

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

SENATUS ACADEMICUS

Minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2017

Present: Professor I Diamond, Professor M Greaves, Professor P McGeorge, Professor J Paterson, Professor BD MacGregor, Dr P Sweeney, Dr D R Smith, Dr M Bain, Professor G Paton, Professor A Sahraie, Professor S Heys, Professor J Skakle, Professor D Jolley, Professor I Guz, Professor H Hutchison, Professor A Jenkinson, Professor C Kee, Professor E Pavlovskaja, Professor M Brown, Professor K Shennan, Mr D Auchie, Dr M Ehrenschwendtner, Professor R Wells, Mrs D Bruxvoort, Mrs L Tibbetts, Dr J Lamb, Dr L McCann, Professor N Hutchison, Dr A Sim, Professor J Schaper, Dr G Hough, Dr H Pierce, Dr P Ziegler, Dr R Shanks, Dr H Martin, Mrs M Stephen, Dr A Bryzgel, Dr T Rist, Dr P Glover, Mr S Styles, Dr M Mills, Dr A Oelsner, Dr A McKinnon, Professor M Pinard, Dr J Baird, Dr M Barker, Professor J Jayasinghe, Dr A Rajnicek, Dr K Kiezebrink, Dr M Brazzelli, Professor G Macfarlane, Dr N Vargesson, Dr D MacCallum, Dr J Hislop, Dr A Jack, Dr G Jones, Dr P Murchie, Dr N Mody, Dr S Fielding, Dr K Foster, Professor A Lee, Professor G Nixon, Dr D Ray, Professor D Jovicic, Professor A Akisanya, Professor M Kashtalyan, Dr O Menshykov, Dr N Schofield, Dr J Oliver, Dr A Ebinghaus, Dr C North, Professor J Feldmann, Professor G Coghill, Dr M da Silva Baptista, Dr B Martin, Dr W Vasconcelos, Dr N Oren, Mr L Ogubie, Mr O Kucerak, Miss K Metcalfe, Miss K Paterson-Hunter, Miss I Ewart, Mr Y Dmitrov, Mr K Olivier and Miss K Smith

Apologies: Professor N Haites, Professor M Ross, Professor P Hannaford, Professor M Campbell, Dr G Gordon, Professor E Welch, Mr M Whittington, Professor J Masthoff, Dr R Neilson, Dr M Hole, Dr P Bishop, Mr E Usenmez, Dr T Fahey Palma, Professor W Naphy, Professor P Nimmo, Dr A Lewis, Dr B Tribout, Professor P Mealar, Dr A Simpson, Dr Z Yihdego, Dr T Argounova-Low, Professor D Anderson, Dr D Lusseau, Dr J Macdiarmid, Dr M Delibegović, Dr D Scott, Dr A Venkatesh, Professor R Barker, Dr I Cameron, Dr F Thies, Professor H Wallace, Dr E Nordmann, Dr M Jackson, Dr K Pilz, Dr B Rea, Professor C Grebogi, Miss D Connelly, Miss M Leskovska, Mr K Thomson-Duncan, Mr J Brown, Miss M Jensen, Mr N Johansson, Mr L Budrass, Miss I Donaldson, Mr K Rzetelski and Miss A McSeveney,

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- 26.1 The Principal opened the meeting, welcoming members of the Senate to the meeting.
- 26.2 The Principal informed the Senate that there was a proposed addition to the agenda, a discussion of the Rectorial Election. The Principal noted that the University Court had requested that Senate confirm whether or not due process had been followed by the Elections Committee in the matter of an appeal received as part of the Rectorial Election and, as such, invited Senators to confirm whether they were content to add the issue to the agenda, following item 8, the report from the University Court. No objections to this proposal were raised.
- 26.3 Mr Scott Styles proposed that the motion regarding Proposed Changes to Pensions for Academic and Academic Related Staff be taken earlier and immediately following agenda item 3 rather than as currently listed, as item 11. Mr Styles noted that the matter was of such importance, affecting every member of staff in the room and, as such, should be discussed before anyone was forced to leave.

- 26.4 The Principal acknowledged Mr Styles' proposal and suggested that many of the items on the agenda were of the utmost importance. Specifically, the Principal noted item 12, the Undergraduate Student Experience, as of importance to all Senators especially as this would be the last opportunity to discuss the item before the University undergoes Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR). He expressed that he would hope Senate would spend at least an hour on this item.
- 26.5 Professor Martin and Drs da Silva Baptista and Rist expressed their support for Mr Styles' proposal. No objections were raised and the meeting proceeded, with the revised agenda agreed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 27.1 The Principal invited members to confirm that they were content with the minute of the meeting of the Senate held on 18 October 2017. No objections to the minute were raised.
- 27.2 The Principal asked members to raise any matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda. No matters were raised and the meeting continued.

MOTION REGARDING THE SHARING OF SENATE MINUTES AND RECORDINGS

- 28.1 The Principal invited Mr Styles to propose his motion of the Sharing of Senate Minutes and Recordings.
- 28.2 Mr Styles informed the Senate that his proposal, to amend Standing Order no.9 to read as follows below, was intended to maximise transparency and communication within the University and to speed up the transmission of decisions to the wider community.

*9. (a) Minutes of Senate meetings shall be taken, all votes shall be recorded and noted, and the minutes submitted for approval by senate at the subsequent meeting of Senate by means of email, **and if necessary at the subsequent meeting of Senate. The method for amending the minutes is set out in (b) below:***

(b) Within 10 days of a Senate meeting the draft minutes of a Senate meeting shall be distributed via email to all senators by the Academic Registrar. Any senators wishing to correct the minutes must then reply with their corrections within 10 days of receipt of the draft minutes to the Academic Registrar. The Academic Registrar will then circulate via email to all senators the revised minutes. If any of the corrections are disputed by other senators, then that objection must be notified to the Academic Registrar within 5 days of the senators' receipt of any proposed amendments. Where there are any such objections then the decision as to whether or not to amend the minutes in the manner proposed will be deferred to the next meeting of Senate. The Academic Registrar will then publish the amended minutes on the Senate website no less than 30 days after the meeting of Senate, with a note if necessary indicating that certain amendments have to be approved by the next meeting of Senate. (b) will be renumbered and amended as follows (c) All meetings will be audio- recorded. All recordings of Senate meeting will be placed on the senate website."

