

UNIVERSITY SENATE

Minutes of the meeting held on 14th June 2013

- PRESENT:** Dr N Andrew, Ms D Borrett (SA), Mrs H Brown, Ms I Bruce, Professor I Cameron, Dr D Chalmers, Dr V Charissis, Mr Ed Clack, Mr A Corbett, (SA), Dr J Edwards Dr H Gallagher, Professor P Gillies (Chair), Professor D Greenhalgh, Mrs P Hamilton, Ms J Hulme, Professor V James Mrs C Khamisha, Professor J Lennon, Dr M MacDonald, Mr Ben McConville, Mr V McKay, Ms J Main, Professor M Mannion, Professor J Marshall, Ms A Nimmo, Dr Susan Ogden, Mr Brian Pillans, Dr R Ruthven Professor K Stanton, Professor B Steves, Mr I Stewart, Dr Ian Trushell, Professor R Whittaker, Professor J Wilson.
- APOLOGIES:** Professor T Buggy, Mr Alex Craig, Mr Graham Dalziel, Mr S Dobbie, Dr R Emmanuel Ms T Findlay, Ms C Fyfe, Ms A Gasteen, Mrs J Greig, Mr A Killick, Mr T Kilpatrick, Mr G Milne, Professor J Tombs, Professor V Webster, Professor J Woodburn.
- OBSERVERS:** Ms T Boyle, T Brian (Court), Neill Clark (VP Education Elect SA), Kenneth Fleming (PG) , Matthew Lamb (Student President Elect), Audrey McCulloch (Dir. SE), Wes Smith (P&P), C Webster (OD) and C Wilson (G&AQ).
- BY INVITATION:** Professor K Gartland, 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 fourth and final meeting of Senate in session 2012/13 including new members Irene Bruce (Head of Governance and Quality Enhancement), Ben McConville (Head of Department, Social Sciences, Media and Journalism), and Gerry Milne, (Acting Chief Financial Officer). The Chair also welcomed and introduced the Student President Elect Matthew Lamb and the VP

Education Neill Clark to Senate (as observers).

Minutes

- 13.33 Considered: The unconfirmed draft minutes of the meeting of Senate held on 15th March 2013 (**Doc S12/51/1**)
- 13.34 Resolved: That the minutes be confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting subject to:
13.01: Academic Calendar Review; amend the minute to read 10.84% of students responded to the Students' Association survey.

Matters Arising

- 13.35 Considered: Any matters arising on the minutes not otherwise provided for on the agenda.
- 13.36 Reported: (i) A Senate member sought clarification on the proposed refurbishment of the Hamish Wood Building and staff concerns that open plan office working arrangements were being planned.
- 13.37 Noted: By the Principal that the University had no policy in relation to open plan office working. The PVC L&T and Dean of GSBS advised that there was no intention to proceed on open plan working, however space constraints may require office sharing arrangements.
- (ii) Arising on 13.3; Review and Rebranding of Consideration of Special Factors – Senate was advised that the SLWG had considered Senate's comments on the proposal and had responded to Senate members (via email) to confirm the outcomes. The new process for Mitigating Circumstances is now approved.
- (iii) Arising on 13.16 Portfolio Refresh – Senate was advised that this item will now be considered by APC at its meeting in September 2013 and thereafter Senate in October. Schools are currently completing a template to ensure consistency of approach for committee consideration of proposals.
- (iv) HEAR – Senate was advised that there has been a delay in producing the pilot HEAR in May 2013 and that the pilot will now take place in November 2013. This is due to the provision of a Unit 4 update to the MIS.

Principal and Vice Chancellor and Executive Board Report

- 13.38 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 S12/63/1**).

In addition to the above report the Principal expanded on the item on international activities and the Forbes Women's Summit to include an opportunity to work with the Ashoka U universities on social entrepreneurship. The PVCL&T and the Director of GCU Lead will be initiating this development.

Draft Strategy for Learning

- 13.39 Considered: The draft Strategy for Learning 2013-2020. **(Doc.S12/64/1)**
- 13.40 Reported: By the PVC Learning and Teaching that there had been wide consultation on the development of the strategy. It builds on the previous LTAS and aligns with the University's key strategic goals; will contribute to the achievement of the university's key performance indicators and the SFC Outcome Agreement.

By the Director of GCU Lead that the SfL centres on the learner and aims to personalise the student experience. It brings a distinctive approach to learning and teaching. The ten design principles will be embedded in undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Enablers have been designed to achieve the strategy however it requires buy in from all participants. An operational plan is being developed to deliver the strategy with the provisional title of "Engage".

