

## **UNIVERSITY SENATE**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2016**

- PRESENT:** Mr J Barclay, Ms G Bartsch, Mrs J Broadhurst, Prof I Cameron , Prof. A de-Ruyter, Dr R Emmanuel, Dr M Ferguson, Dr H Gallagher, Mr M Gallagher, Prof. P Gillies(Chair), Dr J Gregersen-Hermans, Prof. T Hilton, Ms J Hulme, Prof. L Kilbride, Mr A Killick, Mr T Kilpatrick, Ms J Main, Prof. J Marshall, Prof. M Mannion, Mr B McConville, Mr Alan Middleton, Prof. J Miller, Mr V McKay, Prof A Morgan, Dr A Nimmo, Dr S Ogden, Mr B Pillans, Mr R Ruthven, Mr M Stephenson, Prof. B Steves, Mr I Stewart, Prof. V Webster, Prof. R Whittaker.
- APOLOGIES:** Dr D Chalmers, Mr A Craig, Ms L Cuthbertson, Dr A Grant, Prof. S McMeekin, Dr C Miller
- OBSERVERS:** Mrs H Brooke (Court), Mr K Fleming (PG), Mrs L Clark (DoG), Dr E Reather (Exec Support), Mr A Lui (PS), Ms Fiona Campbell (PS), Mrs K Roden (S&P), Mrs H Lauder (DoG), Dr L Haahr (SHLS)
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs D Donnet, Secretary to Senate  
Mr S Lopez, Academic Registrar

### **CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the third meeting of the 2015/16 academic year, and in particular welcomed Drs J. Gregersen-Hermans (PVC and VP International), Professor A Morgan (Acting Dean, GCU London) and Professor A Simmers (Head of Department of Life Sciences). Senate also congratulated Professor Simmers who had recently been granted the Freedom of the City of London and appointed Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers in recognition of her contribution to education and research in the field of optics.

### **PART A (FOR CONSIDERATION)**

#### **Minutes**

- 15.111 Considered: The unconfirmed draft minute of the meeting of Senate held on 11<sup>th</sup>

December 2015. **(Doc S15/41/1 )**

15.112 Resolved: That the minutes be approved as a correct record

**Matters Arising**

15.113 Reported: Arising on 15.100 Athena Swan – the Chair informed Senate that Athena Swan had advised the University to submit its revised application under the old guidelines rather than under the new guidelines (which included GSBS and professional support services in addition to STEM subjects). This advice was given in light of a large number of new new applications for Athena Swan Bronze anticipated in April. Senate was assured however that the University would still apply the Athena Swan approach across all areas of the University.

**Principal and Vice Chancellor and Executive Board Report**

15.114 Considered: A report from the Principal & Vice-Chancellor and Executives to update members on substantive items considered by the Executive Board since the last meeting of Senate. **(Doc S15/42/1)**

15.115 Discussed: Scottish Funding Council The Principal reported that the SFC indicative funding letter had been received. It did not contain the final impact on some strategic funding arrangements, and further information will be received in advance of final approval of the University's Outcome Agreement.

Whilst there had been an overall cut of 2.8%, there had been a significant 4.5% (£2.1m) cut in the core teaching grant. It was vital therefore that the University continue to seek to reduce its dependency upon SFC funding. Preparations had already been made in anticipation of a reduction in funding and proposals would be taken forward for consideration in due course.

15.116 GCY New York In response to a question about the progress of the educational license, Senate was informed that the application had been circulated by the New York State Education Department for canvassing to the other New York universities and colleges. The Principal had previously met with NY university and college presidents to discuss GCUNY's relatively modest proposed academic portfolio, and she was due to undertake a further round of meetings in April to address any concerns they may have. Extensive lobbying on the University's behalf had also taken place. No timescales were available, but the application was now moving through the approval process.

**Senate Disciplinary Committee: Overview Report Session 2014/15**

15.117 Considered: An overview report on disciplinary cases considered by the Senate Disciplinary Committee in Session 2014/15. **(Doc S15/51/1)**

15.118 Discussed: It was reported that there had been an overall increase in the number of disciplinary cases, however with 45 offences out of a student population of almost 17,000 it was noted that only a tiny minority of students were involved. The increase in offences was mainly attributed to an increase in the number of examination offences. There was a disproportionate number of cases involving overseas students, and it was considered that this could in part be due to a lack of awareness of the standards required by the University together with cultural differences and increased pressure for academic success. Ensuring that overseas students were aware of the support mechanisms in place for students as well as the University's regulations was considered to be essential.

The increasing availability of equipment such as smart calculators and watches was discussed and clearer guidance for invigilators and students was requested.

Although only involving a very small numbers of students, the increase in recent years of contract cheating and ghost writing was a concern. Senate requested that advice on how to structure assessments in order to minimise opportunities for ghost writing be prepared as well as guidelines on how to identify ghost written work.