- 28.3 Professor Greaves, responding to the motion, raised the issue of efficiency in providing Senators with both detailed minutes and the audio recording. Professor Greaves noted

that it takes two days of work to prepare the minute and although making clear that he was not suggesting such work was unjustified, Professor Greaves proposed that should the motion to make the audio recording available be approved, that it would be superfluous to retain both. He proposed that an alternative course of action would be to use the recording as the permanent record of the meeting and to provide an associated written action log.

28.4 Mr Styles expressed concern that it would be asking too much of Senators to ask them to sit through a Senate meeting again by way of audio recording. He proposed that the recording be made publically available until the next Senate meeting at which the minute is approved. He further noted that there are often months between Senate meetings and such a change would allow for the transmission of decisions as quickly as possible.

28.5 The Principal invited Senators to vote to on the motion as proposed by Mr Styles.

In favour of the motion:	45
Not in favour of the motion:	27
Abstaining from the vote:	14

A vote having been taken, the Principal confirmed that the motion had been passed.

MOTION FROM SENATE TO COURT REGARDING SHARING OF COURT MINUTES

29.1 The Principal invited Dr Shanks to present her motion regarding the sharing of Court Minutes to the Senate. Dr Shanks noted that the motion was similar to that of the motion regarding the sharing of Senate minutes and recordings and was also proposed in order to expedite the flow of information and to increase transparency across the University. Dr Shanks informed the Senate that the motion was supported by the Senate Assessors and the elected staff members to Court. She noted that the motion sought as much transparency as possible in the operations of the Court.

29.2 Mrs Inglis, University Secretary, responded to confirm that the Court currently complies with the Good Higher Education Governance Code (2013) and is consistent with it. She acknowledged that a new Governance code had been published but its implementation was not yet a requirement. Mrs Inglis informed the Senate that she expected the new code would become a condition of grant and that the University Court would comply with it fully. Mrs Inglis sought clarification from Dr Shanks regarding the interpretation of Paragraph 45 of the Good Higher Education Governance 2017 Code. Mrs Inglis stated that her understanding of the paragraph was that it referred to the circulation of agendas to Court members, with the second sentence regarding circulation of papers to the general University population. Dr Shanks agreed with Mrs Inglis' interpretation of the code. She stated the importance of not waiting for the implementation of the revised code.

29.3 Mrs Inglis further sought clarification from Dr Shanks with regards point 4 of the motion, as to whether this referred to confirmed or draft minutes. Dr Shanks confirmed the motion was intended to refer to draft minutes.

29.4 Mr Styles, a seconder of the motion, stated that its purpose was to speed up the transmission of Court decisions. He expressed his concern that the current position meant that outcomes determined by the Court were unknown until the next meeting of the Court, often months later. He stated that decisions relevant to the University

community should be communicated immediately and that there was no reason why this couldn't take place. Mr Styles acknowledged that there would be confidential matters which should remain as such, however, that other issues could be communicated. He further noted the importance of the circulation of the Court agenda and the importance of the University community being made aware of what the Court, the University's governing body is to discuss, in advance of their meeting.

- 29.5 The Principal noted the comments made and proposed, if Senate were in agreement, that the Senate ask the Court to provide a digest, in the same way as Senate provides, within 48 hours providing a breakdown of issues discussed and outcomes reached. Dr Shanks noted that a Court Digest would be very welcome.
- 29.6 In advance of a vote being taken, Dr North sought clarity on the proposed revisions to the motion. The Principal confirmed the agreed amendment to point 4 and the circulation of draft minutes and the proposal a digest be provided within 48 hours of a meeting.
- 29.7 The Principal invited Senators to vote to on the motion as proposed by Dr Shanks, subject to the amendments as confirmed.

In favour of the motion:	79
Not in favour of the motion:	2
Abstaining from the vote:	1

A vote having been taken, the Principal confirmed that the motion had been passed.

UPDATE FROM PRINCIPAL

- 30.1 The Principal, in providing an update to the Senate, began by acknowledging recent announcements on Europe, welcoming the announcement on citizenship. The Principal stated the need to build a fair and proper way of enabling the University to compete in a global labour market for staff. He informed the Senate that discussions on research remain ongoing. He expressed his belief that it was likely the UK would be part of FP9 in addition to its commitment to H2020.
- 30.2 The Principal acknowledged the Finance Secretary, Mr Derek Mackay would deliver his budget on Thursday 14 December. The Principal noted that the Budget would provide the allocation of funding to Universities and that he expected this to be a flat cash announcement.
- 30.3 With regards student funding, the Principal welcomed the report following the Independent Review of Student Financial Support in Scotland undertaken by Jayne-Anne Gadhia. He further noted that the operationalising of the Office for Students south of the border would take place in early 2018. This is expected to increase further the focus on and importance of the quality of the student experience.
- 30.4 The Principal acknowledged the importance of Chancellor Hammond's budget and its enacting of the Conservative manifesto pledge to move to 2.4% of GDP on research.
- 30.5 The Principal noted that the opening of the Qatar campus had gone well and commended those staff involved in its success. He noted that the recent announcement of the Queen's Anniversary Award and the three recent Leverhulme grants awarded to the University were worthy of particular congratulations, as were the

recent student sporting achievements of Kim Beattie and Zoe Clark and the highly successful Christmas carol service in St Machar's Cathedral of a piece by Paul Mealor and Sir Tony Robinson, a new take on the Christmas Story called the Three Ships, featuring Ian Glen, star of Game of Thrones, and the University Choir and musicians from the student body.

- 30.6 Mr Styles proposed, with regard the students successful in sporting achievements, that the Senate formally send its congratulations to both. The Principal stated he would be delighted if the Senate would be so minded.

QUESTIONS TO THE PRINCIPAL

- 31.1 Dr Rist was invited to ask his question of the Principal.
- 31.2 Dr Rist, on behalf of the Transnational Education (TNE) group asked the following question:

The TNE group set up by Senate to review the University's present TNE procedures, has noted that there is a meeting at Westminster on 16th January 2018 to discuss the future of Transnational Education. It is essential that our University remains engaged and up to date with any TNE developments at government level, and that this is communicated back to relevant staff in a transparent manner. We therefore request current information on what the Principal's plans are for this meeting, what key issues will be addressed that are particularly important from our perspective and position in Scotland, and who will be in attendance with him. For purposes of transparency and information-dissemination, we also request that information from this meeting is fed back to the next regular meeting of Senate, and to other appropriate groups and individuals in the university.

- 31.3 The Principal stated that the meeting referred to was run by Westminster Conferences, a private company. He noted that Professor Wells would be attending on behalf of the University. He noted, however, that a meeting on TNE was also being held by UUK at which the University would also be represented. The Principal expressed the importance of networking and keeping up with best practice.

HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING

- 32.1 The Principal moved to the agenda item of Health, Safety and Wellbeing. He invited any questions or comments on Health, Safety and Wellbeing. He noted that he had recently undertaken a fantastic safety visit to colleagues in the Cruickshank Building where he had been very impressed. He noted that during this visit it was asked, and that it had been asked by others, if it were possible for there to be a shorter version of the two day Mental Health Training. While this wouldn't provide the full Mental Health Training qualification or knowledge, it would form an integral part of awareness raising. The Principal confirmed that he had asked Mr Qamar, Director of Health, Safety and Wellbeing to investigate the feasibility of this suggestion.
- 32.2 Dr North raised the issue of the provision of support services for students, suffering with mental ill health. He noted that the University Website's Counselling Service page is off putting in stating the first available appointment with a counsellor is in four weeks. He stated that this is unhelpful for students in distress. The Principal acknowledged the importance of this issue and committed to take it away for further investigation. Professor Jenkinson added that no distressed student does have to wait and that triage mechanisms have been put in place by the Service to ensure no student has to wait

without support. This was acknowledged, however, it was noted that the information provided on the website was off-putting to students.

- 32.3 Mrs Tibbets asked whether any assessment of the impact of the turnaround time for marking assessments at the conclusion of the first half session, particularly in recognition of Athena Swan and with Part Time staff in mind had been undertaken. Responding, Professor McGeorge, Vice-Principal for Teaching and Learning, acknowledged that an assessment had yet to be undertaken but added that the deadline had been extended. It was agreed that this revised deadline would be confirmed by way of the Senate Digest.

REPORT FROM THE UNIVERSITY COURT

- 33.1 The Senate received an update from Dr Shanks, on behalf of the Senate Assessors, on the meeting of the University Court held on 4 October 2017. Dr Shanks acknowledged that some of the issues discussed were raised previously with the Senate. The main tenets of the update were as follows:

- Regarding TNE and staff contracts, Dr Shanks noted that Professor Ross, Vice-Principal for People Strategy had offered to attend staff meetings to reassure staff on changing terms and conditions.
- Dr Shanks noted that the Court had received reports on TNE in relation to Qatar, Sri Lanka and Uganda.
- Reflecting the new composition of the Court and the subsequent appointment of new Senate Assessors, Dr Shanks confirmed the amendments to Court committee memberships as follows:
 - Drs Delibigovic and Shanks would act in a job share capacity on Operating Board
 - Professor Schaper and Dr Oren would act in a job share capacity on the Governance and Nominations Committee
 - Dr Shanks noted that currently only one Senate representative sits on the Remuneration Committee and informed the Committee of the proposal from the Senate Assessors that this be increased to two. If approved, she confirmed this would comprise one Senate Assessor and one elected staff member.
- Dr Shanks confirmed discussions regarding the process for the appointment of the Principal had been discussed at the meeting of Court on 12 December 2017. Dr Shanks confirmed the composition of the Selection Committee as follows:
 - The Convener, Mr James Hall (an independent member, The Convener of the Governance and Nominations Committee)
 - Mr Martin Gilbert (Senior Governor to Court)
 - Ms Anne Minto and Ms Catherine McPhail (two independent members of the Court female in the interest of gender balance)
 - Mr Lawson Ogubie (President of the Students' Association)
 - The four Senate Assessors
 - Ms Jenny Fernandes and Mr Brian Paterson (the two elected staff members on Court)

- 33.2 Following Dr Shanks' update, a short discussion ensued, the main tenets of which were as follows:

- Professor Akisanya noted that there were now more staff members than independent members on the selection Committee.

- Professor Anderson asked whether there remained vacancies on the Governance and Nominations Committee. Mrs Inglis, University Secretary, confirmed that a vacancy remains, and whilst this has been filled on an interim basis, its substantive filling will now be taken forward.
- With regards to the Remuneration Committee, Professor Coghill sought clarification on whether the member of staff appointed to it was academic. Dr Shanks confirmed that there was currently a place for one staff member on the Committee but that the Senate Assessors had proposed this be increased two members of staff. If approved, Dr Shanks noted the Committee would be comprised of one Senate Assessor and 1 elected staff member.
- Professor Martin requested that the Principal provide the Senate with an update on the TNE partnership in Korea. The Principal responded to note that the Korean campus in its initial incarnation was supported by the University, in particular its guarantee of funded students and the availability of funding for research. The Principal informed the Senate that the University remained committed to that model. He informed the Senate, however, that the student guarantee had since been removed, largely as a consequence of difficulties in Oil and Gas in Korea and that the funding for research had not been forthcoming as expected. As a consequence, in December 2016, Professor Paterson, Vice-Principal for Internationalisation proposed that the University be allowed to increase the range of subjects to be taught, to have a financially sustainable recruitment model. This proposal was opposed by the partners in Korea and, as such, the University has now taken a view that unless there can be flexibility, the campus is not sustainable. The Principal confirmed many letters and emails were being exchanged with the partners, led by Professor Greaves, and that meetings would take place with a Korean delegation in December, where it was hoped an appropriate way forward could be determined.

MOTION FOR EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY

- 34.1 Dr Oliver presented the motion for Evidence-based Policy to the Senate. He noted that the proposal stemmed from an improvised working group, including a member of senior management. He stated that the basic idea from the working group was that while the University stresses the importance of research for underpinning its reputation and for the benefit of society, too often the University doesn't fall back on that research expertise when considering the creation of new policies and procedures, including in the context of the senate.
- 34.2 Dr Oliver stated that the use of evidence based practice is being much more widely used and accepted within the public and private sectors and referenced its use by the UK Government, the NHS and airline and automotive industries. He further referenced the current QAA Enhancement Theme for the student experience as Evidence for Enhancement. Dr Oliver acknowledged that there were good internal examples of evidence based policy including within staff health and wellbeing and even in Senate, on occasion. He stated that the motion was intended to embed an evidence based approach when creating all new policies and procedures which fall under Senate's remit and to make this approach a basic expectation.
- 34.3 Dr Oliver stated that at its most basic level, this would mean that any proposed policies would be put forward with references to the best available evidence, which may include academic publications but also drawing on local expertise. He further referenced staff surveys and/or evaluations and the evaluation of pilot projects as appropriate forms of evidence. Dr Oliver acknowledged that while not every

suggestion would require an essay behind it, at the least, the proposal would allow for the accessing of a deeper logic, facts and points to follow up on. Dr Oliver concluded by stating that the implementation of the motion would allow for more effective decision making and would, in the long term, make things easier.

