

UNIVERSITY SENATE

Minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2020

Present: Professor P Gillies (Chair), Dr B Ahmed, Dr K Bannigan, Dr T Boutaleb, Ms J Burt, Ms S Docherty, Professor C Donaldson, Professor M E Farrag, Dr M Ferguson, Dr K Fryer, Dr L Grey, Ms J Hulme, Dr C Khamisha, Mr T Kilpatrick, Professor G Loffler, Mr T McAlear, Professor J McCallum, Dr K McPherson, Professor M Mannion, Mrs W Mazzucco, Dr C Miller, Professor J Miller, Ms Kathinka Mumme, Professor A Nelson, Mr A Nesbit, Dr V Ness, Dr A O'Hagan, Professor O Pahl, Dr A Pierotti, Dr J Riley, Ms R Russell, Miss L Shearer, Mr B Smith, Professor B Steves, Dr K Thomson, Dr O Uthmani, Mr V Waters and Professor V Webster

Apologies: Mr J England, Miss E Fulton, Ms R Gowans, Mr S Latta, Professor J Lennon

In Attendance: Mr M Anderson, Director of Research & Innovation
Ms F Campbell, Director of People
Mrs C Hulsen, Director of Strategy and Planning,
Mr S Lopez, Academic Registrar
Ms J Main, Director of Student Life
Mrs S Mitchell, COO
Dr S Rate, Vice-Dean GSBS
Mr R Ruthven, Director of Library Services
Professor A Robertson, Director of Academic Development & Student Learning

Mrs D Donnet, Clerk to Senate

In Attendance Apologies: Professor A Britton, Chair of the Senate Disciplinary Committee

Observers: Mrs E Anderson (Executive Support), Mrs L Clark (Governance), Mr C Fitch (Lay Governor), Mr A Haseeb (Lay Governor), Mr G Jack (Lay Governor), Mrs L Johnson (Executive Support), Mrs M Lustman (Lay Governor), Mrs L McGinley (Governance), Mrs K McMillan (Executive Support) and Mr A Sweeney (Lay Governor)

Chairs Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the second meeting of Senate in academic session 2020/21. A warm welcome was also extended to new student member Vincent Waters who was attending his first meeting of Senate, to Kathinka Mumme who was returning as a student member and to Dr Shirley Rate, Vice Dean GSBS, who was attending on behalf of Professor Lennon, Dean GSBS.

PART A (FOR CONSIDERATION)

Minutes

- 20.048 Noted The unconfirmed draft minutes of the meeting of Senate held on 19 October 2020.
(Doc S20/19/1)

Matters Arising

- 20.049 Noted
- i. The matters arising briefing report and any matters arising on the minutes not otherwise provided for on the agenda.
(Doc S20/34/1)
 - ii. In response to a question, it was confirmed that the guidance on lecture capture as detailed in paragraph 20.011(ii) of the minutes had been agreed by all parties and published.

Principal & Vice Chancellor & Executive Board Report

- 20.050 Noted 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 S20/20/1)
- 20.051 Discussed It was raised that in light of the diverging approaches of the Scottish and Westminster Governments in relation to Covid-19, specific advice was required for GCU London students and staff. Senate was advised that this was due to be discussed at the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee and thereafter further information and guidance would be issued.

Response to Covid-19

- 20.052 Received The Chief Operating Officer gave a verbal update on the University's approach to ensuring safety on campus. She advised that the student asymptomatic testing centre had opened on the Glasgow campus earlier in the week. This employed 73 people, 52 of whom were GCU students, including a significant proportion of nursing students. There had been a good take up of appointments and the centre was due to remain open until 12th December, however arrangements could be made, in advance, for students who required testing after this date. It was noted that a number of students on placements with health boards, would receive tests in placement.

To date, only one GCU student had received a positive result, and across Scotland there had only been 4 positive results. The data was held by the NHS and it was not possible for individual institutions to identify the students concerned.

Both the University and the Students' Association were communicating with students to encourage them to come forward for testing and to reassure them that steps would be taken to ensure that any students who tested positive would be supported to ensure a safe return home for the winter break.

In line with the Common Good mission, the University was also providing testing for students at the Conservatoire, and the City of Glasgow and Kelvin Colleges. Arrangements had also been made with a partner institution, for asymptomatic

testing for GCU London students, and this had been communicated to the students concerned.

Information was awaited from the Government on the testing of students returning after the break, and students and staff would be kept updated as appropriate.

20.053 Noted Senate noted the update and welcomed the work being done.

Going Digital Evaluation

20.054 Received A verbal update from the Director of Academic Development and Student Learning, on the evaluation of the GCU Going Digital Framework.

