

## Senate

Tuesday 14 June 2022

### Minutes

Present: Professor Jenny Higham (Chair), Professor Rachel Allen, Professor Dot Bennett, Dr Florencia Cavodeassi, Professor Jon Friedland, George Hadjiyiannakis, Sally Hayward, Angela Kubacki, Jenny Laws, Professor Jodi Lindsay, Karen Lobb-Rossini, Dr Rosie MacLachlan, Dr Aileen O'Brien, Professor Jane Saffell, Dr Philip Sedgwick, Dean Semmens, Dr Jennifer Stott, Professor Katalin Török, Dr Andrew Walley.

In attendance: Derek Baldwinson, Rob Churm, Susan McPheat, Paul Ratcliffe, Shahib Uddin, Emma Whitaker (clerk).

Apologies: Kate Bascombe, Dr Mark Bodman-Smith, Professor Charlotte Clark, Sue David, Dr Kate Everett, Dr Vanessa Ho, Dr Carwyn Hooper, Dr Marcus Jackson, Becky Kemp-Arnold, Dr Carol Shiels, Georgina Sims, Jeannie Watkins.

**59. Apologies for absence**  
Apologies were noted as listed above.

**60. Minutes**  
Considered and approved: The minutes of the meeting held on 1 March 2022.

**Senate/2021-22/Paper 4A**

**61. Matters arising from the minutes**  
Received and considered: Open actions from the Senate Action Tracker.

Discussed:  
Action 1: *To review the Senate membership again next spring.*  
This item would be on the agenda for the July meeting.

Action 3: *A report would be made to Senate on the PTES and PRES Postgraduate Student Satisfaction survey results in due course.*  
This item was on the agenda for this meeting (see minute 62 below).

**Senate/2021-22/Paper 4B**

### Education and the Student Experience

**62. PTES and PRES Postgraduate Student Satisfaction survey results**  
Received and considered: A report on the PTES and PRES Postgraduate Student Satisfaction survey results for 2021.

Reported:

That PTES and PRES are annual surveys that provide insights into the university experience of taught and research postgraduate students. These surveys are provided by Advance HE and administered through a survey platform called JiscOnline. The Advance HE Surveys Team provides Standard Benchmark Reports for both surveys. These reports are confidential to each institution and include dashboard reports, ranking information, detailed tables with statistical comparisons, and full data for benchmarking groups.

That PRES 2021 consisted of 25 sections which included both scaled and open comment questions about aspects such as supervision, resources, research culture, progress and assessment, responsibilities, support, research skills, professional development, opportunities, overall experience, motivations, and COVID-19.

That PTES 2021 consisted of 24 sections which included both scaled and open comment questions about aspects such as teaching and learning, engagement, assessment and feedback, dissertation or major project (optional), organisation and management, resources, support, skills development, overall experience, and COVID-19 (optional).

That SGUL had not run the PTES or PRES survey for several years prior to 2021. This was partly because the pandemic struck at the time when planning for these surveys historically took place, and partly because there had been insufficient administrative support to run and analyse these surveys.

That SGUL intends to run PTES and PRES on a regular basis in future.

That the 2022 surveys had recently closed and the results were being analysed.

That for 2021 there had been a higher response rate than for previous surveys, with a higher satisfaction level.

That organisation and assessment are areas that need continue to be prioritised. It was noted that the Graduate team had done a lot of good work in these areas already.

That students are aware of the extension of their PhDs.

That postgraduate education was previously not surveyed; and the results show the value of surveying postgraduate student satisfaction.

Discussed:

Whether the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic had been considered, and was the impact for postgraduates larger than in other groups of students, or similar. The Deputy Principal (Education) responded that this had not been considered previously but that a comparative survey across the University would be a good thing to be undertaken.

Agreed:

That there would be a paper on PTES and PRES Postgraduate Student Satisfaction survey results brought to a future Senate meeting, that would include an action plan on areas for improvement.

**Action: Deputy Principal (Education).**

**Senate/2021-22/Paper 4C**

**63. Student Welfare and Support update**

Received and considered: A report on Student Welfare and Support, including a specific update on SGUL compliance with the Statement of Expectations on Preventing and Addressing Harassment and Sexual Misconduct.

Reported:

That the COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the importance of welfare support for students in higher education, especially for those on healthcare courses. Mental health problems had increased in the population post the pandemic, and the NHS primary and secondary care services were under exceptional pressure.

That the provision of high-quality pastoral support was a priority for students and their families, and Universities are expected to demonstrate evidence of what is offered.

That the paper provided to Senate would be taken to Council. The paper summarised where SGUL is in relation to current welfare provision.