- 34.4 The Principal thanked Dr Oliver and asked for any comments from the floor. Professor McGeorge, Vice-Principal for Teaching and Learning, stated that he was fully supportive of the proposed approach and acknowledged the recognition Dr Oliver had given to the fact such an approach had been used in the past. Professor McGeorge noted that work to provide evidence in support of a policy is often undertaken at the Committee stage and expressed his support for more of this work being presented to the Senate. Professor McGeorge stated that he had some suggestions to the wording of the existing proposal, particularly in ensuring the wording does not indicate the University hasn't done this before and to amend the wording to be focussed around enhancement.
- 34.5 Dr Nordmann expressed her support for the motion, however, expressed concern that there was no representation from the School of Psychology within it. Dr Nordmann highlighted the importance of consultation with the experts in the area and of the importance of the quality of evidence used and on which conclusions are drawn,
- 34.6 Professor Barker issued his compliments to the Senate in already demonstrating the power of thinking and reasoning and the diversity of opinion within the Senate. He expressed the importance of drawing upon this expertise and in supporting Senators in providing it.
- 34.7 The Principal invited Senators to vote to on the motion as proposed by Dr Oliver, subject to amendments to be agreed between Professor McGeorge and Dr Oliver.

In favour of the motion:	51
Not in favour of the motion:	4
Abstaining from the vote:	3

A vote having been taken, the Principal confirmed that the motion had been passed.

MOTION ON SHARING FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- 35.1 The Principal invited Professor Anderson to present his motion on the Sharing of Financial Information.
- 35.2 Professor Anderson noted that the proposed motion was supplementary to those of the sharing of Senate and Court minutes and, in the same vein, proposed increased transparency and the flow of information, to assist in planning and in helping the University prosper. Professor Anderson acknowledged the citation from the Universities Scotland Act included in the motion as means of evidence.
- 35.3 Professor Anderson expressed concern as to the circulation of the Contextual Legal Advice along with the paper. He expressed that the motion had sought to demonstrate a context that Senate had a joint responsibility with the Court in order to look at and understand financial information and how it affects academic life. Professor Anderson directed the attention of Senators to request for regular financial briefings to Senate and the right to pose questions or to ask for additional information.

- 35.4 The University Secretary, Mrs Inglis, acknowledged that the proposal would indeed increase information flow and transparency. She expressed concern with regards to the stated statutory responsibilities of the Senate contained in paragraphs 1 and 2 and, as a consequence of these, had sought legal input from Mr Ward. Mrs Inglis confirmed that she had no issues with paragraphs 3 and 4 of the motion and, if Professor Anderson were to suggest the motion was contained to paragraphs 3 and 4, she was content with that.
- 35.5 Professor Anderson confirmed the motion was contained to paragraphs 3 and 4. On this basis, the Principal moved to undertake a vote.
- 35.6 The Principal invited Senators to vote to on the motion as proposed by Professor Anderson, subject to its containment to paragraphs 3 and 4.

In favour of the motion:	49
Not in favour of the motion:	2
Abstaining from the vote:	2

A vote having been taken, the Principal confirmed that the motion had been passed.

MOTION REGARDING PROPOSED CHANGES TO PENSIONS FOR ACADEMIC AND ACADEMIC RELATED STAFF

- 36.1 The Principal invited Mr Styles to propose his next motion, regarding the Proposed Changes to Pensions for Academic and Academic Related Staff.
- 36.2 Mr Styles acknowledged that it was likely Senators were aware that the USS has proposed significant changes to the pension scheme, as laid out in his proposed motion, moving away from a benefit system to a contributory system, resulting in the pension as paid out to the pensioners being considerably less over time. Mr Styles commended the Principal and the University who had been very helpful in the matter to date. In terms of evidence based analysis of the motion, Mr Styles noted the submission of three documents, (i) a letter to the Financial Times from a group of academics, dated 18 September 2017; (ii) A letter to USS Institutions from the UCU General Secretary, dated 19 September 2017 and (iii) The University of Aberdeen's response to the USS Consultation for the 2017 Valuation. Mr Styles noted that each document supported the fact that the rationale given by the USS for the proposed changes were incorrect and based on the most pessimistic scenarios possible.
- 36.3 Mr Styles clearly stated that if these changes were to go through, everyone would end up with a smaller pension. He asked the Senate to support the motion and is so doing condemn the changes, which would represent a further pay cut for academics and a breach of trust to those who entered the USS scheme. He further noted that the consequences of the changes would include difficulties in recruiting new academic staff, given an environment with increasingly poorly paid jobs and poor pensions.
- 36.4 Specifically excluding the Principal, Mr Styles stated the irony of the vast majority of Principals and Vice-Chancellors, earning six-figure salaries, being so keen to cut the pensions of academic and academic related staff. Mr Styles urged the Senate to lament and condemn the proposals and asked that the University redouble its efforts to oppose the changes.
- 36.5 The Principal acknowledged that his opposition to the proposals placed him in the

minority. He noted that he understood the reason others in his position supported the changes was a consequence of the fact that in order to maintain current benefits and to satisfy the pension regulator, employer contributions would have to go up significantly. He noted the view from a number of Vice-Chancellors that staff would prefer a pay rise to a pension. He expressed his own view that pay and pension needed to be viewed in a holistic manner.

36.6 Dr Mills echoed the concerns raised by Mr Styles within the motion.

36.7 The Principal invited Senators to vote to on the motion as proposed by Mr Styles.

In favour of the motion:	77
Not in favour of the motion:	3
Abstaining from the vote:	2

A vote having been taken, the Principal confirmed that the motion had been passed.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT EXPERIENCE 2017

37.1 The Senate agreed to defer consideration of this very important paper until the next meeting of Senate. It was further agreed following a suggestion by Professor Coghill that this should be the first item for discussion at the next meeting.

STUDENT POPULATION AND BUDGETARY IMPACT 2017/18

38.1 Professor Greaves provided the Senate with an update regarding the current position regarding the student population following registrations in October 2017. Professor Greaves congratulated academic and support colleagues on their concerted efforts to increase recruitment and growth, reflected in the increase of 2.3% from 2016/17. It was noted that, while there had been substantial increases in student recruitment throughout the specific targeted markets, the University had not met the high targets required and was now in the position of facing a shortfall of £1.4m. Senate noted that meetings were underway with schools about strategies to address the situation going forward.