- 13.41 Discussed: Members were unanimous in their support for the SfL and commended the development team. The following comments were made:
- (i) Page 9 – with reference to GCU Online is there a specific move away from our current offering and how with this be progressed?
 - (ii) Page 13 – 5.1 with reference to the need to invest in the creation of and further development of staff capability and technology, how will this be resourced?
 - (iii) Page 13 – amend the list of Measures of Performance to include Application and Enrolment from MD20 students.
 - (iv) Page 18 – with reference to articulation, global learning and student mobility, it was acknowledged that curriculum structure will enhance this; however the University may now wish to adopt the European Credit Transfer (ECT) system to further enhance recognition of awards, mobility and global employment opportunities for students.

The PVC L&T advised Senate in respect of :

- (i) School consideration of portfolios will identify on-line provision requirements. The extent to which colleagues are using online learning should also be measured. The University will form a steering group to consider requirements and how to move forward.
- (ii) At this stage the level of resourcing is not known however it may not be primarily technical but staff development requirements.
- (iii) The inclusion of the MD20 indicator on Application and Enrolment was welcomed and will reinforce our outcome

statement.

- (iv) The comments in relation to the adoption of ECT scheme were welcomed and will be considered in due course.

13.42 Resolved: That the Strategy for Learning is approved subject to the appropriate amendments outlined above.

Student Experience Framework

13.43 Considered: The GCU Student Experience Framework 2013-2017. **(Doc S12/56/1)**

13.44 Reported: By the Director of the Student Experience that the Framework had been developed as an institutional level document that sets out the strategic direction for the delivery of the GCU student experience. The Framework has been produced as a result of a year-long development process involving staff and students, culminating in the Student Experience Summit in January 2013. It sets out what students can expect from the University and what, in turn, the University expects from our students (the GCU Commitment). It also outlines what our key priority student experience themes are for 2013-17 and how these will be delivered and measured. The Framework is closely aligned with the University's other key strategies which together support the delivery of the institutional goals and KPIs as outlined in the Strategy for 2015. A concise applicant/student version of the framework focussing on the GCU Commitment will be developed for launch in September 2013. In addition a Student Experience Forum will be established and Student Experience web pages will be live from September 2013.

13.45 Discussed: Members welcomed the paper and noted the extensive consultation that had been undertaken in the development. The following areas of comment emerged from discussions including:

- (i) Page 4, - bullet point 4, commitment could be stronger. Suggest "stimulate student to engage" in place of "help".
- (ii) Page 7, - reference to students working part-time. Replace with "students with work commitments" to better reflect the GCU student population.
- (iii) Page 9, - bullet point 4, reference to "aspirations of young people". It was explained that this refers specifically to the Caledonian Club. Suggest an additional bullet point to capture mature student population.
- (iv) Add the PVC L&T to the membership (ex officio) of the Steering Group.

13.46 Resolved: That the Student Experience Framework 2013-17 is approved subject to the above minor amendments.

REF Update

13.47 Considered: A summary of Unit of Assessment REF 2014 preparations as at May 2013. **(Doc. S12/73/1)**

13.48 Reported: By the PVC Research that the summary report is an interim health check on the REF submission preparations. The report outlines the key

elements of each Unit of Assessment submission which is based on a number of factors including quality of output via external peer review, impact of case study and overall fit of story with GCU. Overall quality across the board has improved with the highest rating GPA at 2.6 and an average of 2 across the submission. It is acknowledged that while there will be no funding for GPA less than 3, the importance of the REF in terms of reputational advantage and ability to attract high quality research active staff/students and position in league tables cannot be underestimated.

13.49 Discussion: Senate noted the update report and commended the very professional handling of the UoA work in terms of support and quality of advice provided. This has had a real impact in moving forward. Senate was advised that the aim to further expand and re-shape our research profile by increasing the research student population from 200 to 500 currently and the target of 1000 research active students by 2020.

13.50 Resolved: That Senate notes the REF update report.

Postgraduate Research Student Experience Thematic Audit

13.51 Considered: The report on the thematic audit of the postgraduate research student experience March 2013. **(Doc. S12/61/1)**

13.52 Reported: By Professor Gartland that the purpose of the audit was to:-

- (i) Ensure that the academic quality assurance systems and procedures and relevant approved academic policies adopted throughout the University are efficient, effective and sufficient to deliver intended outcomes.
- (ii) Fulfil an enhancement function through the dissemination of information on good practice throughout the University and, where weaknesses are identified, to require and/or recommend appropriate action for improvement.

