

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

SENATUS ACADEMICUS

Minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2016

Present: Principal, Professors Kilburn, Paterson, McGeorge, Hannaford, MacGregor, Ross, Ms AM Slater, Welch, Irwin and Mr M Whittington, Professors Paton, Sahraie, Heys, Jolley, Dr A Arnason, Professors Wells, Brown, Professor Masthoff, Professor Shennan, Dr M Ehrenschwendtner, Dr S Lawrie, Professor Lurie, Dr P Bishop, Mrs D Bruxvoort, Mrs L Tibbetts, Dr J Lamb, Dr L McCann, Professor Hutchison, Dr A Sim, Professors Nimmo and Schaper, Dr P Sweeney, Dr H Pierce, Dr P Ziegler, Dr R Shanks, Mrs M Stephen, Dr A Bryzgel, Dr T Rist, Dr A Lewis, Dr B Tribout, Professor Duff, Dr A Simpson, Dr Z Yihdego, Mr S Styles, Dr M Mills, Dr A Oelsner, Dr T Argounova-Low, Professor Anderson, Dr D Lusseau, Professor Pinard, Dr J Baird, Dr M Barker, Professor J Jayasinghe, Dr A Rajniecek, Dr K Kiezebrink, Dr M Macdiarmid, Dr M Delibegović, Dr N Mody, Dr A Jenkinson, Dr G Macfarlane, Dr N Vargesson, Dr D MacCallum, Professor Barker, Dr I Cameron, Dr K Foster, Dr F Thies, Dr E Nordmann, Dr D Ray, Dr K Pilz, Dr E Pavlovskaja, Professors Akisanya and Kashtalyan, Dr B Rea, Dr J Oliver, Dr A Ebinghaus, Dr C North, Professor J Feldmann, Professor Coghill, Dr M da Silva Baptista, Dr B Martin, Dr W Vasconcelos, Professor Brittain, Dr N Oren, Mr C Anucha, Mr L Fuller, Miss A Boerkoel, Miss M Leskovska, Miss D Passinke, Mr D Kaminek, Mr M Hickman, Miss D Parsons, Mr L Budrass, Miss C Henssen, Miss L Rossi, Mr N Lazaroz, Miss E Harding and Miss J Killin

Apologies: Professors Glover and Haites, Morrison, Gimlin, Skakle and Guz, Davies, Campbell, Dr R Neilson, Professors Naphy and Connolly, Professor Kee, Dr M Beaton, Dr D R Smith, Professor Mealor, Professor Johnson, Dr D Scott, Dr R MacKenzie, Dr A Venkatesh, Dr S Fielding, Professor Lee, Professor Jovcic, Dr O Menshykov, Dr N Schofield, Dr C Black, Mr K Thomson-Duncan, Miss K Metcalfe, Miss K Halop, Miss A Hall and Mr A Edirisooriya

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- 1.1 The Principal opened the meeting, welcoming members to the first meeting of the Senate of Academic Year 2016/17. The Principal welcomed those senators new to the role and those returning for another year.
- 1.2 The Principal invited members to approve the agenda as presented. As no comments were raised, the agenda was taken to be approved and the meeting proceeded.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 2.1 The Principal invited members to confirm that they were content with the minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2016. As no comments were raised, the minutes were approved and the meeting proceeded.

UPDATE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

- 3.1 The Principal, in providing an update to members, acknowledged challenges facing the University and Higher Education sector as a whole, focussing on four key areas.
- 3.2 The Principal informed the Senate that, ahead of Christmas, he expected the Higher Education Bill (England) to move through Parliament. He noted that the Bill would have likely the following key implications for the sector:

- (i) The opening of the market to private providers in England, not envisaged to have a major impact in Scotland;
- (ii) The publication of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) in England which, under certain conditions, would allow for the raising of fees. The Principal noted that the TEF is currently under construction and that the University would, in the future, be faced with the decision of opting in or out of it. He further noted that the Vice-Principal for Teaching and Learning, Professor McGeorge, sits on the Universities Scotland committee on the TEF should anyone wish to feed in to discussions, or seek further information regarding the draft proposals;
- (iii) The proposed changes to the Research Councils. The Principal noted concern regarding the extent to which Scotland is being considered as part of these changes and stated the importance of lobbying for recognition in this regard. He further noted that a Chief Executive was likely to be appointed pre-Christmas with details surrounding the REF, following the comprehensive review conducted by Lord Stern, to follow in early 2017. The Principal stated his personal view that the review had proven to be very good, however, there did remain some points for clarification.