38.2 Mrs Tibbets noted that the Business School must demonstrate growth over the next 3 to 5 years and, in so doing, meet significant growth targets. Given these targets are based on investment and the University is in the position of a budget shortfall Mrs Tibbets asked whether this was likely to impact on these targets. Professor Greaves confirmed that the growth of the Business School was a major activity for the University. He assured Mrs Tibbetts and the Senate that appropriate support would be provided in order to achieve this.

RECTORIAL ELECTION

39.1 The Principal moved to discuss the Rectorial Election. For the purposes of clarity, he informed the Senate that at their meeting on Tuesday 12 December, the Court discussed the recent Rectorial Election and the decision of the Elections Committee with regard to an Appeal. The Court noted that the election process and rules were matters, under Ordinance, for the Senate and that the Elections Committee was a sub-committee of Senate. The Court, therefore, agreed to ask that the Senate confirm that

due process had been followed by the Elections Committee and for the outcome of the Senate's consideration of this to be reported to Court.

- 39.2 The Principal confirmed that the University Secretary, Mrs Inglis, would make a statement which would be followed by a statement from Mr Styles, on behalf of the Elections Committee and Mr Ogubie, Student President, on behalf of the Students Association. He asked that any conflicts of interest be declared. Mrs Inglis stated the following:

The Court discussed the recent Rectorial Election and the decision of the Elections Committee with regard to an Appeal. The Court noted that the election process and rules were matters, under Ordinance, for the Senate and that the Elections Committee was a sub-committee of Senate. The Court, therefore, agreed to ask that the Senate confirm that due process had been followed by the Elections Committee and for the outcome of the Senate's consideration of this to be reported to Court.

- 39.3 Mr Styles, on behalf of Professor Ross, Convener of the Elections Committee was asked to respond. Mr Styles confirmed that he was a member of the Elections Committee, one of two elected Senators asked to join the Committee, in addition to two further students. Mr Styles stated his firm belief that absolute due process was followed and the Elections Committee was meticulous in that respect.

- 39.4 Mr Styles informed the Senate that on the day of the election, 3 of the 4 Rectorial candidates approached Professor Greaves, Returning Officer with the complaint that they believed good practice had been violated. Their complaint was upheld by the Returning Officer and the election was annulled. Following the annulment, an appeal was submitted and the Elections Committee was convened. Mr Styles confirmed that the Elections Committee addressed the issues as follows:

- Firstly, the Returning Officer have the power to annul the election as opposed to disqualify a candidate. Mr Styles noted that the rules stated the power of the Returning Officer to disqualify a candidate but were silent on the issue of annulment. He confirmed that the Committee felt that the greater includes the lesser and, as such, unanimously agreed that the annulment was within his powers
- Secondly, Mr Styles confirmed that the Committee considered whether or not the Returning Officer had violated natural justice. Mr Styles confirmed that the Elections Committee found that he had and that best practice had been breached by not inviting the party complained about, The Chapman Party, to respond to claims at the point at which they were raised. Mr Styles confirmed that there were therefore grounds for appeal on the basis of violation of procedure.

- 39.5 Mr Styles confirmed that the Elections Committee decided, on the basis of the breach, to hear the complaints in full, and thereby putting themselves in the Returning Officer's place and to rectify the procedural deficiency. To that effect, he informed the Senate that notice was provided of a hearing, at which witnesses could be called and evidence provided. The hearing was convened at 9.30am and concluded at 7.30pm. He confirmed that the Elections Committee spent a solid day considering evidence in a thorough and fair manner. Mr Styles confirmed that on the basis of the facts provided, the Elections Committee had found that good practice had been breached. He stressed that the matter was a civil one and that the outcome had been reached on the basis of probability. Mr Styles asserted that the decision had been made properly and extremely fairly and as the Election was declared annulled, there were no proper results to be released.

- 39.6 Mr Ogubie was asked to address the Senate, following the circulation of a letter to each Senator from the AUSA executive. Mr Ogubie confirmed that the student body had chosen to forward a letter to the Senate on the Election, as a consequence of the attention it had generated and in recognition of a cloud surrounding the process and its result. Mr Ogubie clarified to the Senate that he had been invited to testify on election practice and procedures as concern student elections to the Elections Committee and with no reference to any Rectorial party.
- 39.7 Mr Ogubie noted that as Student President it was his responsibility to air the views of the student body, which was as the letter made clear, that the result of the Election be released. He stated that the AUSA Executive was the umbrella arm of the Students' Association and was democratically elected to represent the student body. He noted that he had been personally accosted by students asking questions on what is going on with the election and expressed that students sought clarity and transparency of the results. Mr Ogubie expressed his concern that the student voice was not being heard and emphasised that the Rectorial election was a student election and their voice should be clearly understood. Mr Ogubie called for the release of the results. He stated any subsequent complaints could then be handled.
- 39.8 Mr Ogubie stated that to say that students are merely swayed by posters is demeaning and expressed that students don't just base their judgement on posters but on individual candidates and their manifestos. He expressed concern that the Election Rules do not allow for annulment based on complaints on posters and that the National Union for Students (NUS) guidelines references instances where annulment may be considered as instances involving allegations of fraud, intimidation of voters or threats to candidates. Mr Ogubie stated that students are unclear as to why the Election has been annulled.
- 39.9 In concluding, Mr Ogubie noted the reputational impact of the decision taken. He emphasised that students were asking questions and the media remained interested in the matter. Mr Ogubie expressed his feeling that Senate should consider the matter.
- 39.10 The Principal thanked Mr Ogubie for his statement. He reminded the Senate that they were to discuss matters of process. The Principal invited comments from the floor and a discussion ensued. The main tenets of the discussion were as follows:
- Professor McGeorge, Vice-Principal for Teaching and Learning, informed the Senate that along with Mr Styles he had sat on the Elections Committee. He echoed Mr Styles' views regarding the following of process. He confirmed that Mr Ogubie's comments reflected those made to the Elections Committee at the time and had been considered. Professor McGeorge confirmed the decision of the Committee which, having decided there was reason to doubt the process, there was no result to declare. He further acknowledged that, as pointed out by the Principal, the Senate had been asked to review whether or not process had been followed, and as outlined by Mr Styles, issues raised had been considered fully. Professor McGeorge stated that the decision of the Elections Committee as circulated to all staff was an accurate reflection of the outcome reached.
 - Ms Smith noted her concern with regards to the extract from the outcome of the Elections Committee that 'during the hearing much was made of the fact the allegations could not be substantiated. This is undoubtedly true'. Ms Smith stated that she was a proud graduate of the University and asked the Senate to consider what CGS mark they would give the Election's Committee. She noted he respect for the University, and expressed her disappointment if the University held its Governance Committees to a lower standard than that of its students. Ms Smith stated that she was happy to accept the decision of the Elections Committee