The process was aligned to the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education, specifically Part B; Assuring and Enhancing Academic Degrees Chapter B11; Research Degrees; Elements 5 – 13. The panel met with a range of staff and students and also reviewed and considered supporting documentation submitted by the Graduate School, Academic Schools, Research Centres and Admissions. A number of commendable good practice examples were found as shown in appendix 2. Enhancement actions are recommended and these are shown in table 3 with suggested lead responsibility and date for resolution.

13.53 Discussion: By the Director of the Graduate School that she welcomed the report and that it gave a clear picture to all involved. Many of the actions identified have already been completed. The report was commended by members and the following comments were provided:-

- i) the role of Research Institutes in the audit
- ii) the possibility of PhD student to have a shadow academic school
- iii) the appointment of a personal tutor for a research student

- iv) Page 17 (12.1) with respect to academic staff workload planning, delete “consider” and replace with “The University should take appropriate account...”

In response it was explained that:

- i) Research Institutes were considered through the various staff that provided evidence during the thematic audit. Paragraph 9 of the report should be amended to show explicit reference to Research Institutes.
- ii) It was confirmed that research students are affiliated to appropriate Schools via the School Research Committee.
- iii) The suggestion of a personal tutor was welcomed however it would require to be balanced against having two independent Professors of Studies.

13.54 Resolved: That Senate approved the report and recommended actions on the postgraduate research student experience.

Changes to Higher Degrees Regulations

13.55 Considered: Changes to the University Higher Degree regulations and guidelines. **(Doc S12/74/1)**

13.56 Reported: By the PVC Research that the changes to the regulations were requested to speed up the registration process and make more explicit the progression between MPhil and PhD. The aim is to enhance PhD student progression and completion rates and to increase PhD student numbers. The maximum length of study will also change from 5 years to 4 years. In addition it is recommended that the attainment of a PhD by previous publication is expanded to include external applicants.

13.57 Discussed: Senate welcomed the proposed changes without any further amendment.

13.58 Resolved: That the proposed changes to the Higher Degrees Regulations are approved.

Complaints Handling Procedure

13.59 Considered: A revised complaints handling procedure taking into account the Model Complaint Handling Procedure for Higher Education, published by the SPSO in December 2012 **(Doc: S12/65/1)**.

13.60 Reported: By the Director of the Student Experience that the Model Complaint Handling Procedure (MCHP) for the Higher Education sector was published in December 2012 under section 16B of the SPSO Act 2002 (as amended by the Public Services Reform Act (Scotland) Act 2010. Under section 16C of that amended Act, all Universities were notified that the MCHP applied to them with effect from 19th December 2012. All HEIs must adopt and implement the MCHP by 30th August 2013.

In recommending the revised procedure to Senate it should be noted that it conforms to the very prescriptive guidelines laid out by the SPSO and that there is very little scope for amendment. The main changes to note are as follows:

- (i) The requirement to monitor, report and publish information on complaints data. This includes quarterly reports to APC, Senate and Court and an annual report to the SPSO
- (ii) The resolution of frontline complaints within 5 days and formal complaints within 20 days
- (iii) The procedure covers all students and members of the public and complaints related to services offered by external providers on behalf of the University or any other outsourced service.

In rolling out the new procedure the following actions will be put in place:

- (i) The requirement for a programme of briefing/training and staff awareness raising across the University
- (ii) The need to establish appropriate processes within Schools and Support Departments to accurately log, monitor and report on frontline complaints
- (iii) The necessity to develop an appropriate IT system to capture complaints data which meets the publishing and reporting requirement of the MCHP.

13.61 Discussed: Senate members sought clarification on the following points:

- (i) Clarity on what is a complaint is required. Students also use the other channels to resolve issues usually via the Student Staff Consultative Group or Programme Board via the class representative.
- (ii) The deadlines for resolution of complaints appear to be very tight, how will this be managed
- (iii) The management of student complaints while on practice placement.

In response it was confirmed that in respect of :

- (i) Clarity on the handling of frontline complaints will be provided during the School/Departmental briefing sessions
- (ii) It is acknowledged that the deadline for the resolution of complaints is very tight. If after the first year of operation it is unworkable this will be taken forward via sector wide forums to the SPSO.
- (iii) Students on practice placement may raise a complaint under the GCU procedure.