3.3 The Principal noted concerns regarding current UK Immigration Policy and its effect on Higher Education. He noted the announcements made by the Home Secretary at the recent Conservative Party Conference, but acknowledged that these had since been slightly revised. The Principal informed the Senate of his concerns regarding overseas students not being seen as welcome and the announcement over the summer that four UK Institutions, the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Bath and Imperial College would be part of a two year pilot of permitting post study work visas. The Principal stated his frustration that this would prolong the UK wide rollout of such a scheme for a further two years, despite arguing for the benefits of it. The Principal noted that the decision to pilot the scheme within these four institutions had been taken on the basis of the institutions with the lowest refusal of visa rates. He noted the University's refusal rate as approximately 2.4% and that no attempt had been made to control for the number refused by nationality. The Principal confirmed his intention to write to the Home Secretary in this regard,

3.4 The Principal acknowledged the impact of the decision taken by the British public to leave the European Union (EU). He acknowledged the hard work to be done to place Aberdeen, and the HE sector as a whole, in the best possible place to deal with the impact. In this regard, he noted the importance of the following key points:

- (i) Continued argument for the freedom of the movement of all staff;
- (ii) Continued argument for the freedom of the movement of all students and clarity surrounding the level of tuition fees for EU students in future years;
- (iii) Lobbying for access to EU funding for research.

3.5 Finally, the Principal informed the Senate of the forthcoming Government Spending Review, likely to be published in approximately mid-December. He noted that the review, which would again cover only one year, was likely to further reduce funding for higher education.

3.6 The Principal informed the Senate that he was not complacent regarding the challenges facing the University, however, asserted his confidence in the ability of the University to withstand them. The Principal reminded members of the Senate of the objectives set out in the Strategic Plan. Put together following extensive consultation, the Principal asserted that he believed, when implemented, these objectives would ensure the University was well positioned to respond to these challenges. The Principal noted the critical nature of the student experience and in so doing highlighted the importance of (i) continuing to increase the number of admissions to the University, (ii) improving and addressing issues surrounding retention, (iii) improving the University's online presence, and (iv) the embedding of quality research in all aspects of provision.

- 3.7 The Principal went on to acknowledge the good work of the University to date in this regard, expressing his delight at the recent publication of two papers in the Urban History journal, the work of Professor Ross in the ongoing work on the People Strategy and congratulated the Schools of Natural & Computing Sciences and Psychology on their Athena Swan awards.

QUESTIONS TO THE PRINCIPAL

- 4.1 In advance of progressing to the items listed on the agenda for discussion, the Principal noted questions posed to him by Senators.
- 4.2 Professor Delibegovic informed members of the Senate of the steps being taken regarding disinvestment within the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition. Noting a deficit of £1.5 million to be addressed, Professor Delibegovic informed Senators that members of staff had, over the summer, received notification of risk of redundancy as a consequence of the fact that their area of research had been identified as at risk of disinvestment. Professor Delibegovic, on behalf of other members of the School and Senate, expressed specific concerns regarding:
- (i) A notable lack of clarity as to how areas were identified for disinvestment;
 - (ii) A perception that the plans had been rushed through;
 - (iii) An understanding amongst staff that webpages had been used as a means of identifying the work of individuals and/or research areas;
 - (iv) The identification of two members of staff, one recently promoted on the basis of research excellence and one salaried entirely by the NHS for redundancy;
 - (v) The number of staff of ethnic origin affected by the plans.
- 4.3 Professor Delibegovic specifically sought clarity from the Principal regarding the following points:
- (i) The criteria used for the process of disinvestment recently initiated in the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition, particularly the definitions of sustainability and critical mass and;
 - (ii) The implications of any wider application of these criteria for the planned future shape of the academic community.
- 4.4 Professor Barker who, in advance of the Senate had also posed a question of the Principal, confirmed that he was content that the content of his question had been covered in full by Professor Delibegovic.
- 4.5 The Head of the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition, Professor Heys, in responding to Professor Delibegovic, noted the following points.
- Since its establishment, the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition had been operating at a deficit, currently totalling £4 million.
 - In order to be sustainable and to move forward, following extensive consultation, the School had prepared and put into place its own strategic plan. The plan, underpinning the wider University strategic plan, was designed to support the work of the School in moving forward in an increasingly competitive environment and in delivering excellence in both teaching and research.
 - Professor Heys noted the importance of the student experience in all aspects of the work of the School.
 - The School strategic plan focused primarily on three areas in order to achieve its objectives; (i) in identifying ways to grow income; (ii) in reducing operating costs and (iii) in reviewing the shape and structure of the School to be able to provide the excellence sought.