providing that their methods are held to the same if not higher standard than that asked of students. Ms Smith further stated that the decision of the Election Committee was a balance of probabilities and reflected a determination that it was more likely than not for posters of three campaign teams to have been ripped down or intentionally defaced. She asked the Senate to consider whether this argument be acceptable from a student in any piece of work. She expressed her concern with regards claims that cannot be adequately substantiated. Ms Smith alleged that it was not academically appropriate to accept the report from the Elections Committee and that Senators have the opportunity to remedy this situation. Finally, she called for the release of the Election results. She argues that should the votes be close enough to indicate the outcome had been affected, students would be forced to accept the decision taken.

- Professor Schaper expressed his concern with regards to section 6.2 of the Elections Committee and argued that it was evident a lower standard had been applied where a higher standard could be applied. Professor Schaper further expressed concern that the behaviours which commonly lead to annulment are significantly more serious and include tampering with ballot boxes and voter intimidation are not seen in this case. Professor Schaper issued his support for Ms Smith and Mr Ogubie.
- Dr Mills began by declaring his status as academic representative to Court. He noted that there remained questions, surrounding what is meant by unsubstantiated evidence.
- Mr Styles expressed concern regarding the use of misleading quotations from the Elections Committee outcome. Mr Styles clearly stated to the Senate that it was the Elections Committee who had heard the evidence and that without sitting through the evidence, it was inappropriate for the Senate to comment on the specifics of the appeal. Mr Styles further noted that 'beyond all reasonable doubt' is purely a criminal standard and as this is not a criminal matter, the normal process was applied and followed.
- Professor Schaper expressed further concern that a lower standard had been applied when a higher standard could have been applied.
- Dr Mills expressed concern that the argument appears to be because posters disappeared, the posters were removed by members of an opposing campaign team. Dr Mills noted that this doesn't make sense to him.
- Professor McGeorge stated that with regards annulment, there is precedent following the annulment of the 2011 Rectorial Election for misconduct. He expressed his concern that the Senate had been asked to focus on whether or not process had been followed by the Elections Committee in hearing the evidence and that the opportunities to present was transparent and carried out appropriately. Professor McGeorge stated that as alluded to by Mr Styles, it is very dangerous for Senate, who did not sit through that evidence, to retry the information in this forum. He stated the need for the Senate to consider whether or not the Elections Committee followed a process which allowed all parties the opportunity to raise issues and did they consider that information and as a consequence, reach a result.
- Professor Anderson expressed confusion as to the role of the Returning Officer and the Elections Committee. He acknowledged that there appeared to be no authority given to annul the Election and that this authority was assumed. Professor Anderson also noted that at the end of the Elections Committee report it stated that new elections would be held under new strengthened rules. He stated that it looked as through the Committee was changing the way Elections are being run in the middle of the Election.
- The Principal, with the approval of the Senate, invited Mr Ward, the lawyer who supported the Elections Committee to answer the specific questions raised.

- Mr Ward, responding to Professor Anderson's point, acknowledged that the Committee agreed that the Election rules fell short of what was ideal. He noted there was provision for the disqualification of a candidate and on his first reading of the rules felt that was the only thing that the Returning Officer could do. Having considered the circumstances, however, disqualification of a candidate would have been very unfair. Students had voted on the basis of the candidate's participation and the results would have been called into question in any event. Mr Ward noted that the Election Committee had discretion to look at other remedies, short of disqualification were appropriate. He stated that there was a precedent for annulment, following the 2011 Election, based on largely the same rules and it was the fairest and most appropriate remedy. Regarding Professor Anderson's second point and whether or not it is appropriate to change the rules, Mr Ward confirmed that it is appropriate given it will be a new election. Mr Ward confirmed that the decision of the Committee had been in part to determine that the situation arose because the rules in place weren't good enough.
- Dr North expressed concern that the Elections Committee had made up policy as it went along. He stated that if the poster rules were vague, the standard expected was unclear or ill defined.
- Dr Simpson echoed points made that the Senate was not to review evidence but process. He sought clarification of, exactly, on which grounds was the remedy to annul exercised. Responding, Mr Ward confirmed that in the absence of specific rules, the Elections Committee had discretion as to which remedies should apply. The Committee had responsibility for oversight and to ensure a fair election. So within the discretion as to how it achieved that in the absence of specific provision.
- Professor Pavlovskaja stated that the Senate had been asked to comment on process. She noted that the rules were not perfect and that the process was followed. Professor Pavlovskaja further stated that the Elections Committee considered the issues and the irregularities as raised.
- Dr da Silva Baptista asked whether the decision to annul in this instance would lead to the setting of precedent, should similar issues arise again. The Principal confirmed that if such an instance arose again and the Candidates concerned decided to appeal, a properly convened Elections Committee would take a view.
- Professor Martin noted the precedent as set by the annulment of the 2011 Election and acknowledged that in this instance the result was released. Professor Martin sought clarification on the legal or procedural basis for the failure to release the results in this instance. The Principal noted that in this instance the results were released prior to the appeal taking place. Mr Ward further stated that typically as a matter of Law, when something is annulled it is taken as not having happened.
- Ms Metcalfe, the School Convener for the School of Education, noted with regards the 2011 Election the precedent followed a completely different situation. She stated that as far as students go, the presence or absence of posters is such a small matter in an Election. She stated that candidates and their manifestos are considered and given a great deal of thought. Ms Metcalfe expressed concern that no decent explanation for the annulment of the Election had been given, and that, as a student, the situation was embarrassing.
- Ms Patterson-Hunter, School Convener for the School of Law, noted her understanding of the role undertaken by the Elections Committee. She expressed concern, however, that students, the people making the decision, were unaware of the results of the Election and were unaware whether a candidate still deserves a vote.
- Dr Schofield, expressed his opinion that appropriate procedure had been followed and the Elections Committee had taken the best decision available to them. He acknowledged the lengthy inquiry undertaken by the Committee and the thorough report outlining their decision. Dr Schofield further stated that he felt it was best to

move forward with a new Election supported by tighter regulations. With regards the argument that posters do not affect votes, Dr Schofield referenced his own research and experience regarding the bias of interpretation by visual clues and studies which demonstrate following exposure to visual clues, the existence of a subconscious element individuals may not know they are being influenced by.

