign materials as part of the election process to ensure that all candidates have equal access to the voting constituency. The rules echo the process in place for Staff Governor elections to Court.

The use of AV (Alternative Vote) is introduced where there are three or more candidates, as this system was felt to offer a more inclusive approach. FPTP (First Past the Post) remains where there are only two candidates. The rules also introduce a complaints procedure.

6. Complaints Annual Report 2017/18

Senate noted an overview of the complaints received by the University in the period 1st August 2017 to 31st July 2018. There were 157 Stage 1 (frontline) complaints and 11 stage 2 (complaint investigation) received. One complainant referred their complaint to the SPSO on completion of the University's complaints handling procedure, however on review of information provided by the University, the SPSO concluded that the University's handling of the complaint was reasonable and that no further action was required.

Following concerns about unsubstantiated, personal allegations made against staff, it was agreed that the Department of Governance work with the Students' Association to develop additional guidance for students. Further, it was agreed to explore the creation of a "buddy system" for staff who were the subject of a complaint

7. Senate Disciplinary Committee

- i. Senate considered the Senate Disciplinary Committee Annual Report for Session 2017/18.
- ii. Senate approved the reappointment of the following academic staff members on the Senate Disciplinary Committee:

Professor Alison Britton, Chair, to the period 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2022

Dr Linda Walsh, Vice Chair, to the period 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2022

8. Academic Representative Review

Senate considered a paper outlining modifications to the GCU Students' Association Academic Representative Structure to reflect the changes in the structure of the academic schools brought about by the GCU School Refresh. The Academic Representative Review was an action within the Enhancing the Student Experience (ETSE) Action Plan 2018/19 and was a Team Objective for the Full Time Officers within the Students' Association.

Senate approved:

- i. The GCU Academic Rep Structure as outlined in the paper.
- ii. The academic rep role descriptions outlined in the paper.
- iii. That the Academic Quality Policy and Practice document be revised to include all the academic rep roles.

9. HESA Performance Indicators 2019

Senate noted the Overview of HESA Performance Indicators 2019.

The key points were:

Participation of under-represented groups:

- The proportion of entrants from state school or college has been maintained at 97% remaining well ahead of both our benchmark (90.7%) and the Scottish sector average of 86.5%.

Degree completion:

- GCU's projected degree completion PI is 79.3%, a decrease of 1.6 percentage points on last year. The Scottish sector average is 81.8%, this is an increase of 1.2 percentage points.
- GCU outperforms the universities of Edinburgh Napier (77.8%), the West of Scotland (77.6%), Queen Margaret (75.7%), Abertay Dundee (72.4%) and the Highlands and Islands (62.2%).

Drop-out:

- GCU's low drop-out rate has been broadly maintained, with a difference of 0.3 percentage points from 8.6% to 8.9% in the 2019 PIs.
- We are ahead of the Scottish sector average of 9.1%.
- GCU outperforms the universities of Edinburgh Napier (10.3%), Queen Margaret (12.7%), the West

of Scotland (17.2%), Abertay Dundee (18.8%) and the Highlands and Islands (23.4%).

Non-continuation after first year of study:

- The University's PI on non-continuation following one year of study has declined compared to the strong performance last year, with an increase of 1.7 percentage points to 8.5%.
- The Scottish Sector average is 7%.
- GCU outperforms the Scottish sector average and nine universities for non-continuation of mature students, signalling our success in retention of mature and articulating students.

10. SFC Outcome Agreement 2019-20

Senate noted an update to the University's Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) for the period 2017-18 to 2019-20. The outcome agreement was submitted to the SFC by the requested date of 30th April 2018. The University's Outcome Agreement has been developed in line with the SFC guidance and in collaboration with colleagues from Schools and Professional Services across the University. Consultation was undertaken with the Students' Association and Trade Unions.

It was reported that good progress was being made towards achieving all metrics.

11. Senate Forward Look 2019-20

Senate received a forward look outlining items that are anticipated to be brought to Senate for consideration in Session 2019-20 in addition to regular business and emerging matters.

12. Enhancement Led Institutional Review

Senate received an update on preparations for ELIR4. The DVC (Academic) reported that good progress was being made, with an initial staff and student consultation being held on March and April. Senate will receive regular updates in advance of review at the end of March 2020.

x. Other Matters Approved

- The award of 31 PhDs, 1 PhD by Previous Publication and 1 Prof.D.

x. Other Matters Noted

- Honorary Appointments.
- Approval, by Senate Chair's Action, of an extension to the term of membership of Professor A Klemm (SCEBE) as academic staff member on the Senate Disciplinary Committee.
- Recent academic staff appointments.
- The confirmed minutes of the Academic Policy and Practice Committee held on 30th January 2019 and 27th March 2019.
- The confirmed minutes of the Research Committee held on 28th January 2019 and 13th March 2019.
- The confirmed minutes of the School of Health and Life Sciences School Board held on 8th February 2019.
- The confirmed minutes of School of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment held on 17th October 2018, 12th December 2018 and 20th February 2019.
- The updated calendar of meetings for Senate and Standing Committees for Session 2019/20 including room allocation.

- The Academic Calendar for 2019/20.
- The Post Graduate Research Student Experience (PGRSE) Thematic Review: Action Plan.
- The Public Sector Equality Duty Report 2019.
- The summary report from the meetings of the University Court held on 14th March 2019 and 2nd May 2019.

Date of the next scheduled meeting of Senate is Friday 18th October 2019