

UNIVERSITY SENATE

Minutes of the meeting held on 31 May 2019

- Present:** Dr T Boutaleb, Prof A Britton, Prof I Cameron, Dr Chalmers, Dr S Dolan, Dr D Chalmers, Dr M Ferguson, Prof P Gillies (Chair), Mr A Killick, Dr S Lodge, Prof G Loffler, Mr S Lopez, Mr T McAlear, Dr J McCallum, Dr B McConville, Mr D McGallagly, Dr K McPherson, Prof. S McMeekin (Vice Prof. Cameron), Mr A Middleton, Dr C Miller, Prof J Miller, Prof A Nelson, Dr S Ogden, Dr A Pierotti, Dr S Rate (Vice Prof Lennon), Miss R Simpson, Mr B Smith, Prof S Smith, Prof B Steves, Dr K Thomson, Dr M Tong, Prof V Webster and Prof B Wood
- Apologies:** Prof C Donaldson, Ms J Hulme, Mrs C Hulsen, Miss M Jorgensen, Prof J Lennon, Dr D Lukic, Prof M Mannion, Mr S Mattar, Prof A Morgan, Dr D Rankin
- In Attendance:** Mrs K Roden, Deputy Director S&P
Mr R Ruthven, Director of Library Services
Mrs D Donnet, Clerk to Senate
- Observers:** Mr M Apiliga (SA), Mrs L Clark (Governance), Ms S Docherty (SA), Mr C Fitch (Court), Ms E Fulton (SA), Mr D Gallacher (Court), Mr G Jack (Court), Miss L Johnson (Executive Support), Ms M Lustman (Court), Ms S MacLean (SA), Ms N Mahal (Court), Mr J Paisley (Comms), Mrs L Shields (FNO), Ms B Stevenson (SA), Prof S Young (Court)

Chairs Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed Eilidh Fulton, Moses Apiliga, Susan Docherty and Bethany Stevenson, who on 3rd June would be taking on the roles of Student President and Vice Presidents for GSBS, SCEBE and SHLS respectively. Also welcomed were Prof Stephanie Young, Vice-Chair of Court, and Lay Governors, Mr Campbell Fitch, Mr Gordon Jack, and Ms Meg Lustman.

PART A (FOR CONSIDERATION)

Minutes

- 18.125 Received: The unconfirmed draft minutes of the meeting of Senate held 1 March 2019 (**Doc S18/44/1**).
- 18.126 Resolved: That the minutes be approved as an accurate record.

Matters Arising Briefing Note

- 18.127 Noted The Matters Arising Briefing Note (**Doc S18/45/1**).
- 18.128 Received An oral update from the Dean, School of Health and Life Sciences, and Chair of the Banded Marking Task and Finish Group on the work undertaken by the

Group. It was intended that a report would be submitted to the next meeting of Senate in October 2019.

Principal & Vice Chancellor and Executive Board Report

- 18.129 Considered A report from the Principal and Vice Chancellor and Executive Board to update members on substantive items considered by the Executive Board since the last meeting of Senate. **(Doc S18/46/1)**.
- 18.130 Discussed
- i. Senate considered the potential consequences that the Augur Review of student funding in England and Wales would have on the HE sector in Scotland. If implemented, it would reduce the fees paid by RUK students, which would have a significant impact on some Scottish universities. Universities Scotland was lobbying on behalf of the sector.
 - ii. Senate welcomed the news that the University had successfully completed the rigorous Ashoka U Changemaker renewal process. The application had highlighted the amount of work being undertaken across the University and work was underway to create a film to capture this to increase visibility, and it was intended to involve staff in discussion on how to drive the work forward.
 - iii. The news that funding from Scottish Government to fund mental health counsellors for staff in universities was welcomed.
 - iv. It was highlighted that the University had received positive feedback from the Scottish Funding Council following the Strategic Dialogue in April. It was noted that more could be done to publicise our research, teaching and common good strengths. The Principal advised that innovative ways of communicating the University's successes to a wider audience were being explored.
- 18.131 Resolved To note the report and the oral updates.