- Professor Anderson noted the energy the AUSA have put into the Election and its outcome. He suggested the proposal of a motion to (i) release the result and make the result public and (ii) to ask the Senate to vote on whether the Committee have the discretion to change the rules of an Election before it is completed.
- The Principal reminded the Senate of the issue under consideration, was whether due process was followed.
- Professor Schaper asked Mr Ward whether the Election rules allowed for an annulment. Mr Ward, responding, stated that while there was no express power, that's not to say it wasn't allowed. He acknowledged that there were lots of things in the Election not covered in the rules and lots of things on which judgements were taken and accepted by the candidates which were not covered in the rules. Professor Schaper asked whether it was stated that it was an option. Mr Ward responded that it was not stated.
- Professor Schaper asked Mr Styles to either confirm or not confirm that the Elections Committee had confirmed an unacceptable option. Mr Styles expressed concern that there was a misunderstanding between an express and an implied term. He stated the general principle of the law, the greater includes the lesser. Mr Styles noted that disqualification would have been a much more drastic action affecting only one candidate and that the Returning Officer had used his implied power to annul the Election and thus applying the outcome equally to all. Mr Styles noted that gap filling was a normal practice in rule making and that as fair a decision as possible had been made. Mr Styles further expressed concern that the AUSA were representing one party. Mr Styles states that the Elections Committee were asking new rules be drafted and proposed to the Senate for consideration.
- Professor Schaper sought to propose a motion to release the Election results and that the annulment be lifted.
- Mr Ogubie expressed serious concern as to Mr Styles' assertion that the AUSA were associated with any party. Mr Ogubie stated that the AUSA stands for the student voice and for no candidate. Mr Ogubie asked that Mr Styles withdraw his statement.
- Dr Glover, speaking as a new member of the Senate and as a lecturer in the law of evidence, suggested to the Senate that the issue before them was to determine whether the process as available to the Election Committee at the time was followed. He noted that complaints were made by candidates regarding Electoral impropriety. This came before the oversight mechanism available at the time, the Election Committee, the Committee vested with a degree of discretion to weigh all the evidence before them, like any trier of fact and place a degree of weight or make a decision on the basis of that evidence, whether a popular decision or not is another matter. On the basis of the evidence heard, Dr Glover asserted that they had the discretion to take a 'least worse' option than to disqualify a candidate on the balance of probabilities that there had been some impropriety. He acknowledged that they instead annulled the election on the basis of a number of complaints weighed in an open hearing of impropriety, the result being that there will be a fresh election. He stated that the consequences don't appear to have been as drastic as some, accounting there will be a re- election. The issue before the Senate, he stated, as triers of fact, is whether the Returning Officer and Elections Committee followed in good faith the rules available at the time and the discretion available at this time. Dr Glover expressed his disappointment as a new Senator to hear colleagues doubted and stated that he felt the Senate should back the decisions

as taken at the time, within the parameters available to them at the time, on the evidence presented to them at the time, which was weighed on the only standard available in a civil hearing of a balance of probabilities. Dr Glover stated that the question is whether due process was followed. Dr Glover suggested to the Senate that it was followed and followed fairly, within the rules.

- Dr da Silva Baptista stated that he felt the results should not be released on the basis that conclusions could be drawn from them, on the basis of perspective.
- Dr Schofield noted his agreement with Dr Glover's statement. With regards the release of annulled data, he suggested that the candidates may come back with further grievances following its release and that it would be dangerous to do so.
- Dr Martin highlighted that she felt nobody is criticising the Election Committee but the Senate is tasked with looking at process and there does seem to be an issue when the Election was first annulled. Dr Martin stated that it was important to now move the matter forward, with tighter regulations.
- Professor Coghill raised a point of clarification. He noted that while discussions had centred on posters, it was his understanding that this was just one factor in the annulment of the Election. With regards procedure, Professor Coghill stated that he felt the actions of the Elections Committee seemed to fit with a logical set of steps. Professor Coghill asked whether a motion to release results would be competent. On the basis of advice from the University Secretary, Mrs Inglis and the Clerk, the Principal confirmed that it was not.
- Dr Rea sought clarification on why the decision had been taken after voting had begun. It was confirmed that the complaints were raised with the Returning Officer following the commencement of voting.
- Dr Mills, with regards reputational damage, stated that an annulment should be an annulment without prejudice.

39.11 The Principal invited Senators to vote on whether or not they were prepared to accept that the processes were followed appropriately and properly. He asked Senators to confirm that due process had been followed by the Election Committee and the outcome of their consideration to be reported to the Court.

In agreement that the processes were followed appropriately and properly:	55
Not in agreement that the processes were followed appropriately and properly:	16
Abstaining from the vote:	4

A vote having been taken, the Principal confirmed that Senate had confirmed due process had been followed.

39.12 Mrs Tibbets sought clarity as to the position the University was left in and whether or not Ms Chapman's tenure as Rector could be extended. The Principal confirmed that, regrettably there was precedent in this situation following the death of the Rector in post. The Principal confirmed that as a decision had now been taken, everything would be done to ensure a proper and fair election was expedited as quickly as possible. The Principal confirmed that he would take the request to extend Ms Chapman's tenure away and ask that this be looked into.

39.13 Mr Ogubie reiterated that the AUSA demanded the statement made by Mr Styles regarding their alleged support for a Rectorial candidate be retracted. He reiterated that the AUSA remained unbiased. The Principal assured Mr Ogubie that the minute would accurately reflect the view of the AUSA.

39.14 Mr Ogubie further stated that the AUSA was afraid of underrepresentation in scenarios

where the Rector would usually be present. The Principal assured the Senate that the rules would be looked at carefully with regards to the possibility of extending Ms Chapman's tenure.

