

Senate Extraordinary Meeting

Tuesday 25 January 2022

Minutes

Present: Professor Jenny Higham (Chair), Professor Rachel Allen, Chris Baker, Professor Iain Beith, Professor Dot Bennett, Dr Florencia Cavodeassi, Professor Charlotte Clark, Sue David, Dr Kate Everett, Professor Jon Friedland, George Hadjiyiannakis, Sally Hayward, Julie Hendry, Dr Vanessa Ho, Dr Carwyn Hooper, Dr Marcus Jackson, Becky Kemp-Arnold, Angela Kubacki, Professor Jodi Lindsay, Karen Lobb-Rossini, Georga Longhurst, Professor Julian Ma, Dr Rosie MacLachlan, Dr Aileen O'Brien, Professor Katalin Török, Professor Jane Saffell, Philip Sedgwick, Dean Semmens, Dr Carol Shiels, Dr Jennifer Stott, Dr Ferran Valderrama, Dr Andrew Walley.

In attendance: Godfrey Allen (Council member observing), Derek Baldwinson, Rob Churm, Jenny Laws, Sian Marshall, Susan McPheat, Paul Ratcliffe, Emma Whitaker (clerk).

Apologies: Dr Marcus Bhargava, Dr Mark Bodman-Smith, Professor Kathy Curtis, Dr Julia Gale, Professor Cilla Harries, Jeannie Watkins.

26. Apologies for absence

Apologies were noted as listed above.

27. Minutes

Considered and approved:

- (i) The Minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2021.

Senate/2021-22/Paper 2A

- (ii) The minutes of the joint meeting with Executive Board, held on 7 December 2021.

Senate/2021-22/Paper 2B

28. Matters arising from the minutes

Received and considered: Open actions from the Senate Action Tracker.

Discussed:

Action 1: To review the Senate membership again in Spring 2022 – this action was not yet due.

Action 2: The Joint Faculty have established an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) action group, chaired by Professor Kathy Curtis. It was suggested that this group link in with the Dean for EDI – The Dean for EDI had reached out to the EDI action group, so this action can be closed. It was noted that a new member of Joint Faculty staff will be joining the group.

Action 3: A report would be made to Senate on the PTES and PRES Postgraduate Student Satisfaction survey results in due course – The Deputy Principal (Education) reported that some data is now available but the graduate school wanted to review the comments and reports in further detail. The Deputy Principal (Education) will report back to the Senate on the 14 June.

Action 4: Programme Monitoring Committees to be asked to review pastoral support at programme level to share good practice and to work towards consistency in provision – This action was in process, having been discussed at a previous meeting of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC). The Academic Lead for Quality and Partnerships would discuss this further with the Chair of the QAEC and would update at the next Senate meeting.

Senate/2021-22/Paper 2C

Matters for Approval

29. Academic Quality Assurance Report

Considered and approved: A paper on academic quality assurance, for onward approval at the February Council.

Reported:

That a report on academic quality assurance is an item in the Council's annual schedule of business to provide academic assurance to the Council as required by the CUC Higher Education Code of Governance. This report covered current programmes and assessment outcomes for undergraduate degrees up to and including the 2021 academic year. The Academic Lead for Quality and Partnerships would be presenting this paper to Council.

That Council had an interest in broader academic governance and was keen to understand that the approach taken by SGUL was robust. Improving reporting on academic governance matters had also been a recommendation from the KPMG audit of governance. QAEC had therefore asked for the report on quality assurance to be produced earlier in the annual cycle going forwards, so that any actions taken in relation to the themes highlighted in the report could also be included in future reports to Council. It was noted that it took some time to prepare the data and then to discuss and agree any actions that would be required.

That complaints and appeals would be subject to a separate paper as Council had requested to see more detail around the range of issues considered and any actions arising from the review of cases from 2020-21.

Discussed:

Whether it was realistic to ask for the academic quality assurance report to be prepared earlier in the annual cycle, when considering workloads and data availability. It was felt that this may be challenging, as it would compress a number of processes, and would need to be thought through carefully to see if it could be achieved. It was noted that data is available from the HESA return at the end of October but that it also needs to be cross referenced with other data.

Whether Senate should be concerned about possible grade inflation on the Paramedic Science programme. It was noted that there had been some variation in the proportion of good degrees awarded to students on the programme, which suggested that this was not a case of grade inflation and that Senate should not be concerned. It was also acknowledged that adjustments to assessment strategies and methodologies necessitated by COVID-19 would have had a bearing on the degree awards in the last two years, which made it difficult to make year on year comparisons and, beyond that, to determine whether increases or decreases in the proportions of honours degree awards are the consequence of COVID-19 changes or educational enhancements.

It was noted that SGUL had never had a formal investigation from the Office for Students (OfS) in relation to degree outcomes and the current data showed that the pattern over time of a sustained increase in the proportions of good honours degrees awarded had now reversed in 2020-21 (81.70% in 2020-21 compared to 83.20% in 2019-20). The OfS had paused their detailed analysis of sector-wide degree outcomes due to COVID-19, which meant that comparisons with the sector were not possible at the current time.

The Deputy Principal (Education) reported that the data from the academic quality assurance report was incredibly useful to the Inclusive Education Steering Group. The Group is using a three-year average to look for trends in regards to inclusivity. The work that has been undertaken on improving data, such as having data at programme level, has allowed the Group to see patterns and to target opportunities for enhancement and to share best practice.

30. Board of Examiner Membership

Considered and approved: The proposed Board of Examiners membership for the concurrent award of MSc Family Medicine, UNic.

Reported:

That this is the final year of this award, as there remain some SGUL students on the course due to previous interruption of studies. At the end of the year this award will return to UNic for all teaching and delivery.

Senate/2021-22/Paper 2E

Matters for Report

31. 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 2F

32. Student Cases

Reported:

- (i) A Student Appeal Committee was convened to consider the case of a student on the BSc Paramedic Science programme under the Procedure for consideration for a final discretionary attempt at an assessment and determined that the student should be permitted a final discretionary attempt at the assessment.
- (ii) A Fitness to Study or Practise Hearing Committee was convened to consider the case of a student on the BSc Diagnostic Radiography and determined that the student should be expelled.
- (iii) A Fitness to Study or Practise Hearing Committee was convened to consider the case of a student on the BSc Physiotherapy and determined that the student should receive a number of conditions.
- (iv) A Fitness to Study or Practise Hearing Committee was convened to consider the case of a student on the MSc Physiotherapy and determined that the student should receive a number of conditions.
- (v) A Fitness to Study or Practise Hearing Committee was convened to consider the case of a student on the BSc Paramedic Science and determined that the student should be expelled.
- (vi) A Fitness to Study or Practise Hearing Committee was convened to consider the case of a student on the MBBS programme and determined that the student should receive a formal written warning.
- (vii) A Student Appeal Committee was convened to consider the case of a student on the MBBS programme under the Procedure for consideration for a final discretionary attempt at an assessment and determined that the student should be permitted a final discretionary attempt at the assessment.

33. 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.

34. Any other business

No other business was raised at the meeting.

35. Dates of meetings in 2021-22

- Tuesday 1 March 2022
- Tuesday 14 June 2022
- Tuesday 5 July 2022 – Joint with Executive Board

All meetings commence at 2.00pm.

EW /27 January 2021

UNCONFIRMED