

UNIVERSITY SENATE

Minutes of the meeting held on 7th October 2016

PRESENT: Dr T Boutaleb, Prof I Cameron, Dr D Chalmers, Prof. C Donaldson, Dr M Ferguson, Dr H Gallagher, Mr M Gallagher, Prof. P Gillies(Chair), Dr A Grant, Drs J Gregersen-Hermans, Prof. T Hilton, Ms J Hulme, Mrs C Hulsen, Prof. L Kilbride, Mr A Killick, Mr S Lopez, Dr D Lukic, Ms J Main, Dr S McChlery, Mr B McConville, Ms J McGillivray, Prof. S McMeekin, Mr A Middleton, Prof. J Miller, Mr V McKay, Prof. A Morgan, Dr A Nimmo, Dr S Ogden, Dr A Pierotti, Mr B Pillans, Ms L Ramage, Ms D Rankin, Mr R Ruthven, Prof A Simmers, Prof. B Steves, Mr I Stewart, Ms K van Dongen, Miss J Waite, Prof. V Webster, Prof. R Whittaker.

APOLOGIES: Mrs J Broadhurst, Dr D Chalmers, Ms L Cuthbertson Mr T Kilpatrick, Dr C Miller.

OBSERVERS: Dr H Bassil-Morozow, (SSMJ) Mrs L Clark (Governance), Mr K Campbell (SA), Mr K Fleming (PG), Dr E Reather (Exec Support), Mrs K Roden (S&P), Mr K Ward (SA), Ms S Young (Court).

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs Deborah Donnet, Secretary to Senate, Mr A Lui, Prof. N Andrew.

CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chair welcomed colleagues to the first meeting of the 2016/17 academic year. She announced that the University had very recently been awarded Athena Swan Bronze and thanked all staff who had worked hard in preparing the submission.

Following a request, it was agreed to raise the following items from Part C for discussion:

- Item C2 Academic Policy Committee Minutes of 11th May 2016 (**Doc APC15/64/1**).
- Item C3 University Research Committee Minutes of 18th May 2016 (**Doc REC15/46/1**).
- Item C4 International Committee Minutes of 12th May 2016 (**Doc IC15/86/2**).

There was also a request to defer consideration of item B7 The Quality Enhancement and Assurance Handbook (**Doc APC16/06/02**) as it had been circulated three days prior to Senate and as the document was 130 pages long, it was suggested that Senators would not have had sufficient time to consider the document. Following discussion it was agreed to consider this item at this meeting as although the document was large, it contained revisions to an existing document that were not considered to be contentious and there had been extensive consultation prior to completion of the document, including consideration by both the Academic Policy Committee and International Committee. Any specific issues

that required further consideration could be brought back to the next meeting if necessary.

PART A (FOR CONSIDERATION)

Minutes

- 16.01 Considered: The unconfirmed draft minute of the meeting of Senate held on 3rd June 2016. **(Doc S15/55/1)**
- 16.02 Resolved: That the minutes be approved as an accurate record.

Matters Arising

- 16.03 Considered: Matters Arising Briefing Note **(DocS16/16/01)**. In relation to the update on the Equality and Diversity Annual report which informed that the requested additional analysis of the equal pay audit data would be undertaken alongside the next equal pay audit due for completion by April 2017, the Chair requested that this deeper analysis of the data be undertaken prior to the next meeting of Senate in December and reported back at that meeting.

- 16.04 Reported Arising on 15.160 Principal and Vice Chancellor and Executive Board Report GCU New York

The Principal informed Senate that significant progress had been made in the licence application and this in part could be attributed to the engagement of a lobbyist. Over 100 New York institutions had been consulted on the application and arising from this there had been 3 objections and one note of concern. Following a meeting with one of the objectors, Fashion Institute of Technology, their objection had been withdrawn and they had written to the Board of Regents, who will make the final decision on the application, indicating their support and that they would be working with GCU NY on the Fair Fashion Initiative. One other objection had been received on the grounds of unfair competition, however this was not an eligible ground for objection.

The Vice President of GCU NY was due to meet with the Chair of the Board of Regents and this was considered to be a hugely positive move. Additionally, a number of letters of advocacy had been sent on the University's behalf by influential individuals who supported the University's work in New York. Prior to making a decision the Board of Regents would undertake a site visit and it was hoped that this would happen before Christmas.