- Professor Heys stated the proactive steps taken with regards to the growth of income, noting growth in the number of Medical students (students undertaking the MBChB), in the number of students undertaking the Diploma in Physician Associate Studies and in terms of international collaborations such as the School's collaboration with Curtin University, Western Australia.
- Professor Heys acknowledged that, as presented to the Senate previously, the number of Postgraduate students within the School had been static for some time and the volume of research income had remained largely unchanged. As such, strategy was to focus on teaching areas which underpinned research and vice versa, identifying areas of excellence and the development of priority programmes.
- The Senate were informed of new master's programmes in Public Health and International Global Health and the opportunities brought about by the merger of the School with the Rowett Institute in developing an internationally acknowledged Nutrition programme. Professor Heys noted that each of these initiatives, although in their early stages, was demonstrating promise as part of the overall strategy to get into a balanced position.
- With regards research, Professor Heys noted that the School had focussed strategy on areas of excellence, areas that are internationally competitive and areas able to underpin the University Strategic Plan. He noted that, regrettably, it was not possible for the School to cover every area but, following a long and diligent process, the School Executive Committee had looked at the strengths of each area, identifying where there was critical mass and where there was expertise which could compete in an increasingly tough internationally environment. He noted the development of research centres to bring together different aspects of the School, a strategy, to date, proving very successful with one being awarded MRC status and at least one other expected to receive research council status shortly.
- Professor Heys expressed the importance of looking very critically at where excellence in teaching and in research lay within the School and in identifying critical mass, defined as the number of staff within an area who can deliver what is required. Professor Heys noted that the quality of outputs, research grant funding, PhD supervision and funding, teaching capacity and innovation in teaching, each explicit in both the School and University Strategic Plans, were used as means of assessing areas and in determining which areas could support and sustain the School.
- Professor Heys stated the due care and attention taken throughout the process, noting the difficult decisions which had to be made.
- The Senate noted that the voluntary severance scheme within the School had not proven to be successful enough and, regrettably, individuals, as a consequence of their research areas, were subsequently put at risk. Professor Heys noted the work of the School Management Team in appropriately restructuring the school to meet the needs of the student experience and excellence and in increasing teaching capacity. Newly created positions were very clearly described addressing key areas of teaching, teaching innovation, assessment and feedback and appointments to these posts has focused in this regard.
- Professor Heys stated that eight colleagues identified as at risk had been assimilated into these posts and that work remained ongoing to develop opportunity for others.
- Professor Heys stated staff were being supported as best as possible as the School moves towards delivering a neutral budget.

4.6 Professor Delibegovic questioned whether the loss of staff in laboratories would have a detrimental impact on teaching excellence, should there not be enough projects and laboratory opportunities to deliver what has previously been provided. Professor Heys noted that the School were looking carefully at where students were affected by restructuring, ensuring all aspects of teaching were covered and an appropriate high quality experience provided. The Principal confirmed no student would be disadvantaged by the changes and that the student experience would not be affected. He confirmed the resource in place to do this and noted that it would be ensured laboratory opportunities would be available where required.

