**GLASGOW CALEDONIAN UNIVERSITY**

**TO: UNIVERSITY COURT**

**Report from the meeting of Senate held on 1st June 2018**

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| **1.** | **Principal & Vice Chancellor 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. Executive Board updates are available to GCU staff on Caledonian Connected.  Additionally, Senate noted that   * The most recent Destination of Leavers Survey results showed that 74% of GCU graduates were in graduate level employment. There had been consistent growth from 57% in 2011, and was a source of great encouragement to students and an indication of the hard work and commitment shown by staff and students * The SFC had recently published widening access statistics for 2016-17. The University continued to perform strongly and contribute significantly to widening access compared to most other universities and against the sector average. At 20.9% GCU had the second highest MD20 recruitment rate amongst universities and third highest recruitment rate amongst HEIs, and was notably higher than the sector average. With respect to retention rates for MD20 students, again the University performed well at 4th overall with a rate of 92.4% against a sector average of 87.4%. This was very encouraging given the significant number of students, approximately 630, the University had within this category and the relatively small numbers in the other high performing HEIs. * The Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science had responded to the University’s letter about the University becoming a provider of teacher education and exploratory discussions with Scottish Government officers were scheduled for later in the month. Senate will be kept informed of progress. |
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| **2.** | **Senate Effectiveness Review** |
|  | Senate noted a progress report on the implementation of the 25 actions arising out of the Senate Effectiveness Review. Whilst many actions were already completed, work would be ongoing over the summer period and into 2018/19 academic year to complete all actions. It was agreed that reference to SAGE (Student Action Group for Engagement) be included all Executive Summary Sheets in order to highlight the importance of student consultation. |
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| **3.** | **Senate Forward Look 2018/19** |
|  | Arising from the recommendations from the Senate Effectiveness Review, Senate received notification of issues anticipated to be considered by Senate in 2018/19, and additionally Senators were asked for suggestions for other areas for consideration. The following areas to be considered by Senate in 2018/19 were noted:-   * Digital learning – An options paper on online and blended learning will be submitted to Senate in the first half of 2018/19. * Working with the NHS and the third sector – The new Dean of the School of Health and Life Sciences will review the University’s working relationships with the NHS and enhancing capability in this area. * Teacher Training – Senate will be kept informed about discussions with the Scottish Government about the addition of teacher education to the academic portfolio. * Academic Leadership – Following on from the schools’ refresh, Senate will be consulted on proposals for the enhancement of academic leadership. * International and Transnational Education – Senate in October will receive an update on the latest developments in Transnational Education. * TEF – Senate will be kept informed of the developments in the TEF. * Our campus and learning environment – Senate will be involved in discussions around the university estate and learning environment. * Connecting learning and research across our campuses – teaching, learning and research linkages between Glasgow, London and New York. This will be brought to Senate in the second half of 2018/19, following the Mid-States Higher Education Board’s consideration of GCNYC’s request for accreditation. * Sustainability within the curriculum * Equality and equal pay |
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| **4.** | **SFC Outcome Agreement 2017/18 and 2019/20** |
|  | Senate received the 2018-19 update to the University’s Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) for the period 2017-18 to 2019-20. It was highlighted that that whilst the Outcome Agreement had still to be signed off, no problems were anticipated. Importantly the University had received confirmation of additional funding of £1.1m in 2018/19 for additional nursing places. |
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| **5.** | **Research Excellence Framework** |
|  | The PVC Research informed Senate that following two rounds of consultation and an independent review of the REF, headed by Lord Stern, there was now more clarity around what REF 2021 would involve. Each submitting institution would have to follow a Code of Practice, to be agreed with the UK funding bodies during 2018-19, to determine which staff were to be included. This has allayed fears about including staff with zero outputs, which would have severely dilute our quality scores relative to other institutions with higher proportions of active researchers and could be damaging to the university’s positive research trajectory over the past decade. For those staff submitted, the average number of outputs submitted would be 2.5, with a minimum of 1 and maximum of 5. Previously each staff member, with a few exceptions, had to submit four outputs. The REF 2021 also included additional aspects associated with research impact and environment. A REF Management Group had been established to ensure an optimal submission in November 2020.  The University’s research information management system was up to date and populated with research outputs from relevant staff during the current REF period, and plans were in place to make fuller use of this facility. This was important as more emphasis would be placed on such systems to produce information for the REF, largely driven by the requirement to make all submitted publications publicly-available (i.e. open access). Initial ‘stocktakes’ for the three main Schools had been undertaken and, as well as testing our research information management system, these had shown that the University was in a healthy position relative to what would be required in the REF and also relative to the position in 2014. Additionally a Research Impact Officer had been appointed in the School of Health & Life Sciences and plans were in place for the rest of the University.  It was anticipated that the Code of Practice would be approved by the Funding Council in early 2019, following which the University would undertake a mock REF. It was not yet clear whether there would be any quality threshold for REF participation.    In response to a question querying the varying practices across the University for the allocation of time for research, the PVC Research advised that this was currently the subject of active discussion, and there was a desire to include research within workloads in a positive way. This would involve a less formulaic than had previously been taken. This approach was welcomed by Senate. |
