

**GLASGOW CALEDONIAN UNIVERSITY
TO: UNIVERSITY COURT**

Report from the meeting of Senate held on 1st March 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

- a) GCNYC had received approval from Homeland Security to issue visas for students worldwide to study at GCNYC.
- b) The funding allocation had been announced and as anticipated there was no increase in funding, which will mean a 1.8% decrease in funding in real terms. Nursing numbers still had to be confirmed and it was hoped that there would be an increase in numbers here. Overall, the funding position reaffirmed the need for the University to be entrepreneurial.

2. January 2019 Exams

Senate received a report outlining action taken following the downtime in the University's VLE (GCULearn) over the new year period for a scheduled upgrade. Whilst the upgrade had been scheduled for a time when usage of GCULearn was traditionally comparatively low, it was acknowledged that improved communication in the lead up to the downtime could have minimised the impact on students. Staff were thanked for their response to the event. Senate noted the mitigating actions that had been put in place to ensure that students were not disadvantaged by the situation.

3. School Boards – Review of Terms of Reference and Composition

Senate endorsed the Terms of Reference and Composition of School Boards.

4. Recommendations from Assessment Regulations Working Group (ARWG) 2018/19.

Senate approved the publication of the Assessment Procedures Staff Handbook, subject to further clarification on the retention of student work. The Handbook signposts all assessment regulations and policies and associated staff responsibilities at all stages of the assessment process.

Senate also considered guidance providing clarification around the criteria for Generic Awards. More clarity was requested in relation to one aspect and it was agreed that this be explored further then circulated to Senate for electronic approval.

5. Banded Marking Scheme – Initial Discussions

Consideration was given to a report from the Assessment Regulations Working Group regarding the introduction of a banded marking scheme to replace the current scheme of numerical marking. There had been a move across the sector to banded marking to allow a more direct relationship between the grade achieved and assessment feedback. Senate approved the establishment of a short life working group to explore this further and requested that it report back to Senate at its next meeting.

6. UK Degree Classifications

Senate considered a paper informing of a review undertaken by the UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment that reported that there had been a significant, sector wide trend for an increase in the awarding of upper second and first class degrees. The review acknowledged that there were a number of complex factors that had contributed to this increase, it was essential that the sector addressed the challenge to protect public confidence in the value of the honours degree classification system. GCU results also reflected this upward trend, however at a comparatively lower rate than the sector overall. It was agreed that further work be undertaken to better understand the situation within the University and that a report be submitted to the next meeting.

7. Research Matters, Trimester A, 2018-19

Senate welcomed a report informing of good news stories with respect to research funding, research outputs and esteem indicators, together with information on the Graduate School activities and highlights.

8. REF2021 - Code of Practice

Senate endorsed the REF2021 Code of Practice, and provided feedback in relation to the process for identifying staff and support for staff who would not be included in the REF submission.

9. Other Matters Approved

- The withdrawal of the BSc Paramedic Practice (top up) programme
- The award of 12 PhDs, 1 PhD by previous publication and 1 Prof D.
- Honorary Appointments
- Senate and standing committee calendar of meetings 2019/20
- The inclusion of the role of Chief Operating Officer to the composition of the Honorary Degrees Committee

10. Other Matters Noted

- Recent academic staff appointments.
- The confirmed minutes of the Academic Policy and Practice Committee held on 7th November 2018
- The confirmed minutes of the Research Committee held on 20th November 2018.
- The confirmed minutes of the Glasgow School *for* Business and Society School Board held on 17th October 2018.
- The confirmed minutes of the School of Health and Life Sciences held on 5th October 2018.
- The confirmed minutes of the GCU London School Board held on 17th July 2018.

Date of the next scheduled meeting of Senate is Friday 31st May 2019