UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

SENATUS ACADEMICUS

Minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2007

Present: Principal, Professor Houlihan, Ms C Macaslan, Professors Gane, Haites, Rodger, MacGregor, Webster, Killham, Fraser, Flin, Dawson, Saunders, Stevenson, Beaumont, Frost, Ms M Pearson, Professors Secombes, Salmon, Cotter, Walkden, Robinson, Mordue, Dr P Edwards, Professor Long, Mrs L Stephen, Professor Burgess, Mrs W Pirie, Dr WD McCausland, Dr B Marsden, Dr M O'Siochru, Dr J Schaper, Dr J Ravet, Mr A Valyo, Dr S Lawrie, Dr J Stewart, Mr SC Styles, Dr A Arnason, Mr N Curtis, Dr D Scott, Dr M Boroujerdi, Professors Heys, Liversidge, Dr T MacFarlane, Dr P Benson, Professor Anderson, Dr WTA Harrison, Professor Levi, Dr MR Masson, Dr TJF Norman, Dr SP Townsend, Dr RPK Wells, Professor Wiercigroch, Dr LH Philip, Dr N Spedding, Mr R Miller, Mr J Hardy, Mr S McMenemy, Mr S Ochola and Miss S Trofino.

Apologies: Professors Logan, Sleeman, Bruce, Sharp, Macinnes, Hughes, Duff, Black, Dr P Schlicke, Mr A Arthur, Dr D Molyneaux, Dr J Forbes, Mrs G Kirkpatrick, Dr AD King, Dr J Sternberg, Professors Lurie, N'Dow, Dr A Schofield, Dr ER van Teijlingen and Dr S Bagaeen.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

33. The minutes of the meeting held on 2 May 2007 were approved.

STATEMENT BY PRINCIPAL

34. In opening the meeting, the Principal congratulated all those who were working so hard towards the preparations for the forthcoming Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). Looking forward, he reminded Senate that the Curriculum Review would be conducted over the next two years and that he had asked Professor MacGregor and Ms Macaslan to take a lead in the process. During next session, the review process would be shaped by debate at all levels across the institution and a number of briefing papers would be circulated over the summer to inform discussion. He encouraged Senate members to bring forward their ideas and to actively engage in the process of review. Following this year of discussion and debate, the following year would be used to develop and shape the new curriculum.

ANNUAL REPORTS FROM THE HEADS OF COLLEGES

35. The Senate received copies of the annual reports for 2006/07 from the three Colleges (copies filed with the principal copy of the minutes). The Heads of College each gave presentations on their reports highlighting their College’s main achievements in 2006/07, the challenges facing their College and their future aspirations.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2007-2010

36. Mr Cannon briefly outlined the progress made since the last meeting of the Senate in regard to the Strategic Plan for 2007-2010. This was the second time that the Plan has been considered by the Senate and comments made at the last meeting had been incorporated. In addition, a foreword by the Principal and by the Vice-Principals for Learning & Teaching and Research & Commercialisation had been added. The Plan presented for approval was therefore the final draft. Mr Cannon invited comment from the Senate but no issues were raised and accordingly, the Plan was approved.

DRAFT LEARNING AND TEACHING FRAMEWORK: 2007-2010

37.1 Ms Macaslan, in presenting the draft Learning and Teaching Framework for 2007-2010, informed Senate that this document was largely derived from the Learning and Teaching Strategy approved by the Senate in May 2006. She informed Senate that the Framework set out the University’s vision for learning and teaching and would serve as a tool to aid College and School planning. The Framework would also be a valuable tool for self-evaluation of learning and teaching across the institution.
37.2 There followed a brief discussion about the role of the Framework in the forthcoming Curriculum Review. Ms Macaslan confirmed that it would provide the foundations on which the Curriculum Review would be built. It was also agreed that the foreword to the document would be amended to emphasise that the Framework spans both undergraduate and postgraduate provision.

COMMUNICATION FROM UNIVERSITY COURT
(22 May 2007)

1. Equality and Diversity: Proposal to revise the University of Aberdeen Committee Structure

38.1 The Senate noted that the Court, for its part, had approved a recommendation to revise the Equal Opportunities Committee’s structure and composition.