- 39.15 Mr Styles stated that he was happy to withdraw any impugning of the Students Association. He noted, however, that one sabbatical had openly supported the Chapman campaign. Mr Styles suggested that the Senate recommend to the Court that the existing Rector be allowed to attend Court until such time as a new Rector be elected.
- 39.16 Professor Greaves, Returning Officer and Senior Vice-Principal sought to clarify a couple of issues. Firstly, he stated that although it might appear from discussions that this was all about posters, it was not. Professor Greaves noted that as his statement to the Elections Committee said, it was about a holistic view of the campaigning process carried out by all of the campaign teams. He confirmed that there were allegations and counter allegations against all of the campaign teams. He informed the Senate that issues arising had included posters being destroyed, posters being out with boundaries, aggressive campaigning, inappropriate behaviour at hustings and graffiti in the library. Professor Greaves noted that he had to decide whether he could be confident that the result had not been affected. He confirmed that he could not and that that was the reason for his decision. He confirmed that the decision was not directed at any one candidate and that he chose a lesser sanction which applied to all candidates. Professor Greaves stated that he believed he acted with integrity and without prejudice. He assured the Senate that he did not know the result and still does not know the result. He suggested that there was a lesson for the Senate, in ensuring rules are set much more carefully.
- 39.17 Mrs Tibbets sought clarification as to how new rules would be created. The Principal confirmed that new rules would be drafted in advance of the next extraordinary Senate in order that they can be circulated with the papers for consideration and approval at the next meeting. He noted that, if approved, the Election would start forthwith. It was confirmed that the AUSA would be involved in the creation of the new rules.

AOCB

- 40.1 With regards to the draft certificate for students completing online learning, where this does not lead to the award of a diploma or degree, included within item 16.1, Report from the University Committee on Teaching and Learning (UCTL), Dr North sought clarity with regards to whether or not these single online courses could be undertaken and used to build a degree. Dr Mackintosh, Director of Online Education and Academic Development confirmed that the intention was for a short course approach, allowing students to undertake the building blocks towards a full degree. Dr Mackintosh confirmed the award of the online learning certificates would not preclude a student from building towards a full degree. The Principal recognised the need for further information on the regulations around Online Education and asked Professor McGeorge and Dr Mackintosh to submit a paper to the next meeting of the Senate providing further clarity.
- 40.2 With regards agenda item 16.4, Dr Rea sought clarity on the, the panel for membership of the Research Excellence Framework (REF) steering group, particular with regards to the inclusion of members of staff with REF experience. Dr Rea stated that he was aware of constituent due to retire who had contacted Professor Campbell, Vice-Principal for Research in this regard but had yet to receive a response. The Principal

noted that Professor Campbell was not present but that he would take the matter away for discussion with her and her response to Dr Rea directly.

- 40.3 The Principal thanked the Senate for their contributions and wished Senators a restful Christmas break.

REPORT FROM THE UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON TEACHING & LEARNING

The Senate approved and noted the recommendations arising from the meeting of the University Committee on Teaching and Learning on 8 November 2017.

1. Changes in Regulations for Various Degrees

- 41.1 The Senate approved, on the recommendation of the University Committee on Teaching and Learning, and forward to the University Court, the draft Resolution 'Changes in Regulations for Various Degrees' (copy filed with principal copy of the minute).

The Senate was further invited 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 date on which they are passed by the University Court.

2. Enhancement- Led Institutional Review (ELIR)

- 41.2 Senate noted that members of the Committee had received an update on the forthcoming Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR), scheduled for October and November 2018. Members of the Committee were reminded of the importance of ELIR and the requirement of the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) that the University undergo review. The Committee acknowledged the opportunity ELIR provides to the University to reflect on its Teaching and Learning practices.

3. The Revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education

- 41.3 Senate noted that the Committee acknowledged the QAA consultation of the revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education available [here](#).

4. Update on the Enhanced Transcript

- 41.4 The Committee received an update on the Enhanced Transcript. The Enhanced Transcript is more detailed than a degree certificate and functions as a supplement to it, providing details of courses, marks and approved extra-curricular activities. Undergraduate and taught Postgraduate students, receive the Enhanced Transcript on graduation. The Committee approved two further roles, Careers Service Student Representative and the QAA Enhancement Theme Student Representative be included within the Enhanced Transcript as 'recognised activities' from the academic year 2017-18.

5. Strategic Plan 2015-2020: Recognising Overseas and Alternative Professional Teaching Qualifications

- 41.5 The Committee approved a paper on the Strategic Plan 2015-2020: Recognising Overseas and Alternative Professional Teaching Qualifications, attached as Annex A.

The Committee acknowledged the importance of the proposal to recognise roles held by academics from overseas which may be comparable to the Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert) in Higher Education Learning and Teaching delivered by the University or Higher Education Academy (HEA) Fellowship.

6. Appeals and Complaints Forms

- 41.6 The Committee approved revised Parts A, B and C of the Appeals and Complaints Form and the removal of Part D (the recording of the outcome of a panel hearing) and noted its replacement with a letter tailored to each individual case received.

7. Online Learning Certificate

- 41.7 The Committee approved the draft certificate for students completing online learning (copy filed with principal copy of the minute) where this does not lead to the award of a diploma or degree.

8. Readmission to Study Policy

- 41.8 Members of the Committee approved changes to the Readmission to Study Policy comprising (i) an extension to the deadline for the submission of an application for readmission and (ii) the inclusion of information, discouraging the deferral of readmission on the grounds that readmission is dependent on an appropriate assessment of how long a student has been away from the University and the impact of this on their studies.

9. Online Admissions Process

- 41.9 The Committee considered a proposed admissions process for students studying online. The Committee is seeking further information before the process is considered further.

REPORT FROM THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

- 42.1 The Senate noted the report on the main items of business considered by the Student Experience Committee at its meeting on 2 October 2017 (copy filed with principal copy of the minute).

REPORT FROM THE RESEARCH POLICY COMMITTEE

- 43.1 The Senate noted the update from the Research Policy Committee on the main items of business considered during the 2016/17 session (copy filed with principal copy of the minute).

RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK UPDATE

- 44.1 The Senate noted the update on the development by the funding councils of the Research Excellence Framework 2021 (REF2021), and the initial plans for the preparation of the institutional submission (copy filed with principal copy of the minute).

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS:

45.1 Honorary Degrees Committee

Senate noted that, subsequent to discussions at the meeting of the Senate Business Committee on 27 September, the following elected Senators were appointed to the Honorary Degrees Committee for a period of four years:

Dr R Shanks
Mrs M Stephen
Professor H Wallace
Professor P Nimmo
Dr J Lamb
Dr N Vargesson
Dr O Menshykov
Professor C Grebogi
Professor P Ziegler

Senate Business Committee

Senate also noted that, following the election held in November, the following elected Senators have been appointed to the Senate Business Committee for a period of two years:

Professor J Schaper
Mrs M Stephen
Mr S Styles
Mrs L Tibbetts
Professor D Lusseau
Dr D Maccallum
Dr N Vargesson
Professor W Vasconcelos