

UNIVERSITY SENATE

Minutes of the meeting held on 15th March 2013

- PRESENT:** Dr N Andrew, Ms D Borrett (SA), Mrs H Brown, Professor I Cameron, Dr D Chalmers, Dr V Charissis, Mr Ed Clack, Mr A Corbett, Mr Alex Craig, Mr Graham Dalziel, Ms T Findlay, Ms C Fyfe (SA), Professor P Gillies (Chair), Professor D Greenhalgh, Mrs P Hamilton, Ms J Hulme, Mrs C Khamisha, Mr T Kilpatrick, Professor J Lennon, Mr V McKay, Ms J Main, Professor J Marshall, Ms A Nimmo, Mr Brian Pillans, Professor B Steves, Mr I Stewart, Professor J Tombs, Dr Ian Trushell, Professor R Whittaker, Professor J Wilson.
- APOLOGIES:** Professor T Buggy, Dr J Edwards, Dr R Emmanuel, Dr H Gallagher, Ms A Gasteen, Mrs J Greig, Professor V James, Mr A Killick, Mr G Moorehouse, Dr R Ruthven, Professor K Stanton, Professor J Woodburn.
- OBSERVERS:** J Barton, (FMD), T Brian (Court), Mrs L Clark (G&AQ), Neill Clark (VP Education Elect SA), Ms M Daly(P&P), S Davidson (GSBS), Kenneth Fleming (PG) , W Henderson (GSBS), Matthew Lamb (Student President Elect), M McPake (SHLS), Christine Reid (OD), Kevin Ward (SA), A Webster (Court), C Webster (OD) and C Wilson (G&AQ).
- BY INVITATION:** Stephen Lopez (SAS)
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs M Henaghan, Secretary to Senate
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CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chair welcomed colleagues to the third meeting of Senate in session 2012/13 including new members Graham Dalziel (Head of Law, Accountancy, Economics and Risk), Susan Odgen (Head of Business Management), Helen Gallagher (Head of Psychology) and Jim Woodburn (Interim Director of the Institute of Applied Health Research). The Chair also welcomed and congratulated the Student

President Elect Matthew Lamb and the VP Education Neill Clark to their first Senate prior to taking up their sabbatical appointments.

Minutes

- 12.92 Considered: The unconfirmed draft minutes of the meeting of Senate held on 3rd December 2012 **(Doc S12/36/1)**
- 12.93 Resolved: That the minutes be confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting subject to:
- (i) 12.54: acknowledge the impact on staff arising from the current academic year structure.
 - (ii) 12.58: factual accuracy correction to (i) amend ⅓ of students 18 or less to 22%.

Matters Arising

- 12.94 Considered: Any matters arising on the minutes not otherwise provided for on the agenda.
- 12.95 Reported: A Senate member sought an update on a potential relationship with Saudi Arabia and plans to send out staff for a CPD course.
- 12.96 Noted: By the Vice Dean (SHLS) that Princess Noura University (PNU) had made a follow up enquiry. The Chair was not at this stage aware of the proposal. Any developments will in due course be considered by the Executive Board in terms of scrutiny and due diligence and thereafter Senate if considered to be a good fit with the University's mission and international strategy.

Principal and Vice Chancellor and Executive Board Report

- 12.97 Noted: A report from the Principal and Vice Chancellor and Executives to update members on substantive items considered by the Executive Board since the last meeting of Senate. **(Doc S12/43/1)**.
- 12.98 Reported: In addition to the above report the Principal advised Senate of two further items;
- (i) that she had received and accepted a request to co-chair a Symposium on the Wealth and Wellbeing of Nations at Princeton University as a guest of honour. The keynote speech will be delivered by the First Minister Mr Alex Salmond. The Principal will also deliver a guest speech at the Symposium reception and dinner and will be the opening discussant at the session examining "Inequality and Wellbeing".
 - (ii) that University Chancellor Professor Mohammed Yunus is to receive the US Congressional Medal of Honour. The award will be presented at a ceremony on Capitol Hill, Washington in recognition of his efforts to combat global poverty. The Principal has accepted an invitation to attend the award presentation event.