2. Validation Agreement: UHI/Faculty of Science and Technology, Orkney College

38.2 The Senate noted that the Court, for its part, had approved the Validation Agreement as referred to it by the Senate.

3. Amendment to the Composition of the University’s Committee on Teaching and Learning

38.3 The Senate noted that the Court, for its part, had approved the amendment to the composition of the University’s Committee on Teaching and Learning as referred to it by the Senate.

4. Draft Resolution No 249 of 2007
[Changes in Regulations for Various Degrees]

38.4 The Senate noted that the Court had approved Resolution No 249 of 2006 [Changes in Regulations for Various Degrees] which had previously been approved by the Business Committee of the General Council and the Senate.

5. Draft Resolution No 250 of 2007
[Regulations for the Degrees of Bachelor of Arts in Theology (with CertHE and DipHE Options) and Bachelor of Arts in Youth Work with Applied Theology (with CertHE and DipHE Options)]

38.5 The Senate noted that the Court had approved Resolution No 250 of 2006 [Regulations for the Degrees of Bachelor of Arts in Theology (with CertHE and DipHE Options) and Bachelor of Arts in Youth Work with Applied Theology (with CertHE and DipHE Options)] which had been approved by the Business Committee of the General Council and the Senate.

REPORT FROM THE UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON TEACHING AND LEARNING
(18 MAY 2007)

1. Regulations for the Preparation & Submission of Postgraduate Theses

39.1 The Senate approved, on the recommendation of the University Committee on Teaching and Learning, the amendment to Regulations for the Preparation & Submission of Postgraduate Theses and to forward to the University Court, the draft Resolution ‘Amendments to Regulations for Postgraduate Study’ (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

39.2 The Senate agreed to ask the University Court that, in accordance with the provisions of Section 6 (2) of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, the draft Resolution be passed forthwith, so that the amended provisions may be applied with effect from 15 September 2007.

2. Monitoring Students Progress

39.3 The Senate noted that the UCTL had considered a report reviewing the operation of the system for Monitoring Students’ Progress and Class Certificate Refusal during the first half-session of 2006/07. The UCTL had noted that, although there had been a substantial rise in the number of monitoring reports issued since the last comparable review in 2004/05, there had also been a rise in the proportions of students going on to achieve passes in the courses concerned. The UCTL were, therefore, satisfied that the process continued to offer support to those students who had been identified as being ‘at risk’.
The UCTL had approved some minor amendments to the system for implementation in 2007/08, which, it was anticipated, would further improve communication between all stakeholders in the system.

### Changes to the Supplementary Regulations for the Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE)

The Senate noted that the UCTL had approved changes to the Supplementary Regulations for the Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) required as a result of restructuring of the programme. The changes were required as a consequence of combining the PGDE (Primary) and PGDE (Secondary) programmes under a new common framework (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

### Term Dates

The Senate noted that following the meeting on 18 May, the Convener approved amendments to term dates for the Professional Graduate Diploma for 2007-2008:

- **Spring Term Closes**: Friday 28 March 2008
- **Summer Term Opens**: Monday 14 April 2008

### COLLEGE OF PHYSICAL SCIENCES – SCHOOL STRUCTURE WITHIN THE COLLEGE

The Senate, for its part, approved proposals from the College of Physical Sciences for the establishment of two Schools of Engineering and Natural & Computing Sciences from the existing School of Engineering & Physical Sciences.

### SENATE COMMITTEES

#### Equality and Diversity Committee

The Senate, for its part, approved, on the recommendation of the Senate Business Committee, proposals to revise the Equality and Diversity Committee structure in the University. The proposals had been approved by the University Court, for its part, at its meeting on 22 May 2007.

#### Student Affairs Committee

The Senate, for its part, approved, on the recommendation of the Senate Business Committee, revisions to the remit and composition of the Student Affairs Committee.

### REPORT FROM THE ACADEMIC STANDARDS COMMITTEES

#### Validation of Faculty of Biochemistry and Genetics, Ness Foundation

The Senate, for its part, approved, on the recommendation of the Academic Standards Committee (Postgraduate), the recommendation that the Faculty of Biochemistry and Genetics, based at the Ness Foundation, an academic partner of UHI Millennium Institute be validated under the terms of the accreditation agreement currently in force between the University and UHI to deliver the research degree programmes in the area of Biochemistry and Genetics.