Assessment Regulations Working Group

- 18.131 Considered A report providing an update and recommendations from the Assessment Regulations Working Group. **(Doc APPC18/48/02)**
- 18.132 Reported Student Performance and Feedback Policy
- That the updated policy would provide more clarity for students, removed inconsistencies in timings and acknowledged that exceptional circumstances may impact on feedback turnaround time.
- 18.134 Approved The update and reframe of the GCU Student Performance Feedback Policy, its principles and applicability for project and dissertations.
- 18.135 Approved Recognition of Prior Learning Policy
- An additional text insert for the Recognition of Prior Learning Policy, to clarify the potential for GCU awards with Merit or Distinction.
- 18.136 Noted That a review and wider conversation on the use of RPL and credit from recognised HE institutions would take place.
- 18.137 Approved Roll out of Threshold Minimum Marks to SQCF Level 8

The text update, as outlined in Appendix B of the report, be added to the Undergraduate Assessment Regulations for session 2019/20.

- 18.138 Noted That the Academic Registrar was working with Information Services to ensure that ISIS updates were made to SCQF Level 8 modules in advance of the new session.
- 18.139 Approved GCU Assessment Procedures Handbook to signpost GCU assessment policies and guidelines for staff.
- The inclusion of an extract from the GCU Generic Retention Policy in the Policy and Procedures for Examination Papers as outlined in Appendix C of the report.
- 18.140 Agreed To request that Executive Board and the Information Governance Committee consider the feasibility of an Electronic Records Management system, to accommodate digital and online submissions.
- 18.141 Reported Consideration of Resit/Resubmission processes for non-standard starts.
- A short life working group had been established and discussions with staff and students had taken place around the operational impact of an institutional move to early resit exams for students. Concerns had been raised around the feasibility of such a move, therefore it was proposed that there be a trial period of early retrieval of course work only, where certain criteria were met.
- 18.142 Approved
- a. A pilot trial of early retrieval in 2019/20.
 - b. The establishment of 'Progression Review' Boards in January, with formalised Terms of Reference and delegated decision making authority, in advance of meetings of main Assessment Boards.
- 18.143 Noted Clarity around the criteria for Generic Awards for both staff and students
- Senate was advised that the Generic Awards Guidance had been updated to include guidance for students who were failing 20 credits on their chosen programme of study and references to SCQF levels, as requested by Senate at its previous meeting.
- 18.144 Noted Regulations for the Appointment of External Examiners
- That the statement in the Academic Quality Policy and Practice Handbook regarding the appointment of external examiners had been reviewed by the Assessment Regulations Working Group and was considered to be sufficient in stating that a programmes must ensure that an academic expert was paired with an industry expert, and as such no amendments were required to the statement.
- 18.145 Noted Establishment of a GCU framework to enable consistency of approach for GCU Mobility Mark Calculations.
- That a task and finish work group would be established and would report to APPC in November 2019.

Assessment Loading

- 18.146 Considered A review of Assessment Loading. **(Doc APPC18/51/1)**
- 18.147 Reported By Professor Ferguson, Associate Dean Learning and Teaching, SCEBE, that a light touch review of module assessment loading had been undertaken in all three Glasgow schools. The review had highlighted that there was variation across all three schools and, as a result, work was underway to make changes to modules that did not align with the general principal of 2 assessments for a 20 credit module, with the loading scaled up or down for modules with more or fewer credits. It was noted however, that some assessments were determined due to professional body requirements and therefore could not be changed.
- 18.148 Agreed To note the review.

Degree Classification – Task and Finish Group

- 18.149 Considered An interim update from the Degree Classification – Task and Finish Group. **(Doc S18/62/1)**
- 18.150 Reported By the DVC (Academic) that work had been focussed on looking at programmes that were exceptions to the standard assessment regulations for honours degree calculation, an exploration of the current honours degree profiling boundary at 3% and consideration of the current standard honour degree algorithm that included of the “Best 180” honours degree calculation.
- 18.151 Noted That work would continue over the summer period and that final recommendations would be captured in tandem with the outcome of the Banded Grading Task and Finish Group and reported to Senate early in the 2019/20 academic year.