Principal and Vice Chancellor and Executive Board Report

- 16.05 Considered: A report from the Principal & Vice-Chancellor and Executive Board to update members on substantive items considered by the Executive Board since the last meeting of Senate. **(Doc S16/1/1)**

16.06 Reported: The SFC issued its guidance on the development of the new round of Outcome Agreements on 5 October 2016. The guidance was informed by the Interim Letter of Guidance from the Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science to the SFC which outlined the high level strategic objectives for the university and college sectors and the SFC. It stated that a further letter of guidance will be published to confirm budget allocations following the conclusion of the process.

The governmental strategic objectives for the higher education sector were:

- High quality effective learning;
- Widening access and implementation of the Commission on Widening Access recommendations;
- Learning which prepares people for work and prioritises provision that meets known skills gaps;
- Internationally competitive and impactful research;
- Effective knowledge exchange and innovation;
- The underrepresentation of women on the governing bodies and at senior levels;
- Gender balance amongst student intakes for key subjects, including STEM subjects.

By 31st October, the University must complete a self-evaluation of the current Outcome Agreement. An early draft of the new Outcome Agreement must be done by 16th December, with the final version agreed by the end of March 2017.

A meeting with the SFC was scheduled for 18th October and the new Outcome Agreement would be developed in collaboration with colleagues and consultation with the Students' Association. Senate would be kept informed of progress.

16.07 Agreed: In response to a request for discussions on the implications of Brexit, it was agreed that a report prepared by Universities Scotland be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Senate Annual Report 2015/16

16.08 Considered: The Senate Annual Report for the academic year 2015/16 **(Doc S16/7/1)**

16.09 Reported: In response to a request that in light of the HE Governance Act, Senate should consider how well it undertakes its own business, Senate was advised that there was a legal requirement that the Court undertake an effectiveness review and one was scheduled for early 2017. It was proposed for the first time to include an effectiveness review of Senate within the Court review and work was currently underway to develop methodology.

16.10 Resolved: To approve the Senate Annual Report.

Academic Policy Committee Annual Report 2015/16

16.11 Considered: The Academic Policy Committee Annual Report for 2015/16
(Doc APC16/07/01)

16.12 Reported: The DVC Academic reminded Senate that the Academic Policy Committee also had responsibility for academic practice as outlined in the Committee's terms of reference.

16.13 Discussed In response to a question about the new Timetabling and Room Booking Policy, Senate was reassured that a review of the new system was underway and all the issues that had been highlighted would be explored. The process would continue to be monitored and further consultation undertaken and Senate will be kept informed of progress

16.14 In relation to the Academic Policy Committee (APC) minutes of 11th May 2016 **(Doc APC15/64/1)**, which had been elevated for discussion from Part C, clarification was sought on the INTO Joint Venture. The PVC and VP International informed Senate, that the INTO JV was an important source of international students however it had been acknowledged that improvements from both partners were required to ensure success. A considerable amount of work had been undertaken with the JV and a recent JV Board meeting acknowledged the progress made and positive prospects for the future. Given the increasing pressure across the sector on the recruitment of international students, the revitalisation of the JV was welcomed by both parties.

16.15 A further question on the APC minutes of 11th May 2016 related to the introduction of a pre-masters, it was explained by the PVC and VP International that this had arisen as a result of a strategy day with the Associate Deans International and the Associate Deans Learning and Teaching Quality and it could be a significant route to increasing post-graduate international recruitment. A small pilot was currently underway. It was further reported that the University was working with INTO Direct to utilise their worldwide recruitment and liaison resources to help with the recruitment of international students to GCU.

16.16 Resolved: To approve the Academic Policy Committee Annual Report.

University Research Committee Annual Report 2015/16

16.17 Considered: The University Research Committee Annual Report for 2015/16

(Doc REC16/02/02)

- 16.18 Reported: In relation to the University Research Committee Minutes of 18th May 2016 **(Doc REC15/46/1)** which had been elevated for discussion from Part C, clarification was sought regarding the University's approach to the STERN review. The Acting PVC and VP Research and Enterprise reported that there had been a report submitted to Court reviewing the impact of STERN and that this would be circulated to Senate members. Due to time pressures it had not been possible to submit this report to Senate prior to Court.
- 16.19 Resolved: To approve the University Research Committee Annual Report.

