

UNIVERSITY SENATE

Minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2020

Present: Dr T Boutaleb, Professor A Britton, Dr D Chalmers, Ms S Docherty, Dr S Dolan, Professor C Donaldson, Dr M Ferguson, Professor P Gillies (Chair), Mr D Halliday, Ms J Hulme, Dr C Khamisha, Professor J Lennon, Dr S Lodge, Professor G Loffler, Dr D Lukic, Mr T McAlear, Professor J McCallum, Dr B McConville, Professor M Mannion, Mrs W Mazucco, Dr C Miller, Professor J Miller. Professor A Morgan, Ms K Mumme, Professor A Nelson, Dr S Ogden, Dr A Pierotti, Mr B Smith, Professor S Smith, Professor B Steves, Dr K Thomson, Dr M Tong, Professor V Webster and Professor B Wood.

Apologies: Mr N Clark, Mr J England, Dr K McPherson

Mr M Anderson

In Attendance: Ms F Campbell, Director of People
Mc C Hulsen, Director of Strategy and Planning,
Mr S Lopez, Academic Registrar
Ms J Main, Director of Student Life
Mrs S Mitchell, COO
Dr S Rate, Vice-Dean of GSBS
Mr R Ruthven, Director of Library Services

Mrs D Donnet, Clerk to Senate

By Invitation: Professor A Robertson, Director of Academic Development and Student Learning

Observers: Mrs E Anderson (Executive Support), Mrs L Clark (Governance), Ms A Dodds (Curriculum, Quality and Accreditation), Mrs E Fry (Executive Support), Mr D Gallagher (Lay Governor), Professor S Hunter (SHLS), Miss L Johnson (Executive Support), Mr A Lui (People Services), Mrs L McGinley (Governance), Ms N Mahal (Lay Governor), Mr V Morgan (Communications & Public Affairs), Ms T Nayariki (Students' Association), Ms Z Nicholson (Students' Association), Mr A Rahoo (Students' Association), Professor A Simmers (SHLS), Dr M Williams (SHLS)

Chairs Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed Ms Susan Docherty who was attending her first meeting as the new Students' Association President, and Professor Mike Mannion in his new role as Interim Dean of SCEBE. A welcome was also extended to all observers, and in particular the new Student Association Officers, Tabitha Nayariki, Zoe Nicholson and Adil Rahoo.

PART A (FOR CONSIDERATION)

Minutes

- 19.137 Approved:
- i. The unconfirmed draft minutes of the meeting of Senate held on 6 March 2020. **(Doc S19/53/1)**
 - ii. The unconfirmed draft minutes of the extraordinary meeting of Senate held on 9th April 2020. **(Doc S19/56/1)**

Matters Arising Briefing Note

- 19.138 Noted The Matters Arising Briefing Note. **(Doc S19/57/1)**

Principal & Vice Chancellor and Executive Board Report

- 19.139 Noted i. 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. **(Doc S19/58/1)**
- 19.140 ii. The Principal informed Senate that an SFC review of FE and HE education had recently been announced by the Scottish Government. This would look at degree and research provision across the two sectors and would potentially have significant implications for the sector and University. Further information was awaited and Senate would be kept informed.
- 19.141 iii. It was highlighted to Senate that the University had made a statement in support of Black Lives Matter and that the University would be working with the Students' Association in order to raise awareness. This would be in support of the work that was already underway by the Task Force on Racism, chaired by Dr Boutaleb, that would report to the People Committee later in the year and feedback would be given to Senate.

Covid-19 Related Disruption to Postgraduate Research at GCU

- 19.142 Considered A report on Covid-19 related disruption to Postgraduate Research at GCU: Survey of Students and action planning. **(Doc S19/59/1)**
- 19.143 Reported i. By the PVC Research, that there had been two rounds of surveys in order to get a clear understanding of the impact the Covid-19 related disruption had had on students' research and what support was required to address this. Further, the University had received a petition from students, and the students had held listening events, and these had been helpful in feeding into the regular meetings with the PGR representative. Additionally, guidance for supervisors had been received from the Research Councils and engagement was ongoing. Generally, feedback from students had been supportive of the actions taken, but there was a need to have more variation and flexibility in the support available.
- 19.144 ii. Executive Board had approved the development of a set of plans in three main areas:
- Wellbeing and Resource Support;
 - Time extensions support (to apply to self-funded as well as funded students; and Funding extensions support.

19.145 Agreed To note the report, and that the Scottish Funding Council had agreed a funding boost for research, and information was awaited on what GCU's allocation from this fund would be.

Safe Return to Campus

19.146 Received A verbal update from the Chief Operating Officer on the plans in place to facilitate a safe, orderly and structured return to campus. It was reported that the Estates Management Group had already undertaken a significant amount of preparatory work to understand, mitigate and manage risks. The University was preparing a plan in line with the Scottish Government's four phased plan to lift lockdown, and this plan would take account of guidance for the sector issued by a number of sources. There would be a phased return to campus with priority given to first, articulating and international students, and modules that could not be taught remotely. The human factor was central to the plans, and the need to be sensitive to individual circumstances was paramount.