More detailed statistical analysis, with benchmarking against other HEIs if possible, was also requested.

15.119 Resolved: To note the report and to report back to Senate at its October 2016 meeting on the points raised above.

#### **Action Plan on Compliance with Consumer Regulations and CMA Guidance**

15.120 Considered: An update on the work being undertaken to ensure compliance with consumer regulations. **(Doc S15/48/1)**

15.121 Discussed: Senate was informed of actions being taken by the University in response to the CMA guidelines. In particular it was noted that tuition fee setting and programme information had to be agreed well in advance for inclusion in the prospectus and other recruitment information. The need to consult on programme changes with applicants who have accepted an offer of a place as well as with on-course students was highlighted.

The Department of Quality Enhancement had prepared guidance on changes to programmes and academic staff were requested to discuss any proposed changes with the Academic Registrar.

15.122 Resolved: To note the report and the actions being taken by the University to ensure compliance with the CMA regulations.

### **Draft Digital Strategy**

15.123 Considered: The draft Digital Strategy and feedback summary paper.  
**(Doc S15/50/1)**

15.124 Reported: The PVC and VP Learning and Student Experience reported that following consultation feedback on the draft Digital Strategy had been received from staff and students as well as Executive Board, Finance & General Purposes Committee and Court. Feedback had been consistent in that the final strategy should reflect key performance indicators and milestones. A separate detailed project and operational plan would be developed to support the strategy. Work would also be done to ensure that all systems and processes that underpin the strategy were aligned to the new strategy.

The revised draft Strategy would be circulated for staff and student comment via a microsite, and then considered by Executive Board and Finance and General Purposes Committee prior to submission to Court for approval. It was proposed that as the next Senate meeting was in June, the revised draft strategy be circulated electronically to Senate members for consideration, if finalised before June.

15.125 Resolved:

- i. To note the feedback and the draft digital strategy
- ii. To circulate the next draft to staff and students for comment via the microsite.
- iii. To agree that the revised draft strategy be circulated electronically to Senators for consideration prior to submission to Court on 23rd June 2016 for approval.

### **Outcome Agreement**

15.126 Received: A verbal update on the Outcome Agreement from the Director of Strategic Projects.

15.127 Reported: Senate was informed that last year the University had agreed a three year Outcome Agreement with the SFC, which was to be reviewed and refreshed each year. A refreshed Outcome Agreement had been prepared and the University had been given the opportunity to reconsider it in light of the contents of the indicative funding letter. Further guidance from the SFC was awaited before considering what the impact on the Outcome Agreement would be.

15.128 Resolved: To note the position and that an update would be provided at the next meeting.

## African Leadership College

- 15.129 Considered: An update paper on the GCU academic partnership with African Leadership Unleashed (ALU) to establish the first African Leadership College (ALC) of higher education. **(Doc S15/54/1)**
- 15.130 Reported: The PVC and VP Learning and Student Experience reported that the first University Quality Assurance visit had been held in February and this had been very successful. GCU staff met with students and ALU staff who were working collaboratively with the University. Additionally there had recently been a surprise visit by the Tertiary Educational Council (TEC) where it was noted that areas previously highlighted had been acted upon. The first formal TEC review was due at the end of August 2016. The first meeting of the Global Council which oversees and advises ALU and the formal launch was due to take place later this month.
- 15.131 Discussed: In response to a question regarding the extent to which the 170 students currently admitted to ALC reflected the University's mission, Senate was informed that the students were from 30 different countries and from a wide range of backgrounds. More than two thirds of students were from backgrounds considered to be challenging, and for this reason the requirement for the foundation year to be residential with support available to students was key. It was anticipated that going forward one third of students would be fee paying with the remaining two thirds receiving scholarships or sponsorships.

The issue of ensuring academic quality was raised. Senate was advised that academic staff had been involved in programme development from the beginning. Deans had access to development funds to support the initiative and these were being managed at School level to ensure the money was directed to the most appropriate areas. Additionally, there was an academic lead in each school with oversight of activity in Glasgow as well as Mauritius. Colleagues were therefore able to respond quickly to issues that arose. It was noted that whilst there was widespread support for the ALC there were, understandably, some concerns from time to time, and these were being managed and shared across all schools. As Schools had proposed the programmes to be included in the ALC portfolio, there was a high degree of commitment from all the staff involved.

It was reported that some of the challenges addressed in developing the ALC programmes had resulted in increasing capacity and capability in areas such as online and digital learning across the University as a whole so the benefits were being experienced by staff not directly involved in the initiative.

15.132 Resolved To note the update.

## **PART B (FOR FORMAL APPROVAL)**

### **GCU London Representation on Senate**

15.133 Considered: A report recommending elected representation from GCU London on Senate.  
**(Doc S15/45/1)**

15.134 Reported: By the University Secretary and VP Governance that membership of Senate was determined by the University's Statutory Instrument which, *inter alia*, set out the ratio of elected member to ex officio members. Accordingly, there was provision for 14 elected member on Senate, 12 of whom were elected by academic staff members in Schools. As GCU London was now a School there was a need to include representation from GCU London from within these 12 elected members.