Senate, Standing Committee and School Board Staff Nomination and Election Rules

- 18.152 Considered A report on proposed changes to the nomination and election process for Senate, Senate Standing Committees and School Boards **(Doc S18/51/1)**.
- 18.153 Discussed It was highlighted that the rules codified existing practices, introduced the use of AV where there more than two candidates, and introduced a complaints procedure. The rules were the same as those recently adopted by Court for the election of staff governors.
- 18.154 Approved The Senate, Standing Committee and School Board Staff Nomination and Election Rules.

Complaints Annual Report

- 18.156 Noted The Annual Report on Complaints for Session 2017/2018 **(Doc S18/53/1)**.
- 18.157 Reported By the Clerk to Senate that the number of Stage 2 complaints remained at the same level as in 2017/18 (11) and that there had been slight increase in the number of reported Stage 1 complaints.
- 18.158 Resolved Following concern about unsubstantiated personal complaints against members of staff and the impact this and the effect a complaint investigation could have, it was agreed to work with the Students’ Association to develop additional guidance for students on submitting complaints. It was further agreed to explore

the development of a “buddy” system for staff who were the subject of a complaint investigation.

Senate Disciplinary Committee

- 18.159 Noted
- i. The Senate Disciplinary Committee Annual Report for Session 2017/2018 (**Doc S18/52/1**).
 - ii. The Chair of SDC reported that there was an increased prevalence within the sector worldwide in the use of essay mills. Whilst this was an issue that was being explored at government level within the UK, it was incumbent on universities to develop preventative and supportive measures. It was intended to explore this further within the University.
- 18.160 Approved
- The reappointment of Professor Alison Britton and Dr Linda Walsh, as Chair and Vice Chair respectively of Senate Disciplinary Committee, for the period 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2022.

Students' Association Academic Representative Review

- 18.161 Considered
- A paper by the Student President on proposed modifications to the Students' Association's Academic Representative Structure to reflect the changes in the structure of the academic schools brought about by the recent schools' refresh (**Doc S18/47/01**).
- 18.162 Reported
- By the Student President that the review of the representative structure was an action within the Enhancing the Student Experience Action Plan 2018/19. The proposed changes had been subject to extensive consultation and saw a significant increase in student representation. It was highlighted that
- There would be 22 undergraduate Departmental Representatives, one for each department, with each representative attending School Boards as full members;
 - No changes were required for the PGT representatives, with one per school including London; and
 - Glasgow based Schools would have two postgraduate research representatives, with one in London.
- 18.163 Approved
- a) The revised academic representative structure and role descriptions; and
 - b) Revisions to the Academic Quality Policy and Practice documentation to reflect the changes.

HESA Performance Indicators 2019

- 18.154 Considered
- A paper on the overview of the HESA 2019 Performance Indicators (**Doc S18/54/01**).
- 18.155 Reported
- By the DVC (Strategy) that the University's performance indicated that the University had performed well within the Scottish context and against the Strategy 2020 KPIs. Key areas reported included:
- The proportion of entrants from state school or college had been maintained at 97% remaining well ahead of both our benchmark (90.7%) and the Scottish sector average of 86.5%.
 - The University's projected degree completion PI was 79.3%, a decrease of 1.6 percentage points on last year. The Scottish sector average was 81.8%, this was an increase of 1.2 percentage points.
 - The University's low drop-out rate had been broadly maintained, with a

difference of 0.3 percentage points from 8.6% to 8.9% in the 2019 PIs, ahead of the Scottish sector average of 9.1%.

- Non-continuation following one year of study had declined compared to the strong performance last year, with an increase of 1.7 percentage points to 8.5%.
- The University outperformed the Scottish sector average and nine other universities for non-continuation of mature students, signalling success in the retention of mature and articulating students.

18.156 Resolved Senate welcomed and noted the report.

SFC Outcome Agreement 2019-2020

18.157 Considered A paper providing an update to the University's SFC Outcome Agreement 2017/18 – 2019/20 (**Doc S18/55/01**).

18.158 Reported The DVC (Strategy) advised that the Outcome Agreement was submitted to the SFC at the end of April. Formal SFC sign off and publication had not yet happened but this was anticipated soon. The Outcome Agreement had been developed after extensive consultation across the University and contained many case studies to demonstrate the action the University had taken.