20.055 Reported That there had been a 20% response rate to the student survey, and the overall satisfaction rate for first year students was 77%. This high level of satisfaction was attributed to first year students' acceptance of on line teaching and learning, whereby students in other years had previous years' face to face teaching to compare to. The details of a staff survey were still being finalised.

The recently received very positive ELIR Early Draft Outcome report included a recommendation relating to the development of blended learning, and this aligned with the work already underway via the Going Digital Framework.

Work was underway in developing the learning and teaching enabling strategy for Strategy 2030, with a key stakeholder meeting planned for the following week and full consultation thereafter.

20.056 Discussed It was raised that students' experience of collaborate ultra was not positive, and the Director of Academic Development advised that the issues were not GCU specific. He had discussed concerns with the manufacturers Blackboard, who were working to resolve the problems and it was hoped that the situation would be improved for next semester.

The positive feedback from first year students was welcomed, and it was acknowledged that it was important to ensure that feedback was followed up on. It was observed that there were high levels of anxiety amongst students, and the importance of regular and timely communication was stressed. This view was reiterated by student members.

20.057 Resolved To note the update.

Assessment Guidance

20.058 Received A report from the DVC (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience) outlining proposed minor changes to the approach for assessments for Trimester A 2020-2021. **(Doc S20/31/1)**

20.059 Reported The DVC (LTSE) advised that the proposed minor changes had been developed to support a consistent approach to assessments, whilst allowing for discipline-specific requirements to be met. These minor adaptations had been proposed following feedback from staff, students and Students Association in relation to the Tri B and Tri C 2019-20 assessment periods and through academic planning discussions for Session 2020-21. In particular, the proposed changes allowed additional time for all students undertaking online examinations, in order to allow

time to upload answers and other relevant materials associated with the assessment.

- 20.060 Discussed
- i. It was noted that there was scope for differing arrangements for individual online exams, and it was confirmed that communications and the module site on the VLE would clearly outline examination times, format and any additional requirements.
 - ii. It was further noted that comms would be issued to encourage students who had yet to advise of additional support needs to contact Disability Services or their Module leader. Further, in line with normal practice, students with a Recommended Adjustments Page would be given specific additional support and/or time to meet their individual needs.

20.061 Resolved To note the proposed amendments to the approach for assessments for Trimester A 2020-2021.

Preparation for Trimester B

20.062 Received A verbal update from the DVC (Strategy) on preparations for Trimester B 2020/21 including assessment arrangements for January 2021.

20.063 Reported By the DVC (Strategy) that the University had demonstrated throughout Tri A, that it had successfully moved from face to face to online teaching to respond to the rapidly changing environment. It was highlighted that there was no evidence of any Covid-19 transmission in an HE teaching environment. Plans for Tri B would echo those for Tri A and would be reviewed regularly in line with public health guidance for both Glasgow and London.

It was anticipated that there would be more on campus activity to accommodate those modules that that could not be deferred or delivered online. As such, a cautious, risk based phased return was planned and this would be undertaken in consultation with the Trade Unions and Students' Association. This would include safe study spaces for students and staff on campus and there would be additional infrastructure investment to support this.

Overall, feedback on the approach taken by the University continued to be positive, the approach would continue to take account of lessons learned and feedback received.

20.064 Discussed The cautious approach was welcomed and it was raised by a Senator who was also a Trade Union representative that the University's approach was one of the best examples in the sector. The collegiate approach of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee was also commended.

20.065 Resolved To note the update.

Enhancement Led Institutional Review

20.066 Received A verbal update from the DVC (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience) on the initial feedback from the ELIR.

20.067 Reported By the DVC (LTSE), that the Early Draft Outcome Report had been received and this advised that the University had effective arrangements for managing academic standards and the student learning experience. This was a positive

judgement, which meant the University met sector expectations in securing the academic standards of its awards and enhancing the quality of the student learning experience it provides, currently and into the future. This judgement confirmed there could be public confidence in the University's awards and in the quality of the learning experience it provides for its students.

In particular, the Early Draft Outcome Report highlighted five areas for commendation:

- The institutional approach to articulating and implementing strategy;
- Student Experience Action Plans
- Student partnership;
- Strategic approach to widening participation; and
- Embedding equality, diversity and inclusion.

The University was asked to consider recommendations in four areas, detailed below, and it was noted that these were issues that the University had already been looking at:

- Feedback on assessment;
- Streamlining quality assurance and enhancement processes;
- Supporting the development of a blended student experience; and
- Communication of policy/approach.

20.068	Discussed	Senate welcomed the very positive ELIR outcome and commended the DVC (LTSE), the Head of Academic Quality, staff in the Department of Academic Quality, the Student President and all staff and students who contributed to the ELIR for their role in achieving the excellent outcome, especially in light of the current circumstances. In particular, the excellent collaborative working between the University and the Students' Association was welcomed, and it was noted that this had been highlighted by the ELIR panel.
20.069	Resolved	To welcome and note the ELIR Early Draft Outcome Report, and that the final report, once received in January, would be available to staff.