On the basis of equity of representation, and to ensure full utilisation of the number of elected places available, it was proposed to allocate elected representation across the 4 schools on a proportional basis.

15.135 Approved: That elected representation by academic staff in Schools be allocated on a proportional basis as follows:-  
GCU London (1)  
GSBS (3)  
SEBE (3)  
SHLS (5)

### **Contextualised Admissions Policy**

15.136 Considered: The updated Contextualised Admissions Policy.  
**(Doc APC15/31/2)**

15.137 Reported: The Contextualised Admissions Policy was introduced in July 2015. The policy defined the basket of measures to be taken into consideration when making final decisions at confirmation in August 2015. The updated policy would allow the basket of measures to be used when making initial offers on applications.

15.138 Approved The updated Contextualised Admissions Policy.

### **Timetabling Policy**

15.139 Considered: Timetabling and Room Booking Policy.  
**(Doc APC15/29/2)**

15.140 Reported: By the Academic Registrar that the policy had been updated to reflect feedback from the sector and it would enable students' personalised

timetables to be available on their own personal mobile devices.

15.141 Discussed: The Student President welcomed the Policy and the reinforcement of ensuring that Wednesday afternoon was available for sports, volunteering and participatory activities. In response to a question regarding students' views on teaching between 5pm and 6pm it was reported any inconvenience associated with this timing was mitigated by the early publication of timetables that enabled students to make arrangements for any caring or work responsibilities.

15.142 Approved: The Timetabling and Room Booking Policy.

### **Higher Degrees Committee**

15.143 Approved: A recommendation from the Higher Degrees Committee for the award of 4 PhDs and one Prof.D. **(Doc S15/43/1)**

### **Honorary Appointments**

15.144 Approved: The following honorary appointments awarded by the University Executive Board:

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>POST</b>	<b>FIELD OF EXPERTISE</b>
Prof Helen Lingard	Visiting Professor	Construction Management
Derek Lovelock	Honorary Professor	Business Engagement
Diane Elson	Honorary Professor	WISE
Ian Grabiner	Honorary Professor	Business Engagement
Kenneth Cole	Honorary Professor	Fashion Executive Education
Nick Robertson	Honorary Professor	Fashion, Retail & Marketing
Prof. Jackie Tombs	Emeritus Professor	Social Sciences & Criminology

### **Chair's Action**

15.145 Note: That the following was approved via Chair's Action since the last meeting of Senate:

#### **Senate Disciplinary Committee Membership**

Approval of the appointment of Dr L Walsh and Ms K Thomson to fill School of Health and Life Science academic staff vacancies on the Senate Disciplinary Committee. **(Doc S15/53/1)**

**PART C (FOR INFORMATION)**  
**DOCUMENTS DISTRIBUTED BY EMAIL ONLY**

**Senate and Senate Standing Committee Calendar of Meetings: Session 2016/2017**

15.146 Received: The Senate and Senate Standing Committees Calendar of Meetings for Session 2016/2017. **(Doc S15/46/1)**

**Academic Appointments**

15.147 Received: A paper on academic appointments made since the last meeting of Senate. **(Doc S15/47/1)**

**Notification of AcceleRATE Conferments**

15.148 Received: A paper informing of GCU Staff achieving Professional Recognition of Teaching and Supporting Student Learning (UKPSF 2011) from 2013 – 2015. **(Doc S15/49/1)**

**Academic Policy Committee**

15.149 Received: The confirmed minute of the meeting of the Academic Policy Committee held on 20th November 2015. **(Doc APC15/27/1)**

**University Research Committee**

15.150 Received: The confirmed minute of the meeting of the University Research Committee held on 11th November 2015. **(REC15/30/1)**

**International Committee**

15.151 Received: The confirmed minute of the meetings of the International Committee held on 12th November 2015. **(IC15/41/1)**

**School Board/Boards of Senate Minutes**

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

- i. School of Health and Life Sciences held on:  
30<sup>th</sup> October 2015 **(Doc HLS/SB/15/022)**
- ii. London Campus Board held on:

2<sup>nd</sup> December 2015 (Doc GCUL/SB/15/17/1 )

**University Court**

15.153 Received: The highlights of the meeting of University Court held on 26th November 2015.(Doc S15/44/1)

**Date of Next Meeting**

15.154 Received: Notification that the next scheduled meeting of University Senate will be held on Friday 3rd June 2016 at 09:30 Hrs in CEE06/07.

**Closing Remarks**

The Chair informed Senate that Mrs Mary Henaghan, Head of Quality Enhancement and former Clerk to Senate, would shortly be retiring from the University after a total of 33 years' service. On behalf of the University the Principal thanked Mrs Henaghan for her service to the University and wished her well for a long and happy retirement.