The validation would remain in force for five years under the terms of the accreditation agreement between the University and UHI. The validation proposal was subject to the academic area meeting recommendations specified in the relevant report by a stipulated date. The report from the validation panel is available at: [http://www.abdn.ac.uk/registry/internal/documents/RDVBioGen.doc](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/registry/internal/documents/RDVBioGen.doc).

#### Resit Provision in the LLM

The Senate further noted that the Academic Standards Committee (Postgraduate) had approved a proposal to allow students on LLM programmes to resit examinations in accordance with the existing terms of paragraph 8.2 of the *Grade Spectrum*. 
3. New and Discontinued Courses and Programmes

41.6 The Senate further noted the changes to the list of courses and programmes approved by the Academic Standards Committees at their recent meetings, available at [http://www.abdn.ac.uk/senastracking/report/](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/senastracking/report/)

**MERGER WITH THE ROWETT RESEARCH INSTITUTE**

42. The Senate, for its part, approved the Ordinance in regard to the merger with the Rowett Research Institute and agreed to recommend its approval to the University Court.

**DIRECTORS OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES**

43. The Senate noted that the Senate Business Committee had approved, on the recommendation of the relevant Heads of College, the appointment of Dr D Hendry as Director of the Undergraduate Programmes (Engineering) for a period of 3 years (vice Dr P Davidson), and the appointment of Dr F Murphy as Director of Undergraduate Programmes (Divinity) for a period of 3 years (vice Professor F Watson).

**ELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS TO THE SENATUS ACADEMICUS AND ELECTION OF SENATE ASSESSORS TO THE UNIVERSITY COURT**

44.1 The Senate noted that the following had been elected to serve on the Senatus Academicus with immediate effect to 30 September 2010 unless otherwise stated, in the constituencies stated:

- **School of Divinity, History and Philosophy Constituency**
  - Dr M O'Siochru

- **School of Language and Literature**
  - Professor A Saunders
  - Dr J Stewart

- **School of Social Science**
  - Dr A Arnason

- **School of Biological Sciences Constituency**
  - Dr P Fraser
  - Dr M Young

- **School of Medical Sciences Constituency**
  - Dr I Greig
  - Dr B Müller

- **School of Medicine Constituency**
  - Professor SD Heys
  - Professor J N'Dow
  - Dr A Schofield (until 30 September 2008)
  - Professor N Webster

- **School of Geosciences**
  - Dr S Bagaeen
  - Dr N Spedding
The Senate further noted that the following had been elected as Senate Assessors to the University Court for the period 1 October 2007 to 30 September 2011, in the Colleges stated:

College of Arts & Social Sciences
Professor C Fynsk

College of Physical Sciences
Dr P Edwards
Professor GR Robinson

GRADUATIONS IN ABSENCE

The Senate noted that details of those qualified to receive degrees, diplomas and other awards who had applied to have them conferred in absentia could be viewed in the Registry (see appendix to Minutes of June 2007).

The Senate agreed to confer the degrees on, and award the diplomas and other qualifications to the persons stated.
College of Arts and Social Sciences

Professor Bryan MacGregor
Head of College
2. CASS academic staff, students, research income
3. The graceful swans

- **Recruitment**: chairs from Aarhus, Cambridge, Duke, Harvard, Houston, Indiana and UCD
- **PGT(U)**: +30%; **PGR**: +34%
- **Research income**: +8.5% (after +26% 05/06)
- **RAE**: 80% submission (excl. Education); 25% ECRs
- **Major research projects**: STNE year 2 (£2.7m); Inclusive Practice (October 2006, £1.4m); SIRE (£0.84m); Entrepreneurship (£0.77m); Gaelic SRDG (£4.3m, £1.2 to UoA)
4. More graceful swans

- Conferences, lectures and seminars: Union; Great Escapes
- RIISS nominated for Queen’s Anniversary Prizes
- Financial targets: met for fourth year
- Improvement and expansion of College estate: Edward Wright Annex; social space; Experimental Economics laboratory; Luthuli House
5. Paddling frantically