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| **6.** | **Schools’ Refresh** |
|  | Senate was informed by the DVC (Academic) that draft structures for SHLS and SEBE had been considered by Executive Board. Discussions in GSBS were not as advanced as in the other schools and consequently further workshops and meetings had been arranged. A key feature raised in consultation across all areas, was the desire for smaller, more coherent, academic departments and strategic direction. Discussions were also underway around having the ability to quickly respond to changing demands, and procedures were being reviewed to support responsiveness in the portfolio whilst maintaining academic standards.  The Deans of SHLS and SEBE reported that since the last Senate there had been extensive consultation and positive staff engagement, and the proposed structures for both schools been developed taking account of areas of academic strength and external market requirements.  As the next meeting of Senate was not scheduled until 12th October, Senate would be consulted electronically on the proposed structures off all three schools in advance of the new academic year. Any significant changes would also require Court approval/endorsement. |
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| **7.** | **Student Experience Action Plan** |
|  | The Director of Student Experience reminded Senate that The Enhancing the Student Experience 2020 Action Plan (SEAP) had been launched in 2016 in support of Strategy 2020. Since then a significant programme of work had been undertaken, overseen by the Enhancing the Student Experience Steering Group, chaired by the DVC Academic. The SEAP contained 4 main themes: Student Engagement and a Sense of Belonging; Programme Organisation and Management; Assessment and Feedback and Wider Student Experience. A number of the actions within the plan had been completed, and a watching brief was being maintained on these actions.  Under the Wider Student Experience theme, The Common Good Award was successfully piloted in 2017/18 for students at Level 3 and above. To date, 103 students had enrolled on the scheme, with 50 students receiving digital badges and seven awarded the full Common Good Award. An evaluation of the Common Good Award had been undertaken, with positive results from participants and initial consultation with employers indicated that the Common Good Attributes were aligned to the capabilities, and the underpinning values, sought in graduates. It was therefore intended to roll out the Common Good Award to all year groups in 2018/19.  The undernoted priority areas had been identified for 2018/19:  1. Academic advising  2. Student engagement/student voice  3. Digital learning, assessment and feedback  4. Academic leadership  5. Wider student experience  A more detailed work plan for 2018/19 was under development in partnership with the academic Schools, professional services departments and Students’ Association, and a fuller progress update would be submitted to Senate in September 2018, focusing on the CPD for staff which underpinned a number of SEAP activities. |
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| **8.** | **Digital Preservation and Archiving Policy** |
|  | Senate considered the Draft Digital Preservation and Archiving Policy, which had been developed to address gaps within existing policy. Senate agreed to endorse the Digital Preservation and Archiving Policy for approval at Court on 21st June 2018 subject to references to the Data Protection Act 1998 being updated to read “current data protection legislation”. |
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| **9.** | **Fitness to Study Policy** |
|  | Senate approved the Fitness to Study Policy.  The Director of Student Experience advised Senate that the purpose of the policy was to provide suitable and co-ordinated support to GCU students where a student’s health or wellbeing caused the University concern regarding the student’s fitness to study on a course. The policy addressed a gap in policy provision and was underpinned by a duty of care to both students and staff. It had been developed following extensive consultation, including SAGE. Implementation of the policy would be monitored over 2018/19 and it would be reviewed at the end of the academic year. Based on past experience, it was anticipated that the policy would only be used in a very small number of cases. |
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| **10.** | **Assessment Regulations Working Group (ARWG)**  Senate considered a number of recommendations from the Assessment Regulations Working Group  Threshold Minimum Marks  Further to the decision at Senate on 16th March 2018 that threshold minimum marks be introduced and that an incremental approach be taken with threshold minimum marks to be introduced for new students only from the 2018/19 session at level 1 and level M, the Academic Registrar had been working with Information Services in order to ensure that module changes were completed by the end of June 2018. A process for exemptions from threshold minimum marks was being developed by the Academic Registrar and ADLTQs. Guidance for students would be developed to clearly state that for those modules with Professional Statutory and Regulatory body requirements which already have minimum thresholds, there would be no change to the existing threshold.  Generic Award Titles  Senate approved the following generic award titles:  *Engineering and Built Environment*  BA/BA (Hons)/BSc/BSc (Hons) Technology (Design)  BA/BA (Hons)/BSc/BSc (Hons) Technology (Computing)  BA/BA (Hons)/BSc/BSc (Hons) Technology (Built Environment)  BA/BA (Hons)/BSc/BSc (Hons) Technology (Engineering)  *Glasgow School of Business and Society*  BA/BA (Hons) General Business  BA/BA (Hons) Social Studies  MSc General Business (PG)  S*chool of Health and Life Science*  BSc/BSc (Hons) Health and Social  BSc/BSc (Hons) Life Sciences MSc Life Sciences (PG)  Nursing and Community Health will use unnamed University awards.  