Standing Committee and School Board Summary Reports

20.070	Considered	<p>Senate received summary reports from the following Senate standing committees and School Boards:</p> <p>i. <u>Academic Policy and Practice Committee held on 4 November 2020</u> (Doc S20/33/1)</p> <p>Senate was advised that key items discussed included:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proposals to accept a wider range of English language qualifications.• Updated guidance on temporary programme and module adaptations, in line with QAA guidance.• A high level summary report on Graduate Outcomes 2017-18 survey which highlighted areas for enhancement and themes which could be developed via the Enhancing the Student Experience Steering Group (ETSE) and thereafter fed into the APPC forward programme of work. <p>ii. <u>University Research Committee held on 18 November 2020</u> (Doc S20/24/1)</p> <p>It was highlighted that The Committee approved Regulations for the Award of Aegrotat and Posthumous Research Degrees, recommended by the Research</p>
--------	------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Degrees Committee. It was noted that these regulations reflected common sector practice. The VP Research expressed the Committee's thanks to Professor Jim Woodburn, and contribution he had made to the Research Committee and the research standing and capacity of the University.

iii. International Committee held on 5 November 2020
(Doc S20/35/1)

The DVC (Strategy) indicated that the Committee received a briefing from the Head of VISA on the Home Office new/enhanced Points Based System (PBS) immigration routes for international applicants, students, workers and visitors, in light of the UK exiting the EU on 31 December 2020. Further updates would be received as required

iv. Glasgow School for Business and Society held on 14 October 2020
(Doc S20/21/1)

The Vice Dean GSBS informed Senate of plans to integrate Carbon Literacy Training into a level three module in the Department of Management & HR. The CLT training would be delivered to 180 students, and would be reported during the 2021 EPAS re-accreditation cycle, as further evidence of the degree programme's commitment to embed ethics, responsibility and ethics into the core of the BABPS programme. It was noted that CLT was already being delivered to Media students, and GCU was the only Scottish University doing this. It was suggested that this should be highlighted, perhaps in relation to COP26.

v. The School of Computing Engineering and the Built Environment held on 29 October 2020
(Doc S20/22/1)

The Interim Dean, SCEBE, advised that the School had submitted its Athena SWAN, Silver Submission and he expressed thanks to all involved, noting that it had been a huge piece of work.

vi. The School of Health and Life Sciences held on 9 October 2020
(Doc S20/23/1)

The Dean SHLS advised Senate that the School had successfully supported in situ placements for some international students. There had been a number of Covid-19 contingency meetings as placements for many programmes had been impacted.

PART B (FOR FORMAL APPROVAL WITH WHATEVER LEVEL OF DISCUSSION IS APPROPRIATE)

School Board Terms of Reference

20.071	Approved	A report (DocS20/25/1) proposing minor amendments to the Terms of Reference of School Boards to cover <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updates in relation to role titles and School Research Committee title• Specific reference to quoracy; and• Minor typographical amendments.
--------	----------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Research Degrees Committee

20.072 Approved The award of 1 PhD and 1 MPhil.
(Doc S20/30/1)

PART C (FOR INFORMATION)

Honorary Appointments

20.073 Received Notification that the following honorary appointment was awarded by the University Executive Board.

Post	Title	Field of expertise	School
Honorary Professor	Dr James Boyle	Diabetes	SHLS

Academic Appointments

20.074 Received A paper on academic appointments made since the last meeting of Senate.
(Doc S20/32/1)

International Committee

20.075 Received The confirmed minute of the meeting of the International Committee held on 11 June 2020. **(Doc S20/27/1)**

School Boards Minutes

20.076 Received The confirmed minute of the meeting of the School of Health and Life Sciences School Board held on 8 April 2020.
(Doc SHLS/SB/20/001/01)

University Court

20.077 Received The summary report from the meeting of the University Court held on 11 November 2020.
(Doc S/20/28/1)

Professional Recognition of Teaching and Supporting Learning

20.078 Received An annual update on the progress of staff achieving professional recognition as part of the University's KPI for 75% of staff to hold higher level qualifications including professional recognition of teaching.

The Chair expressed Senate's congratulations to all colleagues on their achievements, and in particular to the Student President who had achieved Associate Fellowship.
(Doc S20/29/1)

Senate Membership

20.079 Received The updated Senate membership for session 2020/21 to include newly elected student members.
(Doc S19/71/3)

Date of Next Meeting

20.080 Noted

The date of the next scheduled meeting of Senate is 24 February 2021.

Chair's Closing Remarks

The Chair expressed her thanks to Senators and all staff and students for all their hard work during what had been a very challenging year, and wished all well for the extended winter break.