International Committee Annual Report 2015/16

- 16.20 Considered: The International Committee Annual Report for 2015/16. **(Doc IC16/18/02)**
- 16.21 Reported: In response to a question regarding staff mobility, the PVC and VP International advised that having staff with international experienced and who were able to deliver an international teaching experience was crucial. One key objective for the current year was a refresh of the International Strategy and focus on strengthening the international skills and experience of staff would be a top level goal of that the revised Strategy.
- 16.22 With reference to the increase in visa refusals that had been raised in both the Annual report and the International Committee Minutes of 12th May 2016 **(Doc IC15/86/2)** which had been raised from Part C for discussion, Senate was advised that this was an issue that had affected the whole sector, and lobbying of UKVI was underway.
- 16.23 Further information on the Saudi Arabian government's decision to limit the number of fully funded studentships was sought and Senate was informed that a number of institutions and programmes (generally where the programme to be delivered was not ranked in the top 50 in the UK) were no longer eligible for funding. Extensive consultations with the British Council had taken place, and they were currently advising HEIs to maintain their relationships with the Saudi Government. It was stressed that instances such as this, highlighted the importance of international diversification and not being reliant on a small number of large markets.
- 16.24 Resolved: To approve the International Committee Annual Report.

Equality and Diversity Committee Annual Report 2015/16

16.25 Resolved: To approve the Equality and Diversity Committee Annual Report. **(Doc S16/17/1)**

Annual Report 2014/15: School Boards and Boards of Senate

16.26 Considered: The Annual School Board Reports from:-

- School of Health and Life Sciences **(Doc S16/2/1)**
- School of Engineering and Built Environment **(Doc S16/3/1)**
- Glasgow School for Business and Society **(Doc S16/4/1)**
- GCU London School Board **(Doc S15/5/1)**
- GCU Lead **(Doc S16/6/1)**

16.27 Discussed: It was noted that only the GCU Lead report was accompanied by an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA). It was considered that the annual reports themselves did not need an EIA however, there should be a section reporting on gender equality within each School report in the future.

16.28 Reported In response to a question regarding the remit of the Academic Development Committee as outlined in the Glasgow School for Business and Society Annual report, where it stated that this Committee “approved” new programme developments, it was clarified that this approval was at School level only and that formal approval was still required in the usual way through Academic Policy Committee. It was requested therefore that the wording of the report, and the terms of reference be changed from “approve” to “recommend”. There were also concerns regarding the balance of membership between academic and management staff on this Committee and it was noted that this was under review.

16.29 A question was asked in relation to the membership of the GCU London School Board where it was noted that there were “Up to 7 *ex officio* members elected by and from among the academic staff of the School”. It was explained that representatives could not be both elected and *ex officio* and it was requested that the membership be clarified.

16.30 It was highlighted that the main function of the GCU Lead Board was to ratify the recommendations of the recognition of the panel for the conferment of professional recognition in teaching and supporting learning, and this was now included in the Learning and Teaching Sub-Committee’s revised Terms of Reference agreed at Academic Policy Committee on 14th September 2016. It was therefore requested that Senate agree to disband the GCU Lead Board.

16.31 Resolved: a) That all future School Board reports include a section on gender equality.
b) That the wording of the GSBS School Board report regarding the Academic Development Committee be revised as outlined at

- 16.28 above.
- c) That further clarification regarding the membership of the GCU London School Board be provided as outlined at 16.29 above.
 - d) To disband the GCU Lead School Board as detailed at 16.30 above.
 - e) That future School Board reports should aim to bring alive the work of the School in a more compelling way.
 - f) Approve the School Boards Annual Reports for 2015/16.

National Student Survey 2015

- 16.32 Considered: An overview of the results of the 2015 National Student Survey. (**Doc S16/6/1**)
- 16.33 Reported: By the Director of Strategy and Planning that the University had not performed as strongly as expected in this year's NSS and had experienced a decrease in six of the eight categories.
- Overall satisfaction has decreased by 2% to 83%
 - Satisfaction with teaching had decreased by 2% to 83%
 - Assessment and feedback remained at 66%
 - Academic support has decreased by 2% to 78%
 - Organisation and management had decreased by 1% to 73%
 - Learning resources had increased by 1% to 88%
 - Personal development had decreased by 1% to 84%
 - The Students' Association had decreased by 2% to 68%
- There were a number of programmes that had performed particularly well, with 24 programmes achieving 90% satisfaction or above. At School level there was some variation in overall performance with SHLS performance decreasing by 5% to 84%, SEBE improved by 1% to 80% and GSBS has remained at 86%. An in depth analysis of the results had been undertaken, including the open comments provided by participants.
- 16.34 The Principal stressed that the disappointing results demonstrated that the University needed to implement changes now to improve the student experience so these could be reflected in the 2017 survey.
- 16.35 The DVC Academic provided examples of work already underway with staff and students to address issues raised in the survey: there would be a pause in week 7 to allow all module leaders to provide feedback; there would be whole year surveys using the questions to be used in the 2017 NSS; and discussions would continue around teaching excellence and the student experience with staff and students.
- 16.36 The International Student Representative commented that specific issues impacting individual courses should be examined and the DVC Academic reassured Senate that this was being done and that students would have a voice feeding into individual School Action Plans.