Academic Calendar Review

- 12.99 Considered: (i) The proposal for a new academic calendar structure. **(Doc**

S12/39/1)

- (ii) A paper from the Students' Association on the Academic Calendar Review (**Doc S12/44/1**)

13.00 Reported:

- (i) By the PVC Learning and Teaching that there had been wide consultation on the review and development of the academic calendar and that he had welcomed the input from the various stakeholders including academic schools, Students' Association and support departments. The Short Life Working Group established a set of principles to conduct the review of the current academic year structure. The main guiding principles for consideration included the impact on the student experience, staff and operational activities. The proposal for the new academic structure is set out on page 4 of the report. To ensure stability the group has proposed an academic calendar structure up to 2017/18.
- (ii) By the President of the Students' Association that a survey of students (1701 responses) had indicated that students did not support changing the examination diet from December to January. The survey indicated that 1385 students preferred to undertake examinations prior to Christmas. The Students' Association also considered that there had been a lack of consultation on this proposal. There had been consultation on the Strategy for Learning but not on changing the academic year structure. In summary the Students' Association could not support the proposal to change the academic year structure.

13.01 Discussed:

The Principal stated that the academic calendar proposal was in response to requests from students (circa 15½ thousand did not engage with the SA survey). Staff had also indicated that the current calendar arrangement did not lend itself to the optimum student learning experience in terms of the ability to reflect on learning and the opportunity to gain timely feedback on formative work prior to undertaking summative examinations.

The PVC Learning and Teaching confirmed that the Students' Association had been provided with the set of questions on the academic year structure as part of the consultation exercise with all stakeholders.

It was noted that the proposed structure indicated teaching taking place between 5 – 6 pm. This would impact on staff and students with commitments including after school care arrangements. In response the PVC L&T indicated that there were a number of constraints to be considered in designing the structure within the number of weeks available in the trimester.

The VP Education from the Students' Association stated that they had not asked for students views on formative rather than summative assessment in their survey. Students are willing to wait a bit longer for

feedback and would support a move towards more formative assessment. This is reflected in the developing Strategy for Learning. The President of the Students' Association stated that students are overwhelmed about the number of changes currently taking place.

A Senate member also noted that there were a number of developments currently taking place in the University including the Strategy for Learning and possible change to long /thin delivery of modules and that it was important to reflect carefully on the whole picture. The PVC L&T stressed that the overarching strategic aim is the element of the discussion currently taking place. Portfolio refresh is currently taking place but it is within the context of the Strategy for Learning, not entirely separate.

A Senate member stated that the change to the academic calendar need not change the timing of examinations. Assessment is being looked at as it forms part of the programme and the right blend of formative and summative assessment. One factor is the consideration of what happens before and after Christmas. Another member indicated that in their School there was a blend of modules delivered over Trimester A and B and A, B and C trimesters. There were also placements to be factored in and this meant that the student could be out of the university for several weeks. This would make long thin delivery difficult to accommodate. Other issues raised included impact on international students in terms of cheaper flights, accommodation agreements and potential timetabling difficulties.

In response the PVC L&T stated that as teaching starts week commencing 9th September with an international orientation week there were no perceived difficulties with cheaper flights or tenancy agreements. It was also confirmed that there were no anticipated difficulties with timetabling. In terms of module delivery (short/fat or long/thin) this was a separate issue for School consideration.

The PVC Research stated one note of caution was the length of time students could be out of the University; leaving on 13th December and returning 6 weeks later to undertake examinations. As an academic community the university must work hard to engage students in some form. It is anticipated that the new Student Portal could be used to engage students with content that is useful.

A Senate member indicated that the last two years under the current calendar made it difficult to engage on all fronts. He felt that a later start date was required. Examinations in January provide more time for reflection on learning. Erasmus students have examinations in June therefore the new structure is a good fit. For these reasons he commended the proposal to Senate. The Chair also indicated that the later start date would enhance opportunities for staff to attend research conferences, pedagogy and advance best practice in teaching and learning. The Students' Association acknowledged the long break between Christmas and January examinations but reassured that support

will be there for students and at risk students.

- 13.02 Resolved: That following a review of the academic calendar Senate approved the revised academic calendar structure up to session 2017-18. The need to consider formative and summative assessment via programme structures was noted. The concerns raised by the Students' Association have also been noted and assurances given that the University will continue to work hard to ensure good internal communication with them.

Strategy for Learning

- 13.03 Considered: A progress report on the development of the Strategy for Learning. **(Doc S12/49/1)**

- 13.04 Reported: By the PVC Learning and Teaching that the review of the current LTAS is nearing completion. The progress report for Senate is for information and comment at this stage, with the final draft strategy submitted to Senate in June for approval. The PVC L&T noted that elements of the strategy will have resource implications in terms of staff and use of technology; this will require further discussion with the Executive Board and Schools. The strategy will also inform the portfolio refresh activity and the KPIs developed for the strategy would be rigorous and focus primarily on programmes. In addition further consultation and engagement with colleagues on the London campus, the public and private sectors and the voluntary sector will also take place.