Applicability of Assessment Regulations for non-standard start dates  It was noted that the Academic Registrar had convened a task and finish group focused upon proposals for flexible resubmission/resits. The outcomes of the task and finish group had been shared with the Assessment Regulations Working Group which supported the direction of travel and was now under consideration by APPC.    Operation of Assessment Boards  At the last meeting, Senate approved administrative changes to the conduct of Pre-Assessment Boards and Assessment Boards subject to the following:  a) That quoracy of 70% (excluding External Examiners) be a requirement of Pre-Assessment Boards  b) That the guidance specifically states that when names are read out, those students eligible for merit and distinction are highlighted.  The Academic Registrar will update the Terms and Reference and Standard Operations of Assessment Boards to reflect these administrative changes.  Policy on Project and Dissertation Supervision  It was reported by the Chair of the Assessment Regulations Working Group that a sector review had revealed that the approach to project and dissertation supervision varied depending on the needs and requirements of different disciplines and this approach was reflected within the University. In recognising this, it was recommended that a policy should set a minimum number of contact points for supervision, rather than specified contact hours. It was acknowledged however that disciplines involving bench or lab work, would require additional contacts and project and dissertation handbooks should provide additional specificity over and above the minimum requirements. Additionally, supervision should take place every two weeks for dissertations that run over the course of one Trimester, and every three weeks for dissertations that take place over the course or two Trimesters.  Senate approved the revised Policy on Project and Dissertation Supervision taking account of the changes detailed above and agreed that a clear communication strategy be implemented to inform students of the revised policy and process.  Assessment Preparation Guidance for Academic Staff  Senate approved the following amendments to the Assessment Preparation Guidance for Academic Staff  a) Signposting of existing Digital Assessment policy in guidance  b) Change word ‘count’ to word ‘limit”  c) That the guidance remain as guidance.  Assessment Regulations Working Group 2018/19 Work Plan  The undernoted ARWG workplan for 2018/19 was approved:   1. Consideration of resit/submission processes for non-standard starts 2. To consider current GCU feedback principles and applicability for Project and Dissertation submissions. 3. Analysis of Honours Profiling. 4. Grade Point Average (GPA) review. 5. 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. 6. Clarity around the criteria for Generic Awards for both staff and students 7. To consider updating the Assessment Regulations to require that all students successfully complete all SCQF level 9 modules prior to entering honours project.   Review of Assessment Regulations consistency with Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) guidelines with particular reference to the calculation of merit and distinction.  Senate thanked the Chair and members of the Assessment Regulations Working Group for the considerable amount of work undertaken by the Group in 2017/18. |
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| **11** | **GSBS Withdrawal of Programmes** |
|  | Senate approved the withdrawal of the following programmes:-  • BA/BA (Hons) International Business and Finance, last intake September 2018  • BA/BA (Hons) International Business and Marketing, last intake September 2018  • BA/BA (Hons) International Business and Tourism Management, last intake September 2020 |
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| **12** | **Research Degrees Regulations Refresh** |
|  | Senate considered proposals for the refresh of Research Degree Regulations. The changes were proposed to simplify the regulations and take account of changes to University procedures and structures.  Senate resolved to agree, in principle, the proposed changes, subject to the incorporation of additional amendments raised at the meeting, with the updated report being circulated electronically to Senators for final approval. |
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| **13** | **Refreshed Regulations and Procedure for Misconduct in Research Degrees** |
|  | Senate approved refreshed Regulations and Procedure for Misconduct in Research degrees which were currently included in the Regulations for the Award of University’s Degrees Of Master Of Philosophy, Doctor Of Philosophy, Professional Masters And Professional Doctorate (Section 15 Cheating and Plagiarism). The revised procedures clarified roles and responsibilities, included realistic timescales based on the procedures in the Code of Student Conduct, and introduced an appeal process. It was noted that ultimately, the intention was to integrate the procedures for Research Degrees within the Code of Student Conduct at its next revision. |
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| **14.** | **Other Matters Approved** |
|  | * Following recommendations from the Higher Degree Committee, Senate confirmed the award of 32 PhDs and 1 Prof D. * Honorary and Visiting appointments. * The reappointment of Dr Les Wood and Dr Karen Thomson and Professor Agnieszka Klemm as members of the Senate Disciplinary Committee. |
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| **11.** | **Other Matters Noted** |
|  | * Recent academic staff appointments. * The confirmed minutes of the Academic Policy and Practice Committee held on 31st January 2018 and 28th March 2018. * The confirmed minutes of the Research Committee held on 24th January and 14th March 2018. * The confirmed minutes of the Glasgow School for Business and Society School Board 1st November 2017 and 7th March 2018. * The confirmed minutes of the School of Engineering and the Built Environment School Board 17th January 2018 and 7th March 2018. * The confirmed minutes of the School of Health and Life Sciences School Board of 16th February 2018 * The confirmed minutes of GCU London School Board of 14th February 2018 * The proposed calendar of meetings for Senate and Standing Committees for Session 2018/19   **Date of the next scheduled meeting of Senate is Friday 12th October 2018** |