That the University was attempting to capture data that had not been recorded in the past; e.g. the ratio of personal tutors, and discussions that took place in welfare meetings. Data collection had improved over the past few months.

That it was difficult to benchmark against the sector as the University did not have a centralised welfare provision. However, anecdotal evidence seems to suggest that SGUL had a different structure to most universities.

That the SGUL model is stretched due to greater expectations on the service, and at times it could be chaotic and difficult for staff and students to navigate the service, and to access the right help.

That the paper included a proposed model, based on the services that other Universities in the sector had. This model included:

- a wellbeing function;
- a welfare service that would support students who had particular stresses and needs;
- an inclusion strand for students with disabilities and/or mental health issues, to ensure students had access to appropriate support and interventions, to allow them to study the same as other students.

That the Registry team recognised this was an ambitious model, but felt that they could begin to work towards this model, with the two new welfare posts, funded as part of the University's ongoing commitment to improving student welfare.

That a further RRC request had been made for a grade 4 post, 'Accommodation and Welfare Officer', who would backfill the accommodation administration that the current Welfare and Accommodation Officer undertakes, to free them up to be the main resource to help form this service.

That a priority for the team is improving case management and information collection, to ensure data is properly recorded and information could be appropriately shared.

That the Student Union had been working with the Dean for Students on the issues reported in the welfare paper and thanked her for her work with them on the paper.

That Appendix A included a brief summary of the Student Union's recent student welfare survey. A key theme of the survey was inconsistency of experience – a lot of students reported that they found services helpful but also found some unhelpful. Another theme was that students found, even when interacting with the same staff member, the help and intervention they received was not always the same.

That the Student Union provided peer support and were now providing more of a support structure for welfare officers in societies, who are already doing a lot of work with their members. The Student Union felt that a more formalised scheme for the peer mentors would be good for both the students and the mentors.

Discussed:

That the Senate thanked the student welfare team, the Dean for Students and the Academic Registrar for their hard work in producing this very thorough report.

That in the new SGUL Strategy, there would be a real focus on what needs to happen to improve student wellbeing and support, including strengthening and standardising welfare support available from the programme teams, including personal tutors. The Dean for Students added that she would be meeting with the programme leads to discuss training for personal tutors, standardisation of recording meetings with students, and having a personal tutor lead for each course.

That a University-wide approach to improving welfare is needed, such as having a uniform mitigating circumstances policy.

That a Professional Services Director / welfare lead should be considered to help create and run the central hub. Student experience management may also come under that post; currently it sits under the Deputy Principal (Education). This also would increase resilience in the team. This should be made more explicit within the paper for when it would go to Council.

That the point that the SGUL model is stretched due to greater expectations on the service, and at times it could be chaotic and difficult for staff and students to navigate the service, and to access the right help, be emphasised more in the paper.

That diagram 1 should be formatted to be on one page alone.

**Senate/2021-22/Paper 4D**

#### **64. Sexual Misconduct Working Group**

Received and considered: The report of the Sexual Misconduct Working Group.

Considered and approved:

- (i) Assault and Sexual Assault Policy; and
- (ii) Student Behavioural Code of Conduct.

Reported:

That the Academic Registrar had put together a small working group following receipt of the AVA report, and to consider the Office for Students (OfS) statement of expectations around how students should be addressing sexual misconduct. Ban Haider was leading on the AVA report and it was also an area that the Student Union was very involved with.

That the OfS were currently investigating the impact of their statement of expectations, due for report in the autumn.

The working group was tasked to establish what could be delivered this academic year. The group reviewed the Sexual Assault Policy; produced some web pages to support students after an incident; and to articulate better how the University could support students through the process of making a complaint. This was because feedback from students that have been through the University complaint process was that they had found it distressing. It was important for the University to also make clear that it was difficult to investigate these cases and come up with a clear judgement, whilst making the students feel supported and feeling that the process was not distressing.

That the group would like to reconvene in the new academic year to review the completed work and to begin to address more clearly some of the other items raised in the AVA report:

- How to monitor and assess impact;
- Learning from cases and the student experience;
- Barriers to reporting - it is hoped that information from the recent Student Union welfare survey may be useful when considering this item;
- Development of a Sexual Misconduct Strategy. This should be reflected in the institutional Strategy and should incorporate strategies to support men and non-binary people;
- Formalisation of the team of trained staff and maintenance of skills and training;
- The training/appointment of an Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA);
- Continuation of the relationship with Rape Crisis and the building relationships with other organisations, particularly those supporting men and non-binary people; and
- Embedding work into the curriculum.