13.62 Resolved: That Senate notes and approves the revised the complaints handling procedure.

Key Information Sets (KIS)

- 13.63 Considered: An update on the Key Information Sets (KIS) content for the 2013 KIS return. **(Doc.S12/68/1)**
- 13.64 Reported: By the Acting Director of Policy and Planning that the return will be submitted in August 2013 and published on the Unistats website. KIS previews for all programmes will be made available to GCU staff on the Policy and Planning pages of GCU. There are strict compliance guidelines on both internal and external data and we have no control over data relating to areas such as DHLE and NSS which will be added by HESA in July 2013.
- 13.65 Discussed: Senate members sought clarification on the following:
- (i) Page 1 (bullet point 2) and Page 2 (13 bullet point 1) what is the steer for GCU programmes more examinations or more coursework based assessment to be in line with the sector median.
 - (ii) Paragraph 9 (2nd bullet point) 12 programmes offer an optional full year abroad, why not all programmes.
- In response it was noted that :
- (i) In terms of assessment we need to tie this into the Strategy for Learning and become more tactical. We also need to recognise what is happening across the sector but would not want this to drive pedagogy.
 - (ii) The availability of study abroad opportunities needs to increase and this should be taken forward via the portfolio refresh
- 13.66 Resolved: That Senate noted the updated report on the KIS submission.

Senate Disciplinary Committee

- 13.67 Considered: An overview report of the work carried out by the Senate Disciplinary Committee in Session 2011/12 **(Doc. S12/59/1)**
- 13.68 Reported: By Mr Ian Stewart (Senate member and member of the SDC) that Senate was invited to note the report, the number of offences and the seriousness of offences. The SDC looks at each case on its merits. It should also be noted that a number of offences are made by overseas students and perhaps the university requires to consider appropriate support and transition arrangements for student from different cultures.
- 13.69 Discussion: It was noted by Senate that the number of offences remained low in terms of the student population. It was also noted that there was a typographical error in appendix 1 where a SEBE programme has been attributed to the GSBS.
- 13.70 Resolved: That Senate noted the report.

Student Representation on Senate

- 13.71 Considered: A paper proposing additional student representation on Senate. **(Doc. S12/70/1)**
- 13.72 Reported: By the Chair that this paper represents a preliminary discussion on additional student representation on Senate. In terms of the Review of Higher Education Governance (not finalised) which recommends 10% student representation on academic bodies, GCU is currently in line with this. Students need to be empowered and this Senate wants to create a forum for discussion.
- 13.73 Discussion: By the VP Education for the Students' Association that any opportunity to increase student representation is welcomed. This proposal recommends an additional two student members elected by the Students' Association. The student population is currently represented by two students on Senate and this is a lot of work to cover in ensuring good communication and representing the student voice. Two more representatives will not make this perfect but it will help to make representation more effective.

Comments from other Senate members included:

- (i) Additional representation will help to develop student leaders. School Officers could be provided with this opportunity.
- (ii) If additional membership is under consideration it should be targeted at specific areas. These included an additional student member to represent research students; part time students; international students or direct entrant population.
- (iii) Increased student representation is welcomed and GCU should be the leader in the sector given the background of our student population.
- (iv) In considering this proposal there is an opportunity for the Students' Association to review representation at all levels.

In summary the Chair thanked members for views. In light of the discussion the Students' Association will take the opportunity to review the paper and resubmit a revised version to the next meeting of Senate. The membership of Senate is governed by the Statutory Instrument and the appropriate advice mechanisms to effect change in composition will be considered.

- 13.74 Resolved: That Senate notes the position.

Student Attendance and Engagement Policy (Research Students)

- 13.75 Considered: A new student attendance policy for research students. **(Doc.S12/72/1)**
- 13.76 Reported: By the Head of SAS that the new student attendance policy for research students, outlines responsibilities of students and staff and also the University level processes where attendance and engagement becomes a concern. The policy forms part of our overarching strategic policy for student experience and support as well as ensuring strategic compliance with external stakeholders, such as UKBA.

- 13.77 Discussed: By the Director of the Graduate School that she welcomed the policy and that it had received through consultation during its development and provided clarity for all students and staff.
- 13.78 Resolved: That the Student Attendance and Engagement Policy (Research Students) be approved.

Feedback Enhancement Group (FEG)

- 13.79 Considered: A progress report on activities of the Feedback Enhancement Group **(Doc.S12/66/1)**
- 13.80 Reported: By Professor Gartland, Chair of the FEG, that the paper represented a summary of activities and actions carried out. The key activities included:
- (i) the piloting of the EvaSys Module Feedback project
 - (ii) the delivery of bespoke Feedback for Future Learning seminars to students in both Glasgow and London campuses.
 - (iii) The launch of the Feedback for Future Learning website
 - (iv) The launch of the Feedback for Future Learning GCU Learn community
- 13.81 Discussed: By the PVC Learning and Teaching that APC had considered the report on the EvaSys pilot on module feedback and that it was resolved that implementation of the module feedback tool was subject to further consideration.
- 13.82 Resolved: That Senate thanked Professor Gartland and noted the progress report.