18.159 Discussed Good progress was being made towards achieving all metrics, and it was noted that the requirements were becoming more operational, and this had been fed back to the SFC at the University's Strategic Dialogue meeting in April. It was anticipated that more focus would be on the gender action plan, which would translate into increasing the number of male nursing students and females in to engineering. It was highlighted that the University continued to perform well in achieving widening participation targets and the contribution of the Caledonian Club was acknowledged.

18.160 Resolved To note the update.

Senate Forward Look 2019/20

18.161 Considered A paper on a number of key issues that it is anticipated will be brought to Senate for consideration in 2019/20, in addition to regular business and any emerging matters (**Doc S18/56/01**).

18.162 Discussed In addition to the issues detailed in the paper, the following topics were agreed for inclusion:

- More detailed discussion around the Public Sector Equality Duty Report and the mainstreaming of equality and diversity in all areas of the University; and
- Equal pay statistical analysis by gender.

18.163 Resolved To note the forward look.

Enhancement Led Institutional Review

18.164 Considered A paper providing an update on ELIR 4 (**Doc S18/58/01**).

18.165 Reported The DVC (Academic) that preparation for ELIR 4 was on schedule, and initial consultation with staff and students had taken place in March and April. Work on the Reflective Analysis (RA) was underway, and the outline RA was appended to the report.

18.166 Noted The update and that Senate would be kept informed of progress.

PART B (FOR FORMAL APPROVAL)

Research Degrees Committee

18.167 Approved The award of 31 PhDs, 1 PhD by previous publication and 1 Prof D (**Doc S18/57/1**).

Honorary Appointments

18.168 Noted The following honorary appointments awarded by the University Executive Board:

Post	Title	Field of expertise	School
Honorary Professor	Dr Mark Hannan	Social Innovation/Finance	Yunus Centre/ GCU London
Honorary Fellow	Dr Eric Carlan	Alcohol Misuse Research	SHLS
Visiting Professor (extension)	Dr Will Sorrar	Global Civics	Yunus Centre/ GSBS

Chairs Action

18.169 Noted That the following Chair's Action was taken since the last meeting of Senate: Approval of an extension to the term of membership of Professor A Klemm (SCEBE) as academic staff member on the Senate Disciplinary Committee (**Doc S18/48/1**).

PART C (FOR INFORMATION)

Academic Appointments

18.170 Received A paper on academic appointments made since the last meeting of Senate (**Doc S18/50/1**).

Academic Policy and Practice Committee

18.171 Received The confirmed minute of the meetings of the Academic Policy and Practice Committee held on 30 January 2019 (**Doc APPC18/34/01**) and 27 March 2019 (**Doc APPC18/47/01**).

University Research Committee

18.172 Received The confirmed minute of the meetings of the University Research Committee held on 28 January 2019 (**Doc REC18/17/01**) and 13 March 2019 (**Doc REC18/23/01**).

School Board/Boards of Senate Minutes

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

School of Health and Life Sciences held on:

- i. 8 February 2019 (**Doc HLS/SB/18/020**)

School of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment held on:

- ii. 17 October 2018 (Doc SCEBE/SB/18/01/011)
- iii. 12 December 2018 (Doc SCEBE/SB/18/20)
- iv. 20 February 2019 (Doc SCEBE/SB/18/25)

Senate and Standing Committee Calendar of Meetings 2019/20

18.174 Received The updated calendar of meetings for Senate and Standing Committees for Session (Doc S18/38/01).

Academic Calendar for 2019/20

18.175 Received The Academic Calendar for 2019/20 (Doc S18/49/01).

Post Graduate Research Student Experience (PGRSE) Thematic Review: Action Plan

18.176 Received The updated PGRSE Thematic Review Action Plan (Doc APPC18/35/01).

Public Sector Equality Duty Report 2019

18.177 Received The Public Sector Equality Duty Report 2019 (Doc APPC18/35/01).

University Court

18.178 Received The summary reports from the meetings of the University Court held on 14 March 2019 (Doc S18/60/01) and 2 May 2019 (Doc S18/61/01).

Date of Next meeting

The next scheduled meeting of University Senate will be held on Friday 18 October 2019 at 09:30 Hrs in The Lantern.