Discussed:

That it would be good to be clear about what the University is able to do via the complaints route, and what the police would be able to do. It was noted that the Registry / Welfare teams would support students if they would like to go to the police. The student complaints route is open to them and staff and supporters would try not to influence the student over which route they would like to take but would give them information about the pros and cons of each and support them in the choices that they made.

That there was a practical challenge with some police cases taking years, and this potentially impacting students whom were suspended whilst a police complaint was active.

Agreed:

That the Senate would like an update report of the Sexual Misconduct Working Group's work in the Autumn.

**Action: Academic Registrar.**

**Senate/2021-22/Paper 4E**

**65. Reports from the sub-committees of Senate**

Received and considered: A report from the Education Student Strategy Committee (ESSC).

Reported:

That the ESSC is a decision-making committee, accountable to Senate, and was responsible for reviewing and approving strategic, resourcing, reputational and policy matters related to education and student experience institution-wide. It reviewed and approved systems and processes that enabled delivery of the Strategic Plan and coordinated decision-making for education and student experience across all institutes, departments and faculties. ESSC reports are intended to provide assurance to Senate that these responsibilities were being discharged appropriately.

That this report provided an overview of items considered at ESSC meetings on 2 February and 7 April 2022.

Discussed:

That Senate enjoyed the ESSC report and thanked the Education Strategy Manager for producing the report.

**Senate/2021-22/Paper 4F**

## Partnerships

**66. Partnerships Update**

Received and considered: A partnerships update, including UNIC and the Joint Faculty.

Reported:

That the teach out plan had now been finalised for the UNIC MBBS. The plan required UNIC to provide evidence to confirm that the resources, structures and processes that support the effective delivery of the programme remain in place until 2025 and beyond, if needed. The teach out plan was being successfully reviewed regularly by the joint St George's-UNIC Executive Group; reviews had taken place in February and May 2022.

That the University had made itself available to twin with a Ukrainian training institution, as part of the UK-Ukraine Twinning programme, run by Universities UK (UUK). This would entail providing support to academics and students affected by the war in Ukraine. The Director of Partnerships was meeting with the UUK consultants tomorrow to discuss what was involved in the programme and see whether it was feasible for SGUL.

**Senate/2021-22/Paper 4G**

**67. Update on Joint Faculty Dissolution**

Received and considered: An oral update on the Joint Faculty Dissolution, presented by the Academic Lead for Quality and Partnerships.

Reported:

That the staff consultation had taken place and had now closed.

That SGUL now had the list of staff who would be transferring to the University, which had allowed SGUL to make direct contact with staff. SGUL had embarked on a communications schedule, created a welcome message from the Principal and a video message from the Chief Operating Officer, which had been sent to transferring Professional Services staff.

That a town hall had taken place last week, which had been useful and it had been a great way to engage with staff.

That there would be some informal events to introduce staff to SGUL leaders.

The Academic Lead for Quality and Partnerships thanked all the staff involved who were working very hard to get work done by the 31 July deadline. A lot of this was work that could not be progressed until the final list of transferring staff had been received.

That work was continuing regarding the teach out for small but complex programmes.

That it was important to highlight the risks and so there was a Joint Faculty Dissolution risk register with some high level risks being monitored by the Safety Management Committee. For example, maintaining the staff base was a high risk – there had been a number of resignations of key staff during the dissolution. There were also risks around the sheer volume of IT work.

That discussions were ongoing regarding the name of the new medical institute, to ensure it is inclusive for the staff coming into SGUL. There would be a consultation to see what the best option would be, which would include allied health staff.

Discussed:

That some highly active research staff would be coming across, and there is a concern in their eyes that they will lose their Kingston inboxes; they had requested an SGUL e-mail account in order to transfer their contacts and research across to lower the risk of losing these. The Director of IT, who was the SIRO, stated that staff can only bring data into the SGUL infrastructure if they had permission from the owner. The IT team were working to get an agreement to bring data over from Kingston. This process was being completed department by department. There were contractors on site now and so the IT team would be gaining momentum with the data migrations. There would be a town hall this Friday afternoon, where one of the big messages was not to attempt to migrate yourself; staff must follow processes.

That in one team, three people were going to transfer across, but one had since retired. The team wanted to know if the money for that post would transfer across, and could the team then appoint someone else to fill the role, with those funds. The Director of Finance stated that the finance teams were still desegregating the budget at the moment, and this could be discussed outside of the meeting.

## Quality

**68. Annual Monitoring**

Received and considered: An update on Annual Monitoring.