Honorary and Visiting Appointments

13.83	Approved:	The undernoted Honorary and Visiting appointments			
		Title	Post	Field of expertise	School
		Dr Andrew Smith	Honorary /Senior Lecturer	Leading research in the field of Eyecare Economics	GSBS
		John McNeill	Honorary Professor	Police Investigations and Review Commissioner	GSBS
		Prof Malcolm McDonald	Honorary Professor	Marketing	GSBS
		Prof Matt Sanders	Visiting Professor	Prof of Clinical Psychology, Director of the Parenting and Family Support Centre and Founder of the Triple P – Positive Parenting Program	SHLS

Academic Appeals Committee Revised Membership

13.84 Approved: A Chair's Action on the revised membership of the Academic Appeals Committee for the period to July 2016. **(Doc S12/54/1)**

Higher Degrees Committee

13.85 Approved: A Chair's Action on the confirmed awards from the Higher Degrees Committee of 18 PhDs and 2 MPhils. **(Doc S12/52/1)**

Additions to the University Awards Portfolio

13.86 Approved A Chair's Action on Award titles for inclusion in the University Awards Portfolio. **(Doc.S12/67/1)**

Senate Disciplinary Committee Membership

13.87 Approved: A proposal to approve an extraordinary extension to the membership term of seven academic staff members of the Senate Disciplinary Committee (Doc.S12/71/1)

GCU London Campus Board

13.88 Approved: The Terms of Reference and Composition of the GCU London Campus Board (Doc.S12/62/1)

Enhancement Led Institutional Review

13.89 Noted: A paper advising on the timeframe and recommended actions in advance of the third cycle of QAA ELIR scheduled to take place in session 2014/15. (Doc.S12/57/1)

Senate and Senate Standing Committee Calendar of Meetings Session 2013/14

13.90 Noted: The Senate and Senate Standing Committee Calendar of Meetings for session 2013-2014. (Doc.S1253/1)

Equality Outcomes Framework

13.91 Noted: The Equality Outcomes Framework which outlines the University's commitment to mainstreaming equality and diversity. **(Doc.S12/60/1)**

Enhancement Led Internal Subject Review (ELISR)

13.92 Noted The report and action plan of the ELISR of the Department of Business and Management **(Doc.S12/68/1)**

Student Complaints Overview

13.93 Noted: An overview report on student complaints received and considered in Session 2011-12. **(Doc.S12/75/1)**

Academic Staff Appointments

13.94 Received: Notification of recent academic staff appointments **(Doc. S12/55/1)**

University Court

13.95 Received: The highlights of the meeting of University Court held on 25th April 2013. **(Doc S12/76/1)**

Research Committee

13.96 Received: The confirmed minutes of the meeting of the Research Committee held on;
(i) 23rd January 2013. **(Doc. REC12/22/1)**
(ii) 10th April 2013. **(Doc.REC12/29/1)**

School Board Minutes

13.97 Received: Confirmed School Board minutes from the undernoted meetings of School Boards:
(i) GSBS 21st November 2012 **(Doc.GSBS/SB/12/02/15)**
(ii) GSBS 20th February 2013 **(Doc.GSBS/SB/03/17)**

Academic Policy Committee Minutes

13.98 Received The confirmed minutes from the meeting of the Academic Policy Committee held on 6th March 2013 **(Doc.APC12/49/2)**.

Equality and Diversity Committee

13.99 Received: The confirmed minutes from the under noted meetings of the Equality and Diversity Committee held on:
(i) 30th March 2012 **(Doc. EDC12/01/1)**
(ii) 13th June 2012 **(Doc. EDC12/02/1)**
(iii) 28th September 2012 **(Doc. EDC12/03/1)**
(iv) 10th December 2012 **(Doc. EDC12/04/01)**

Academic Calendar 2013/14 to 2017/18

14.00 Received: The new layout Academic Calendar for session 2013/14 – 2017/18 **(Doc.S12/58/1)**

Update on 2013 League Tables

14.01 Received: An update report for Policy and Planning on the University's performance in 2013 league tables. **(Doc.S12/69/1)**

Senate Members out of Tenure

14.02 Noted: The Chair extended her thanks to all outgoing Senate members who have now completed their period of tenure for their contribution and participation in Senate as follows:
Catriona Khamisha (SHLS);
Carla Fyfe Student President (SA)
Danielle Borrett VP Education (SA)

Date of Next Meeting

14.03 Received: Notification that the next scheduled meeting of University Senate will be held on Friday 11th October 2013 at 09.30 hours.