- 4.7 Professor Delibegovic asked the Principal if, following the restructuring activity within the School, would more cuts, or changes to processes follow in future years. The Principal confirmed this would not be the case.
- 4.8 Professor Barker informed the Senate that his area was one affected by disinvestment. Acknowledging the feedback provided by Professor Heys, he noted concern regarding the lack of transparency and demonstrated due diligence in informing staff why they had been identified as at risk. He stated that staff had already left without knowing exactly the criteria used in arriving at the judgements made. Professor Barker noted key risks for the University as (i) loss of confidence of staff, (ii) the danger of damage of reputation with students, (iii) the danger of damage to reputation with funding bodies if principal holders of research funding leave or move as a consequence of the restructuring and (iv) the involvement of a high number of ethnic minority staff. Professor Barker stated that staff did not feel supported.
- 4.9 Professor Heys acknowledged the point raised by Professor Barker, expressing his understanding that the process represents a difficult time for staff. Professor Heys reiterated the paramount importance of the student experience. Professor Heys noted the ethnic origin of staff was not taken into consideration and while understanding that individuals were affected, that decisions had been driven by areas of research and not individuals. He stated he was unaware of any grant implications of the changes. He stated that the final shape of the School remains unknown at this time as the plan remains ongoing. He stated his confidence, however, in the capability and capacity of the School to deliver the excellence sought.
- 4.10 Professor Hannaford noted he was also based within an area of disinvestment. He sought to reassure colleagues that he had taken over responsibility for a grant following the departure of a colleague. As the grant would be fulfilled, the funding body had no concerns in this regard.
- 4.11 The Principal asked Professor Heys if it would be possible to reassure the Senate that all teaching would be covered and delivered in the second half session. Professor Heys confirmed he was entirely confident teaching would be delivered, however, did note as a teaching post did remain to be filled, exactly the form this would take was yet to be determined.
- 4.12 Dr Vargesson expressed his gratitude to Professor Heys for the update provided, however, noted that as a member of School, this was the first time he had heard this explanation and the detail provided. He noted the value of the information to staff. Dr Vargesson also noted concern as to the potential for further restructuring as a consequence of future cuts to funding.
- 4.13 Professor Heys agreed he was happy to lead an open staff meeting to enable all School staff to hear the explanation as provided. The Principal confirmed he would also attend. The Principal acknowledged that the School deficit was £4 million but that this would be achieved by way of a savings and income growth. He acknowledged such growth requires time to achieve and that during this time, cross subsidy across the University was an option. Professor Heys reassured colleagues that staff at risk were being looked after and that the School was working hard to potentially reposition colleagues remaining at risk.
- 4.14 Ms Harding expressed concerns on behalf of Postgraduate Research (PGR) students, specifically identifying the case of a PGR who had just begun their PhD and their supervisor has been asked to leave. Ms Harding stated the student is unaware of what happens next or who to seek advice from. She further expressed concern regarding the removal of a £500 grant for PGRs and that Level 4 undergraduate students are making project decisions based on members of staff who they think will still be in post.