Reporting:

That this was an annual process where programme teams undertook a self-evaluation. The outcomes were reported year on year to the monitoring committee structures, i.e. to the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC) and then to Senate.

That an action plan that QAEC had put together was included in the report. The plan was based on engagement with the programme teams. There had been a useful enhancement meeting in QAEC which had focused on the action plans of individual programmes and drew them together with input across the board. There was some great work coming out of that meeting.

That issues escalated to QAEC by programme teams and FQC, TPCC and UPC were highlighted, and a theme was concerns around staff workload.

That some work was ongoing regarding the student online survey system – Dr Baba Sheba was leading on this.

That the Chairs of QAEC and ESSC liaised regularly regarding the action plan.

**Senate/2021-22/Paper 4H**

**69. External Examiner Appointments**

Considered and approved: the appointment of the following External Examiners, endorsed by UPC, to serve for four years; and their memberships of the Boards of Examiners to start from the 2022-23 academic session:

Nominee	Programme and Section of Course	Appointment to commence
Josephine Morris Senior Lecturer in Physiotherapy Winchester University	BSc Physiotherapy MSc Physiotherapy	2022/23 (subject to confirmation)
Vicky MacBean Lecturer in Physiotherapy Brunel University	BSc Physiotherapy MSc Physiotherapy	2022/23
Dr Louise Hickey Associate Professor in Biomedical Science University of Nottingham	MBBS 4 year 1	2022/23

**Senate/2021-22/Paper 4I**

**70. Reports from the sub-committees of Senate**

Received and considered: A report from the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC).

Reported:

That apprenticeship provision is subject to Ofsted inspection and SGUL had an Ofsted visit just before Easter. The outcome of “requires improvement” is quite disappointing for the University, despite having limited apprenticeship provision (on two academic programmes – advanced clinical practice and healthcare science) and only 31 learners in total. The report from the visit had since been received and had been approved. This would come back, alongside an action plan, to a future meeting of Senate.

Discussed:

That Ofsted inspections would happen at very short notice, and that one of the programmes inspected (Advanced Clinical Practice) was in teach out, because there was little interest from employers for students trained via this route.

That the OfS were pushing apprenticeships from an Access and Participation viewpoint. It was noted that SGUL had been asked to produce and submit a new Access and Participation plan.

That there was a Joint Strategic Board with the SGUH Trust where it had been noted that the OfS included the Access and Participation in their capital bids.

That the Operational Excellence team were doing some work on standardising policies for admissions and mitigating circumstances. The task and finish group had met today to push this work forwards. Standardising the policies would also help improve student wellbeing and satisfaction.

**Senate/2021-22/Paper 4J**

## Research

### 71. Reports from the sub-committees of Senate

Received and considered: A report from the Research Committee.

Reported:

That the report had not been received by some of the Committee members so would need to come back to the next meeting.

The Research Excellence Framework (REF) result had not yet been published. Individual organisation feedback from the REF had only been published this month. Therefore a full report would be going to the next Research Committee, and then would be reported to Senate, Executive Board and also to Council.

Senate/2021-22/Paper 4K

## Matters for Report

### 72. \*Student Recruitment Targets 2023-24

Received and noted: Student Recruitment Targets for 2023-24.

Senate/2021-22/Paper 4L

### 73. \*Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) Annual Statement

Received and noted: the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) Annual Statement.

Senate/2021-22/Paper 4M

### 77. Actions taken by the Chair

\*Received and noted: Decisions taken on behalf of Senate by the Chair since the last meeting of Senate.

Senate/2021-22/Paper 4N

### 78. Student Cases

Received and noted:

- (i) A Fitness to Study or Practise Hearing Committee was convened to consider the case of a P Year MBBS student and determined that the student should receive a number of conditions and undertakings.
- (ii) A Fitness to Study or Practise Hearing Committee was convened to consider the case of a First Year OT student and determined that the student should be expelled with immediate effect.
- (iii) A Fitness to Study or Practise Hearing Committee was convened to consider the case of a F Year MBBS student and determined that the student should receive a number of conditions and undertakings.

### 79. Minutes of Senate Sub-Committees

Noted that minutes of the following Senate sub-committees were available on request:

- a) Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee
- b) Research Degrees Committee (unreserved)
- c) Research Committee
- d) Student Support and Welfare Committee
- e) Taught Postgraduate Courses Committee
- f) Undergraduate Programmes Committee.

### 80. Any other business

No other business was raised at this meeting.

### 81. Dates of meetings in 2021-22

Tuesday 5 July 2022 – Joint with Executive Board.

All meetings commence at 2.00pm.

EW /27 June 2022