- Strategic and operational plans
- Succession planning; Support Staff Forum; IiP
- College Newsletter
- UG and PG recruitment; MA Applicant Day; Retention
- Bursaries; marketing; overseas trips
- RAE; seed funding support; workshops; R & I
- Teaching Prizes; peer observation
- Teaching workload data collection; Forums
6. Challenges

- Balance intellectual ambition with financial reality
- Delivery: areas of investment and major projects
- Rebuild philosophy
- Staff retention and development
- Library budgets
- UG & PG reviews – attractiveness and efficiency
- Student recruitment and retention
- Expand overseas recruitment; links with employers
7. Aspirations: swans and paddling

- A major international centre for research and teaching in arts and social science
- Strategic but also opportunistic
- Theoretically informed; strong disciplines; permeable boundaries
- Projects: Centre for Modern Thought; visual culture; citizenship; science, religion & technology
- Maintain funded numbers; overseas recruitment
- Increase research income
8. Conclusion

- We have come a long way
- We have a long way still to go
College of Life Sciences and Medicine

Research led College aiming to improve society

www.abdn.ac.uk/
Successes

Grant Applications and Awards in the last 12 months

Value of applications £112m
Value of awards £46m

Research Council applic £41.5m
Research Council awards £13.9m (last year £5.9)

Examples

£1.2m NERC grants in one round to Oceanlab PIs for Marine Science projects
£1.5m SRDG funding to Psychology for Patient Safety project
£2.5m EPSRC grant for Imaging project
Successes

Staff appointments – 12 months from October 2006

Harkany            Karolinska Institute, Sweden (SULSA)
Redpath            CEH Banchory (ACES)
Van der Waal       Netherlands (ACES)
Bartos             University of Freiburg
Erskine            UCL
Vargesson          Imperial College London
Ferguson           University of Edinburgh (WYETH)
De Bari            King’s College London (WYETH)
Gerdthan           Malmo University Hospital, Sweden (SIRE)

Initiatives likely to bring in over 30 new staff to College
Successes

Infrastructure developments
Challenges

The future post-RAE

Research framework

Research priorities

Developing staff and infrastructure
Challenges

UG and PGT science recruitment, maintaining competitiveness, student retention
Challenges

Collaborations

SIRE
SULSA
SINAPSE
Policing
Plant Science
Marine Biology
Patient safety – lead from Aberdeen
ACES – lead from Aberdeen
Fund raising activities

Bus – funded by first bus

Matthew Hay - £3.7M to date but with other large contributions possible

UCAN help make life better
Aspirations

Successful RRI merger

Fundraising to develop as ongoing income stream

Infrastructure including modern teaching environment for students, imaging institute, bioplex

Drug discovery/dentistry – our next big thing?
College of Life Sciences and Medicine

Research led College aiming to improve society

www.abdn.ac.uk/
Senate Report

PROFESSOR ALBERT A. RODGER
VICE-PRINCIPAL, HEAD OF COLLEGE OF PHYSICAL SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

June 2007
Since the Inception of the College of Physical Sciences (2003)

- Introduced staff change of about 40% within our College
- Influx of internationally highly regarded scientists
- New discipline & major new taught programmes launched
- Four fold increase in research grant & contract income
- 27% of staff externally funded
- College Income projected to reach £29m in 2007/08

46% of research income now from research councils

Participation in funding council sponsored research pooling initiatives and strategic partnerships that create scientific networks across Scotland and across disciplines.
Achievements: International Staff Recruitment