19.147 Discussed Concern was raised about combining work with childcare and other caring responsibilities, and the Director of People advised that further guidance on this would be developed in consultation with the trade unions. Concern was also raised about students, and international students in particular, making arrangements for accommodation for the forthcoming academic year, and it was noted that communication about this would be sent as soon as clearer information was available.

19.148 Agreed To note the update.

Review of ELISR Schedule (Covid-19)

19.149 Noted A report on revisions to the ELISR schedule as a result of Covid-19. (**Doc S19/60/1**)

19.150 Reported By the DVC (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience) that the University had received confirmation from the SFC that it was content for the University to extend the review schedule for four Enhancement Lead Institutional Subject Reviews (ELISRs) due to Covid-19, noting that this may mean that the maximum six-year Institution-led Review cycle would be exceeded.

Revisions to Senate's Standing Orders

19.151 Considered A report recommending revisions to Senate's Standing Orders. (**Doc 19/67/1**)

19.152 Reported By the Clerk to Senate that many of the changes were editorial to better reflect or clarify existing practice, or to comply with the HE Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 there were some proposed revisions that were changes to the current Standing Orders.

19.153 Discussed Senate was generally supportive of the proposed changes, but further consideration/clarification on the following issues was requested:-

- the proposed timings in calling an extraordinary Senate meeting;
- the eligibility of academic staff on fixed term contracts to stand for election as Senators;
- the nomination of Senate's member on Court; and
- the process for electing Heads of Department as ex-officio members whilst off-campus working was in place.

19.154 Agreed That further work be undertaken on the issues raised and that a revised set of Standing Orders be circulated for electronic endorsement, prior to submission to Court on 25th June for approval.

Assessment Regulations Sub Committee

19.155 Considered A report from the Assessment Regulations Sub Committee (**Doc S19/61/1**) outlining work that had been undertaken by the Sub-Committee, and focusing in particular on work in relation to the GCU Study Abroad and Grade Conversion Policy, GCU Moderation Policy and consideration of resit and resubmission processes for non-standard starts, and the review of compensation regulations.

19.156 Approved i. GCU Study Abroad and Grade Conversion Policy, which identified the baseline requirements for periods of student mobility and signposted the roles and responsibilities of both staff and students undertaking a credit rated period of study with a partner institution. It was further noted that the GCU Study Abroad and Grade Conversion Policy and Outward Operational Handbook would be owned by Academic Quality.

ii. The updated GCU Assessment Moderation Policy and agreed that revised GCU assessment review and moderation templates be developed for academic session 2020/21, and that a short life working group be convened to pilot the implementation of GCU Learn Communities for External Moderation purposes across three academic schools in academic session 2020/21

iii recommendations to allow non-standard start post-graduate students with failed coursework to resubmit in the next trimester, and associated updates to the Taught Postgraduate Assessment Regulations and Terms of Reference and Standard Operations of Progression & Award Boards and associated activities to support this.

19.157 Noted i. An update on the 2019-20 Early Retrieval Pilot and that early retrieval and compensation would be revisited in academic session 2020/21, in order for further sector analysis and wider consultation to be undertaken;

ii. Updates to the Undergraduate Assessment Regulations to reflect the incremental roll out of Threshold Minimum Marks for SCQF level 9 modules in the 2020/21 session;

iii. Updates on the *Discipline Based (TESTA) approach to Assessment Planning* pilot in partnership with Academic Development;

iv. That a Short Life Working Group had been convened by the Dean (SHLS) to consider the institutional approach to Banded Grading, GPA and Honours Profiling. It was expected that this group would report to APPC and Senate in the 2020/21 academic session;

v. Exceptions Cases approved at the meeting of the University Exceptions Committee on 27th April 2020 which required amendments to the Taught Postgraduate Assessment Regulations; Undergraduate Assessment Regulations and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy; and

vi. The Assessment Regulations Working Group Work Plan: Session 2020-21

GCU Going Digital

19.158 Considered A report on transition to a high quality baseline student online learning experience for Trimester A 2020/21 and beyond. (**Doc S19/69/1**)

19.159 Reported i. By the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience) that the proposed GCU Going Digital Framework incorporated a set of pedagogic principles and

four enabling work-streams or 'pillars' designed to align with the University's new 2030 strategy and its education goal. The Framework would support the University's underlying mission, vision and values as the University for the Common Good, and build on work to date, incorporating principles already discussed at Academic Policy and Practice Committee and Senate.

- ii. Going forward, the pedagogic principles would form a key part of the planned University wide consultation with staff and students to create the new 2030 Strategy for Learning.