- 4.15 Professor Heys noted all PGRs affected had been contacted and made aware of their position and who their supervisory contact should be. Professor Heys stated no member of staff had been asked to leave. While not aware of the specific case to which Ms Harding referred requested further detail in order that this could be quickly resolved. The Principal reiterated that all students seeking a laboratory experience would get one.
- 4.16 Mr Fuller stated that the Students' Association were receiving a number of queries from students regarding the issue. Mr Fuller noted that the student body had voted staff cuts at Foresterhill as a priority campaign for the SA this academic year. Responding to Mr Fuller, the Principal issued his total reassurance that the student experience would not be affected and that the capacity to deliver high class teaching in the School remains higher than elsewhere in the University.
- 4.17 Dr Oliver noted concern regarding the unanswered issue of the two academics (point 4.2 refers) noted by Professor Delibigovic. Professor Heys reiterated that disinvestment had been identified by areas of research and not by the identification of individuals. He confirmed areas of excellence had been identified by where best research can underpin the strategic plan. Dr Rea noted from his own experience that staff greatly appreciate being able to understand why decisions are being made and where this is done can more readily accept them. Professor Heys stated the benefit of the School strategic plan in making these issues very clear and in articulating the strategic vision of the School.
- 4.18 Professor Masthoff asked Professor Heys to confirm how many PGR students were affected by disinvestment. Professor Heys noted he did not have the exact figure but could provide this to Professor Masthoff subsequent to the meeting. Professor Masthoff further queried whether all staff in a given area would leave or if critical mass would remain at an appropriate level? Professor Heys confirmed that expertise would remain to deliver required experience. He reiterated that the final shape of the School remains in flux, but he is confident that security and breadth of experience for students is on place. Professor Heys agreed to again contact all PGRs affected.
- 4.19 Dr Rist noted concern that disinvestment in individuals was fundamentally against collegiality. Referencing the Court paper circulated to the Senate he noted the statement 'indicative budgets break even giving limited scope for investment' and suggested the University is not in a bad position and therefore should not be disinvesting in colleagues. The Principal clearly stated the expectation of the University not to break-even but to return a surplus to ensure financial sustainability. The Principal expressed his regret at the position, however, noted that primarily as a consequence of a reduction in funding, the University does have areas with a deficit to be addressed.
- 4.20 Professor Anderson and Dr Shanks posed a question of the Principal as follows:
- Can the Principal please explain the inconsistency between the set of figures officially tabled to Court, and then, very shortly afterwards, the use of a very different set of figures by the Senior Management Team? Can the Principal comment if this quick change in figures implies that the Senior Management Team has the authority to work independently of Court? In the interests of transparency, when will UMT table the correct figures to both Court and Senate?*
- 4.21 The Principal clearly stated the deficit of the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition as £4 million, noting this was to be brought to break even by means of savings of £1 million which had already been identified and by a combination of further savings and income growth. The Principal stated that the paper presented was entirely consistent with the paper which went to Court. He confirmed that the University Management Group (UMG) works entirely under the jurisdiction of the Court and Operating Board, on which there are three Senate Assessors.

- 4.22 With reference to Professor Delibegovic's final point (*point 4.2 refers*) and the implications for the wider University, the Principal confirmed three Schools had been identified as operating at a deficit. The Schools being the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition, Biological Sciences and Natural & Computing Sciences. The Principal confirmed Professors Skakle and Paton, as Heads of School, were working closely with their teams to develop appropriate plans to reduce deficit and to break-even. The Principal confirmed to the Senate that there were no implications for other schools in the University. He stated he was, however, not able to provide indefinite reassurance for the future but reiterated his confidence in the University's Strategic Plan as a means of ensuring the University remain a high quality UK institution.
- 4.23 Dr Oliver asked a question of the Principal regarding a potential proposal to review the range of degree programmes offered by the University. Dr Oliver raised concern that this appeared to be being reviewed for reasons of timetabling and annual reporting requirements. He stated programmes with less than 10 registered students were being targeted for withdrawal. Dr Oliver noted concern of the effect these proposals could have on disciplines, the student experience and the academic integrity of the University. Dr Oliver asked for confirmation of the stage at which these proposals were at and if they would be roundly debated in Senate and therefore informed by Schools and Senators.
- 4.24 The Principal noted no intention for there to be a cut-off point for the withdrawal of programmes and stated that programmes would be reviewed for pedagogic reasons only. He noted that raw data suggested joint honours students are less satisfied than single honours students and that this does need to be further investigated. The Principal referred to an email from the Vice-Principal for Teaching and Learning, Professor McGeorge, to Schools to ask them to question their programmes on a pedagogic basis and to encourage careful review of the programmes offered, to ensure the student experience is strong. Professor McGeorge added there are approximately 350 programmes on University's books, approximately one third of which have no students registered. He noted that the email circulated does make reference to programmes with less than ten registered students but as means only as a point at which to begin discussion. The Principal reiterated that Schools were being asked to discuss their programme portfolio from a pedagogic perspective with particular focus on those programmes with small numbers.
- 4.25 Mrs Tibbetts queried the operation of the Restructuring Committee. Noting that correspondence had been circulated to all Heads of School to clarify its remit, deadlines etc., Mrs Tibbetts further sought clarity on whether it would be likely that the Committee would cease to operate in the New Year as restructuring comes to an end. Professor Kilburn confirmed this might be reasonably expected.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING

- 5.1 The Principal moved to the agenda item of Health Safety and Wellbeing and reminded the Senate of ongoing safety tours across the University. The Principal also reminded Senate of the online health and safety training available to all staff.
- 5.2 The Senate received an update on the forthcoming launch of the Mental Health Strategy on 9 November, the Race to the Pole Challenge and the Health and Wellbeing Day planned for 11 January 2017. The Principal issued his congratulations to Professor Sahraie on his recent completion of an ironman challenge.
- 5.3 With regards Health and Safety, Dr North, queried the reference to 'School Wellbeing Coordinator' within the Support for Study Policy (minute point 17.1 refers). Professor Ross confirmed this role was a new one, likely, although not required, to be taken on by existing local Safety Coordinators (identified under the University's Health and Safety Policy). Dr North noted that this may be duplication of a role currently fulfilled by a School Disability

Officer. Professor Ross acknowledged that this may be the case, however, in recognition of the different practice in operation across the University discussions as to how these roles would be fulfilled would be held on a school by school basis.

- 5.4 The Principal informed Senate that he was delighted to have recently signed the Stonewall 'no bystanders' pledge and would encourage the University as a whole to take such matters very seriously.
- 5.5 The Principal invited members to bring forward any further issues relating to matters of health, safety and wellbeing. No matters were raised.

REPORT FROM THE UNIVERSITY COURT

- 6.1 The Senate received an update from Professor Hutchison on behalf of the Senate Assessors on the meetings of the University Court held on 28 June and 4 October 2016 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minute). Professor Hutchison specifically noted that the Court had discussed the following:
 - (i) The implications of the EU Referendum Results and Brexit;
 - (ii) University budgetary matters (minute point 5 also refers);
 - (iii) The composition of the Court (minute point 8 also refers). Professor Hutchison noted regarding this item that the initial proposal had been to reduce the number of Court members 28 from 17 which would have reduced the number of Senate assessors significantly. Professor Hutchison noted that the Assessors had argued against this and had led on the proposals being presented for a Court membership of 25.
 - (iv) Appointment of the next Court Senior Governor (minute point 7.2 also refers).

PROPOSAL FOR REVISED COMPOSITION OF COURT

- 7.1 Mr Styles proposed a new motion to the Senate to bring the motion (agenda item 14) regarding the 'Revised Composition of the University Court' forward on the agenda given the link to the Report from the University Court. The Senate voted on this matter, the results of which were as follows:

In favour of the motion to move agenda item 14 forward for discussion:	65
Not in favour of the motion to move agenda item 14 forward for discussion:	12
Abstaining from the vote:	12

Members of the Senate therefore approved the motion to move agenda item 14 forward for discussion.

- 7.2 The Principal informed the Senate of the process surrounding the replacement of the Court Senior Governor, a vacancy arising as a consequence of the decision taken by Sir Moir Lockhead, following 14 years as a member of Court and 7 of which in the role of Senior Governor, to step down. The Principal noted that an advert, with a closing date of 7 November 2016, had been released and was being worked on by an executive search agency. The Senate noted that it is hoped interviews will be held later in the year with an interview panel chaired by Mr James Hall, chair of the Governance and Nominations Committee joined by Ms Katherine McPhail an Independent Governor, Ms Jenny Shirreffs, an elected member from the General Council, Professor Alfred Akisanya, Senator Assessor and Mr Chubbe Anucha, President of the Students' Association. The Senate acknowledged that the Court would hope to have a recommendation for the post later in the year.

7.3 The Senate received a paper from the University Court setting out proposals for a revised composition of Court (copy filed with the Principal's copy of the minute). These proposals were being made in response to the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act. Mr Styles introduced a motion setting out proposed amendments to the proposals presented by Court. Mr Styles informed the Senate that following the publication of the HE Governance Scotland Act, certain aspects of the composition of the Court have been altered by statute, including the existence of a senior lay member, elected members representing staff and representatives of Trade Unions. The statute allows for carte blanche for Universities to do what they like subject to the rule that staff nor students make up a majority of the governing body. In a consultation role, this motion proposes that Senate respond to Court:

- (i) Suggesting some small drafting changes as detailed within the paper;
- (ii) Welcoming the decision to keep four Senate Assessors;
- (iii) Suggesting a change of name from 'Senior Governor' to 'Dean of Court' and,
- (iv) Proposing four of the twelve seats for independent members be reserved for elected General Council Assessors, given the important role alumni play.