- Chair in Mathematical Sciences, from Ohio State University
- Chair in Pure Mathematics, from University of Birmingham
- Chair in Pure Mathematics, from Université Claude Bernard, Lyon
- Chair in Mathematics, from Reading University
- Chair in Mathematics, from University of Georgia, USA
- Vassili Gorbounov, Chair in Mathematics, from University of Kentucky
- Kilgour Chair in Geology, from Woods Hole Oceanographic Inst./MIT
- Chair in Materials Chemistry, from University of Dundee
- Chair in Human Environment Interactions, from Louvain University
- Chair in Engineering Hydraulics, from Nat. Inst. for Water and Atm. Res., New Zealand
- Chair in Geosciences, (SEERAD Chief Scientific Adviser)
- Chair in Complex & Non-Linear Systems, University of Sao Paulo
- William Neill, Chair in Spatial Planning from Queen’s Belfast
- John Nelson, Chair in Transport from Newcastle University
- Alexey Bondal, Chair in Mathematics from Russian Academy of Science
- Chair in Engineering Dynamics, from University of Manchester (FREng)
- Neil Price, Chair in Archaeology, University of Stockholm
- Chair in Engineering Dynamics from University of Cambridge (FRS)
- Robert McMeeking, Chair in Engineering Materials from University of California, SB
- Douglas Price, Chair in Archaeological Science, University of Wisconsin-Madison
- Ron Steel, Chair in Geology from University of Texas at Austin
- Chair in Computing Science, Carnegie Mellon University
Achievements:
Major Awards & Commercialisation

- $5.3M for International Technology Alliance (ITA) programme in Network and Information Sciences.
- Second (£1m+) Leverhulme grant to fund human-environment interactions research
- Industry funded (£1m+) research on reservoir modelling and distribution
- EPSRC Platform Grant – Natural Language Generation (£6m+)
- £897k from the BBSRC @ SysMo Initiative – cross College
- EBP:Aberdeen business with big idea for tackling climate change wins £40,000 prize in Shell Springboard competition
- Blue Flow: Enterprise Fellowship Award from Royal Society of Edinburgh/ Scottish Enterprise
- Brinker: Locate a Subsea Umbilical Leak for Norsk Hydro
### Achievements: Research

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Achievements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Archaeological Science</td>
<td>New in 2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>Centre for Marine Bio-Diversity; ScotChem;</td>
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<td>NRP Institute for Medical Technologies (with Engineering)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computing Science</td>
<td>SICS; ScotGrid; NRP Institute for Computational Systems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>Institute of Energy Technologies (with Geosciences);</td>
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<td></td>
<td>NRP Institute for Energy &amp; Clean Technology</td>
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<td>Centre for Applied Dynamics Research;</td>
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<td>Centre for Micro &amp; Nanomechanics;</td>
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<td>NRP Telford Institute; SULSA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geosciences</td>
<td>Institute for Coastal Science &amp; Management;</td>
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<td>Centre for Transport Research; SAGES</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>UK Institute for Fundamental Physics;</td>
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<td>SUPA II; NRP Centre for Complex Systems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Institute of Mathematics; (SIMS)</td>
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<td>Anglo-French Network on Representation Theory</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spatial Planning</td>
<td>Centre for Planning &amp; Environmental Management</td>
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New programmes in:
- Chemical engineering
- Petroleum Engineering
- Subsea Engineering

New programmes in:
- Spatial Planning
  (RPTI accreditation secured)
- Archaeology

New ventures:
- Global Challenges
- Systems Biology & Complex Systems

Achievements: Teaching & Learning
- Establishment of Science Communication Unit
- Award of Academic Staff Teaching Prize
- New programmes in:
  - Chemical engineering
  - Petroleum Engineering
  - Subsea Engineering

Explohub
International PhD Masterclass
(20 countries represented)
Challenges: Undergraduate Recruitment

Student recruitment - applications 2005 - 2007

Average retention across College = 12.7%
Challenges:
Income Growth
Staff & Student Recruitment

CPS Awards 2003 - 2007

CPS - Total PGR

CPS Age Profile - all academic, teaching and research staff 2006/7

CPS: Number of Research-only Staff 2006/07
Challenges:
Postgraduate Recruitment

PGT Students/Academic FTE 2005/06
All CoPS subjects

Aberdeen University CPS
7th highest

Growth target
80%
Fraser Noble Refurbishment programme
Commences June 2006

School of Natural & Computing Sciences
School of Geosciences
School of Engineering
Graduate School
Research Vision

1 To maintain an unwavering commitment to fundamental research, expressed through a diversity of strong, interconnected and outwardly reaching disciplines with the capacity to compete at the highest international level.

2 To create an environment that enables researchers to perform to their highest potential.

3 To be cognisant of, and responsive to, (but not exclusively driven by) the needs of industry, particularly in view of the region’s unique industrial base.