19.160 Discussed Whilst supportive of the proposals, further information and guidance on required standards of delivery, especially in the current circumstances, and guidance on the operationalisation of the framework was requested. More detailed consideration of understanding and addressing the varying IT/internet access issues and capabilities of students was requested, as were guidelines on student engagement and synchronous/asynchronous teaching and timetabling. It was noted that it was intended that all large lectures would be conducted remotely and this would make space available for other on campus activities.

19.161 Agreed To endorsed the direction of travel and that a special meeting of Senate be held to consider an updated report taking account of Senate's feedback.

Enhancement Led Institutional Review

19.162 Noted A verbal update from the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience) informing that the ELIR scheduled for March that had been postponed due to Covid-19, would now take place from 16th to 20th November 2020 and would be an online event.

Senate Forward Look 2020/21

19.163 Noted A number of key issues that it was anticipated would be brought to Senate for consideration in 2020/21, in addition to regular business and any emerging matters. **(Doc S19/70/1)**

SFC Outcome Agreement 2020/21

19.164 Noted The SFC Outcome Agreement 2020/21. **(Doc S19/67/1)**. The Director of Strategy and Planning reported that the Outcome Agreement had been submitted as required in April but, this had not been published by the SFC and, due to Covid-19, there would now be less emphasis on Outcome Agreement. High level talks with the SFC would take place in July, so more would be known then.

PART B (FOR FORMAL APPROVAL)

Research Degrees Committee

19.165 Approved The award of 17 PhDs, 1 PhD by previous publication, 1 Prof D and 1 DBA. **(Doc S19/62/1)**

Programme Withdrawal

19.166 Approved The withdrawal of the Top-up Doctorate route in D.Psych. Counselling Psychology. **(Doc APPC19/51/1)**

Senate Membership 2020/21

19.167 Approved The membership of Senate for 2020/21 taking account the changes in composition agreed at the previous meeting. **(Doc S19/71/1)**

Chair's Action

19.168 Approved Amendments to the Assessment Regulations in light of Covid-19. **(Doc S19/66/1)**

PART C (FOR INFORMATION)

Honorary Appointments

19.169 Noted The following honorary appointments awarded by the University Executive Board:

| Post | Title | Field of expertise | School |
|-----------------|-------------|--------------------|--------|
| Honorary Fellow | David Wylie | Podiatry | SHLS |

Academic Appointments

19.170 Received A paper on academic appointments made since the last meeting of Senate. **(Doc S19/63/1)**

Academic Policy and Practice Committee

19.171 Received The confirmed minute of the meeting of the Academic Policy and Practice Committee held on 29 January 2020. **(Doc APPC19/38/1)**

University Research Committee

19.172 Received The confirmed minute of the meeting of the University Research Committee held on 5 February 2020. **(Doc REC19/06/1)** and 1 April 2020. **(Doc REC19/29/1)**

International Committee

19.173 Received The confirmed minute of the meeting of the International Committee held on 17 November 2019. **(Doc IC19/17/1)**

School Board/Boards of Senate Minutes

19.174 Received The confirmed minutes from the under noted meetings of Boards of Senate:

School of Health and Life Sciences held on

i. 14 February 2020 **(Doc SHLS/SB/19/033/01)**

School of Computing Engineering and Built Environment

ii. 18 February 2020 **(Doc SCEBE/SB/19/01/37)**

Glasgow School for Business and Society

iii. 16 October 2019 **(Doc GSBS/SB/19/02/01)**

iv. 18 December 2019 **(Doc GSBS/SB/19/03/01)**

v. 19 February 2020 **(Doc GSBS/SB/19/04/01)**

Senate and Standing Committee Calendar of Meetings 2020/21

19.175 Received The updated calendar of meetings for Senate and Standing Committees for Session 2020/21 including room allocation. **(Doc S19/50/02)**

Academic Calendar for 2020/21

19.176 Received The Academic Calendar for 2020/21. **(Doc S19/64/01)**

University Court

19.177 Received The summary report from the meeting of the University Court held on 23 April 2020. **(Doc S19/65/01)**

Research Bulletin for Trimester A 2019-20

19.178 Received An update on Research from the PVC Research. **(Doc S19/68/01)**

Date of Next meeting

The next scheduled meeting of Senate will be Friday 16th October 2020, however as agreed at 19.112 above, an additional meeting of Senate, to further discuss "GCU Going Digital" **(Doc S19/69/1)**, was to be arranged within the next month

Chair's Closing Remarks

The Chair thanked Senate members for their hard work over the 2019/20 academic year, and gave special thanks to the following Senators for whom this was their last scheduled meeting: Dr Douglas Chalmers, Dr Dane Lukic, Dr Sheila Lodge, Mr David Halliday, Mr Jonnie England, Ms Kathinka Mumme and Mr Neil Clark. Thanks were also expressed to Professor Iain Cameron and Professor Antony Morgan who were both stepping down from their roles as Deans but would remain within the University.