- 16.37 As feedback remained a problematic area, a question was asked regarding the use of part-time staff, in GSBS in particular, who may have a disproportionate level of marking. And it was clarified that part-time staff were paid separately for marking and staff marking loads were monitored to ensure that feedback can be turned around.
- 16.38 It was also remarked upon that GSBS staff had experienced more changes than other areas with the move to long thin then back to short fat module delivery. Whilst this was accepted, it was acknowledged that there had been problems in some areas for a number of years and therefore the need for change could not be ignored. It was noted that There were areas of excellence across the University so there was a need to share good practice and to continue to work closely with students.
- 16.39 This was reiterated by the Student President who welcomed the work and partnership approach undertaken. The need for improved communication between staff and students was stressed.
- 16.40 All Deans expressed their disappointment with the results and were in agreement that action needed to be taken immediately.
- 16.41 Resolved: To note the update on the National Student Survey 2016 and endorse the actions being taken to address the issues raised.

Appointment of Vice Chair of Senate

- 16.42 Approved A recommendation from the Principal that Prof. James Miller, Deputy Vice Chancellor Strategy be appointed as Vice Chair of Senate for the period up to 1 August 2017. **(Doc S16/11/1)**

Senate Composition and Membership Session 2016/2017

- 16.43 Approved The updated Senate composition and membership for Session 2016/2017 subject to the correction of Dr Dane Lukic's title. **(Doc S16/18/1)**

Honorary and Visiting Appointments

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

Title	Post	Field of expertise	School
Mrs Elaine Ross	Honorary Research Fellow	Infection Prevention & Control	SHSL
Dr Eleanor Anderson	Honorary Senior Research Fellow	Control of Antimicrobial Resistance in Scotland	SHLS

Margaret Curran	Honorary Professor	Social Justice, Media & Politics	GSBS
Gordon Matheson	Honorary Professor	Local Government & Politics	GSBS

Higher Degrees Committee

- 15.45 Approved: The award of the following degrees from the Higher Degrees Committee.
(Doc S16/14/1)
1 MPhil
15 PhDs
1 PhD by previous publication
1 ProfD

Fitness to Practise Policy

- 16.46 Considered: The revised School of Health and Life Sciences Fitness to Practise Policy.
(Doc APC16/01/1)
- 16.47 Discussed: A question was asked about the wording used in relation to instances that may result in a Fitness to Practice hearing outlined at 6.2.4 of the report “The individual has had civil proceedings (other than divorce or civil partnership dissolution proceedings) brought against them” and “Conduct giving rise to a police investigation” detailed Appendix 3, and it was suggested that the word “criminal” should be included. It was explained that Fitness to Practise also related to good character and therefore behaviours that were not necessarily criminal may fall within the Fitness to Practise remit. It was agreed to consider the matter further and report back to Senate if necessary.
- 16.48 Resolved: a) To approve the revised School of Health and Life Sciences Fitness to Practise Policy subject to further consideration of the points outlined at 16.47 above.
b) That an Equality Impact Assessment be prepared.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy

- 16.49 Approved: A proposed amendment to the University’s Recognition of Prior Learning Policy. **(Doc APC16/04/2)**

Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook

- 16.50 Approved: The revised Quality Enhancement and Assurance Handbook.
(Doc APC16/05/2)
- 16.51 Reported: By the DVC Academic that the Handbook had been updated to take account of external changes and as a result of consultation and feedback from academic colleagues. The revised handbook was one of the actions agreed as part of the Academic Pillars work which was approved at

Senate in June 2016 Substantial parts of the Handbook remained unchanged, and the aim was to clarify and provide additional information where needed. The Handbook reasserted that the University was a programmes based university and importantly it clarified, deepened and reasserted the policies and procedures in relation to programme boards and programme leaders.

16.52 Work was on going in relation to module credit rating and teaching hours and this would be reported back to the December meeting of Senate.