- 13.05 Discussed: A Senate member enquired if the KPIs referred to in bullet point 2 of the paper suggested cuts to programmes and whether the KPIs will be interpreted on an historical or forward thinking basis.

It was clarified that KPIs normally refer to University level indicators on progression/retention and completion; in the context of the Strategy for Learning it was agreed that "objectives" was a more appropriate description. The PVC L&T stated that the University must have confidence that the programmes on offer to students are successful, able to recruit to both home and international markets; provide an excellent student experience leading to a good honours degree and employment. The NSS and KIS data will be utilised to inform discussions and the financial viability of programmes was not the main indicator. A programme could be niche and successful in terms of reputation but may not be financially viable. The intention is to adopt a sharper focus. It was also confirmed that session 2012-2013 data is a reasonable baseline for discussion and decision making. Senate members were also advised that the draft strategy was available from Professor Whittaker if required (most members have already engaged with the draft strategy via the consultation process).

- 13.06 Resolved: That Senate noted the progress report on the Strategy for Learning. The draft Strategy for Learning will be considered at the next meeting of Senate in June.

Assessment Regulations Working Group

- 13.07 Considered: A position paper on the progress of the review of the Assessment Regulations. (**Doc. S12/48/1**)
- 13.08 Reported: Senate was advised that the review of the Assessment Regulations is ongoing. The Academic Policy Committee had considered an interim report and request for guidance from the working group at its meeting in March and agreed that implementation of the revised regulations would now be session 2014 – 2015. In considering the interim report the APC noted that it was essential that the Assessment Regulations align with the university policies and strategies; therefore it was not possible to provide the necessary guidance to the working group until the Strategy for Learning had been approved. Additional work is also required in drafting separate undergraduate and postgraduate regulations.
- 13.09 Resolved: That Senate notes the position and that the draft Assessment Regulations will be submitted to Senate in due course for implementation in 2014-15.

Review and Rebranding of the Consideration of Special Factors Process

- 13.10 Considered: The report of the Short Life Working Group on the review and rebranding of the Consideration of Special Factors process. (**Doc. S12/47/1**)
- 13.11 Reported: That the SLWG report recommends the rebranding of the Consideration of Special Factors process to be renamed “Mitigating Circumstances”. This is in line with the sector and fits with ISIS terminology. The new process outlined in the report is a direct replacement of appendix 6 of the Assessment Regulations and is done with the full knowledge of the Assessment Regulations Working Group. The new process provides consistency of approach, a help sheet for students and guidelines for staff. It also includes the facility to request retrospective mitigating circumstances for consideration. It is hoped that it will reduce the culture of using “special factors” as an insurance to protect assessment attempts. Currently the University processes circa 2000 special factors and an estimated 300 Academic Appeals (many of which are retrospective Special Factors). The SLWG has put in place a communication strategy to advise all stakeholders. The Mitigating Circumstances process will be effective from session 2013-14 and the Assessment Regulations will be updated accordingly.
- 13.12 Discussed: Senate commended the work of the SLWG. The following issues were raised for clarification:-
- The SLWG is requested to consider the implementation of an electronic process rather than hard copy
 - The list of reasons as to what can be accepted as a mitigating circumstance should be strengthened
 - Strengthen the list of reasons why a form will not be accepted
 - Clarify the difference between an academic appeal and a retrospective mitigating circumstance form
 - Clarify paragraph 6.7
 - Appendix 1 – Senior Admin Member of MCB – should this read member of MCB?

13.13 Resolved: That the Short Life Working Group's response to the comments from Senate are circulated electronically to Senate members. Subject to agreement on the above amendments the Mitigating Circumstances process is approved for inclusion in the Assessment Regulations for implementation effective from session 2013-14.

Portfolio Refresh

13.14 Considered: An update paper on portfolio refresh. **(Doc S12/50/1)**

13.15 Reported: By the Chair that work on the portfolio refresh is ongoing and this update paper is to provide Senate with information on progress to date. Senate is asked to note the direction of travel and that deliberations are continuing in Schools. The progress report contains key highlights from the School submissions for information. All proposals will be subject to the usual university approval processes. It is anticipated that the full report will be submitted to Senate in June.

13.16 Discussed: It was noted that there was a need to align portfolio developments to the evolving Strategy for Learning. APC had deliberated the interim proposals at a recent meeting. The next stage is for Executive Board consideration of proposals and thereafter the June Senate.