7.4 The Principal reminded the Senate they can only offer a view to Court but noted his confidence that the Court would take Senate's view seriously.

7.5 For clarity and transparency the University Secretary, Mrs Inglis, in regard to paragraph one of the motion informed the Senate that the statement 'the appointment of two persons directly elected by all academic staff' was not correct as it was the intention of the Court to elect one individual from academic staff and one from support staff and similarly with the trade unions, one from, the academic trade union and one from the support staff trade unions. The Principal further noted that the reduction in numbers on Court had been largely brought about by a reduction in the number of representatives from Aberdeen City and Shire Councils.

7.6 Following discussion, Senate was asked to vote with regards to the proposals (i) that the term Dean of Court should be adopted for the Senior Governor and (ii) that four of the twelve seats for independent Court members should be reserved for elected General Council Assessors. The results of this vote were:

In favour of the motion that the term Dean of Court should be adopted as the title for the Senior Governor:	53
Not in favour of the motion that the term Dean of Court should be adopted as the title for the Senior Governor:	19
Abstaining from the vote:	20

In favour of the motion that four of the twelve seats for independent Court members should be reserved for elected General Council Assessors:	70
Not in favour of the motion that four of the twelve seats for independent Court members should be reserved for elected General Council Assessors:	16
Abstaining from the vote:	9

Votes having been taken, the Principal confirmed that support to both elements of the motion had been approved and agreed to forward these to the University Court as representative of the Senate's view.

PRESENTATION ON TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION

- 8.1 The Senate received a presentation from Professor John Paterson on Transnational Education (TNE) (copy filed with the principal copy of the minute).
- 8.2 The Senate noted that Professor Steve Bradley, University of Lancaster, had recently delivered a presentation at the University of the experiences of Lancaster in working with TNE in Ghana.
- 8.3 Further to the Presentation, there was discussion surrounding TNE specifically and also the Delivery Partner documentation (minute 9.1 refers). A summary of which is detailed below.
- Professor Duff raised an issue regarding the Delivery Partners document proposing an amendment to Section 4 to stipulate that each individual partnership proposal should come to Senate for approval. Professor Duff stated the importance of academic standards and intellectual integrity in this regard. The Principal acknowledged the intention of the document in this regard. Mr Styles proposed that this be explicitly stated.
 - Dr Lusseau thanked Professor Paterson for his presentation, noting the importance of the University's consideration of all options in the Higher Education landscape. He asked if there would be an exclusivity clause associated with a partnership with TNE preventing the University from working with other partners in a specific area. Professor Paterson confirmed that, in the case of the partnership with TNE, there would be an exclusivity clause preventing the University from working with others in the immediate region.
 - Dr Mills noted with regards the proposed partnership with TNE the reference made to the University of Rwanda welcoming to the work of the University in the region. Noting that the public University of Rwanda is a large institution with approximately 30 000 students, he informed the Senate of the issues experienced with a low PhD level amongst teaching staff as a consequence of the genocide. Dr Mills asked if there would be potential to work with the University to improve this. The Senior Vice-Principal, Professor Kilburn, stated that he had been in touch with the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Rwanda who had indicated that he would welcome the arrival of a high quality Higher Education provider. Professor Kilburn confirmed that discussions remained ongoing, but that these were likely to centre on the potential for staff development. The Principal noted his agreement with the need for development and stated his hope that the University could work with Rwanda in areas of capacity building but also in potentially obtaining funding to deliver subjects such as teaching and nursing to enable the delivery of critical functions in country.
 - Dr Mills further queried the possibility for Government funding opportunities for PhD development as demonstrated by work undertaken by the German and Swedish Governments. Professor Kilburn stated that interaction with the Rwandan Government had begun following invitation to go and discuss opportunities with them, primarily around the energy agenda, PhD and upskilling. He noted that the TNE model represented a starting point for work in this regard.
 - Dr Yidhego expressed his support for the proposed project in East Africa, noting the potential benefits for the region and the University. Dr Yidhego questioned, however, the identification of Rwanda as the right country to work in. He noted the location of Rwanda as far away from the big markets such as Ethiopia and that Rwanda is a Francophone and not English speaking country.
 - Professor Paterson stated the benefits of working with TNE in such a partnership. He stated that they undertake the financial risk associated with infrastructure, staffing etc. and undertake extensive research to be confident they have the right location. Professor Paterson acknowledged the responsibility of the University to continue its own examination of the suitability of Rwanda as part of the East African