16.53 Clarification was sought regarding the timeline for programme approval and the number of checkpoints involved and whether the process offered sufficient flexibility to accommodate any pressing needs for new programmes. The DVC Academic stressed that there had been no changes to processes but the timeline had been articulated. Any new programmes should only be put forward if aligned with the University Strategy and where it had been demonstrated there was demand. Any urgent case for the introduction of a new programme could be accommodated. This was highlighted in the coversheet that accompanied the Handbook, and the handbook would be amended to make this clearer.

16.54 Guidance was also sought about when it was appropriate to advertise a new programme and Senate was informed that a short-life working group had been established to look at this. It was possible to advertise a programme prior to approval as long as it was made clear to prospective applicants that approval was awaited.

16.55 There was some concern regarding Section 6 of the Handbook relating to Programme Review, and in particular regarding 6.2 which outlined the steps involved in discontinuing an approved programme. It was agreed that further clarification would help staff and that consultation on this continue, with revised wording reported back to the December meeting of Senate.

16.56 Resolved: To approve the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook subject to further discussions outlined at 16.52 And 16.55 above and that the results of these consultations be reported back to Senate in December.

APC Terms of Reference, Composition and Membership 2016/2017

16.57 Approved: a) The Academic Policy Committee Terms of Reference, Composition and Membership for Session 2016/2017. **(APC16/06/02)**
 b) To amend the name of the Committee to Academic Policy and Practise Committee.

Senate Disciplinary Committee Chair

- 16.58 Approved:
- a) The appointment of Professor Alison Britton as Chair of Senate Disciplinary Committee for a period of 3 years commencing 1st November 2016.
 - b) That on an exceptional basis, the current Chair, Mrs Moira MacMillan, continue to chair one long standing ongoing case to its conclusion.
 - c) That steps be taken to appoint the Vice-Chair of the Senate Disciplinary Committee.

Chair's Action

- 16.59 Noted: That the following was approved via Chair's Action since the last meeting of Senate:

Senate Disciplinary Committee Membership

- i. Approval to extend the appointment of Mr Michael Bromby, Glasgow School *for* Business and Society, as Vice-Chair of the Senate Disciplinary Committee until the process for appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Senate Disciplinary Committee was concluded. **(Doc S16/8/1)**
- ii. Approval of a second term of membership for Professor Elaine McFarland (GSBS) as academic staff member on the Senate Disciplinary Committee. The term of appointment was for the period 1st August 2016 to 31st July 2019. It was noted that Professor McFarland had very recently retired from the University so steps would now be taken to fill this vacancy. **(Doc S16/9/1)**

PART C (FOR INFORMATION) DOCUMENTS DISTRIBUTED BY EMAIL ONLY

Academic Appointments

- 16.60 Received: A paper on academic appointments made since the last meeting of Senate. **(Doc S16/12/1)**

Academic Policy Committee

- 16.61 Received: The confirmed minute of the meeting of the Academic Policy Committee held on 11th May 2016. **(Doc APC15/64/1)**

University Research Committee

- 16.62 Received: The confirmed minute of the meeting of the University Research Committee held on 18th May 2016. **(Doc REC15/46/1)**

International Committee

- 16.63 Received: The confirmed minute of the meetings of the International Committee held on:
- i. 12th May 2016 (Doc IC 15/86/2)
 - ii. 16th June 2016 (Doc IC 15/102/01)

School Board/Boards of Senate Minutes

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

GCU LEAD Board

- i. 18th May 2015 (Doc GCULB15/1)
- ii. 29th October 2015 (Doc GCULB15/2)
- iii. 30th March 2016 (Doc GCULB16/1)

University Court

- 16.65 Received: The highlights of the meeting of University Court held on:

- i. 23rd June 2016 (Doc S16/19/1)
- ii. 22nd September 2016 (Doc S16/20/1)

Senate and Standing Committee Calendar of Meetings Session 2016/17

- 16.66 Received: The revised Senate and Standing Committee Calendar of Meetings for Session 2016/17 including venues. (Doc S16/10/1)

Annual statement on Enhancement led Internal Subject Review and Quality Assurance Arrangements for the Academic Session 2015-2016

- 16.67 Received: The Annual statement on Enhancement led Internal Subject Review and Quality Assurance Arrangements for the Academic Session 2015-2016. (Doc S16/15/1)

Date of Next Meeting

- 16.68 Received: Notification that the next scheduled meeting of University Senate will be held on Friday 9th December 2016 at 09:30 Hrs in CEE06/07.