13.17 Resolved: That Senate notes the update paper on portfolio refresh.

Student Attendance Policy (Taught)

13.18 Considered: A new student attendance policy for taught students. **(Doc: S12/40/1).**

13.19 Reported: By the Head of Student Administration Services that the policy had been developed as part of the University's overall Student Attendance and Engagement Strategy which aims to provide a supportive learning environment of which student attendance is one aspect of the overall engagement. The paper outlined the key principles of students as active participants in their learning; the link between attendance and academic development; the need to identify at risk students to offer appropriate support and advice and the University's dual duty of care for Tier4 students in terms of providing support and meeting our UKBA licence requirements.

13.20 Discussed: It was noted that:

- i) the actions outlined in 4(b) of the policy, the manual task of attendance monitoring, was very time consuming and a huge administrative burden. It would be helpful to have the swipe card system fully implemented.
- ii) The availability of the swipe card system would not fully eliminate all manual tasks related to attendance monitoring.
- iii) In terms of students on placement, who has the responsibility to monitor attendance?
- iv) 4(d) the actions relating to a student without the relevant ID card

need clarification on the role of the academic member of staff.

In response the Director of the Student Experience stated that a separate protocol on the actions relating to 4(b) of the policy had been developed and this would be communicated separately and added as an appendix to the policy. The University Secretary had sympathy with the comments made. In terms of swipe cards, the policy needs further testing with the interface of the Tier 4 manual. Stress testing on implementation of the policy in terms of elimination of staff burden and ensuring that the policy is workable was also required. No date has been set at present for this but it is anticipated that it will be completed by September 2013. It was confirmed that attendance monitoring of students on placement was the overall responsibility of the University. We do rely on placement providers communicating clearly with us; however the roles and responsibilities of the relative parties are made clear via the placement agreement.

- 13.21 Resolved: That Senate agreed the Student Attendance Policy (Taught)in principle subject to
- the outcome of stress testing
 - the inclusion of the protocol for the academic staff responsibilities relating to attendance monitoring as outlined in 4(b) as an appendix to the policy.
 - Senate receiving a progress report for the October 2013 meeting.

Honorary and Visiting Appointments

13.22 Approved: The undernoted Honorary and Visiting appointments

Title	Post	Field of expertise	School
David Philip	Visiting Professor	Seconded from role as Director with Balfour Beatty to the Cabinet Office as the UK government’s Head of BIM implementation.	SEBE
Arun Singh	Honorary Professor	International Lawyer and Corporate Educator.	GSBS
Vanessa Friedman	Honorary Professor	Fashion Editor, the Financial Times.	GSBS
Paul Kelly	Honorary Professor	CEO of the Selfridges Group.	GSBS
Ray Kelvin	Honorary Professor	Founder and Managing Director of Ted Baker Plc.	GSBS

Belinda Earl	Honorary Professor	Style Director, Marks & Spencer Plc.	GSBS
Christos Angelides	Honorary Professor	Group Product Director, NEXT Plc.	GSBS
Matt Chambers	Honorary Professor	Global Head of Marketing, World Duty Free.	GSBS
Patrick Grant	Honorary Professor	CEO of Norton & Sons, Savile Row.	GSBS
Imran Amed	Honorary Professor	Founder and Editor of the Business Fashion.	GSBS

Higher Degrees Committee

13.23 Approved: Confirmed awards from the Higher Degrees Committee of 11 PhDs and 1 Prof.D. **(Doc S12/45/1)**

Academic Appeals Committee Membership

13.24 Approved: The revised membership of the Academic Appeals Committee for the period to July 2016. **(Doc S12/42/1)**

SFC Outcome Agreement

13.25 Approved: The final version of the SFC Outcome Agreement for 2013/14. **(Doc. S12/37/1)**

Academic Staff Appointments

13.26 Received: Notification of recent academic staff appointments **(Doc. S12/46/1)**

University Court

13.27 Received: The highlights of the meeting of University Court held on
i) 13th December 2012. **(Doc S12/38/1)**
ii) 25th February 2013 **(Doc S12/51/1)**

Research Committee

13.28 Received: The confirmed minutes of the meeting of the Research Committee held on 24th October 2012. **(Doc. REC12/1/1)**

Senate Membership

13.29 Received: The revised Senate membership as at March 2013. **(Doc S12/41/1)**

School Board Minutes

13.30 Received: Confirmed School Board minutes from the School of Health and Life Sciences held on 17th October 2012. **(Doc. HLS/SB/12/16)**

Academic Policy Committee Minutes

13.31 Received: The confirmed minutes from the undernoted meetings of the Academic

Policy Committee held on

- i) 19th September 2012 (Doc APC12/14/1)
- ii) 5th December 2012 (Doc APC12/33/1)

Date of Next Meeting

13.32 Received:

Notification that the next scheduled meeting of University Senate will be held on Friday 14th June 2013 at 09.30 hours.