community and informed the Senate of conversations with colleagues working there in assisting the University in doing so.

- Dr Oliver raised the issue of the profitability of the scheme, noting that the University of Lancaster had opened their campus in Ghana in 2013 with no profit yet returned. Dr Oliver noted the University's estimate that the proposed venture would be profitable in three years, with an estimated profit of £1.4 million. While acknowledging that the University was not only seeking a profit from the venture, Dr Oliver sought clarity, particularly in recognition of discussed budgetary challenges, of the University's confidence in turning a profit and not putting undue resource stress on staff within Aberdeen.
- Professor Paterson acknowledged Dr Oliver's concern. He noted the careful work of the University in this regard, the due diligence, and careful business modelling undertaken. Professor Paterson assured the Senate that the business model left nothing out and, while risk will always be a factor, stated it allowed for a reasonable amount of security. Professor Wells further stated that the business plan revenue had been determined in terms of student numbers from TNE estimates. From close examination of their projections in relation to their other projects – including the Lancaster campus in Ghana and Murdoch University campus in Dubai - in both those cases they were approximately correct in the round. Professor Wells confirmed that numbers had been modelled with sensitivity analysis and that the upmost care to include all costs.
- Dr Martin noted the model would require teaching materials and assessments to be provided to staff delivering teaching in the proposed campus in Rwanda and queried how appropriate contextualisation would be undertaken. Professor Paterson confirmed that it was likely course and programme outlines, learning outcomes and curriculum content would be shared but that these would be appropriately contextualised by staff at the overseas campus. Professor Paterson noted that the extent of this would vary from course to course.
- Dr Martin further asked if staff in Aberdeen would be given credit for their required interaction with staff overseas and, if so, how this would be resourced. Professors Paterson and Wells stated that the model as proposed includes the role of link-tutor per programme encompassing duties as mentioned in the framework. The Senate noted that the business plan had factored in 0.3 FTE for that role undergraduate programmes and 1.0 FTE for postgraduate programmes.
- Dr Martin stated concern regarding the likelihood that other academic staff would be required to devote time to the project. The Principal confirmed that the University has a fair workload model and would not go beyond it.
- Professor Schaper reiterated the point made regarding the potential language barrier in Rwanda. He noted Tanzania as an English speaking and stable country. Professor Paterson noted work he personally undertakes in Tanzania in a capacity building project. He reiterated the diligence of TNE in looking at all options in East Africa and the potential identified in Rwanda. Professor Paterson stated that although Rwanda is a Francophone country, for the last 10 years English has been the language of instruction throughout the Education system.
- Dr Rea raised the issue of moral responsibility with regards to profit. Professor Paterson acknowledged the concern of some colleagues in this regard but noted the fees paid by international students, derived from all parts of the world, studying in Aberdeen. Professor Paterson stated the seriousness with which he takes his role as educator and the privilege of watching students he has taught progress. He noted the value in the University being able to reach an extended number of students in a region which has experienced challenges but has also experienced growth in recent years. Professor Paterson acknowledged the requirement for resource in order for the University to succeed in future years.
- Professor Paterson acknowledged a point made by Dr Rea regarding the existence of relevant expertise amongst colleagues in Aberdeen. He confirmed that if the resource does not exist or the delivery of a programme is not academically credible then this won't be taken forward.

- The Principal addressed concerns raised regarding the stage at which the proposal for the partnership with TNE had come to the Senate. The Principal informed the Senate that offers are received regularly with regards to partnerships and that these are investigated and addressed before sharing and discussing. The Principal confirmed that Heads of School had been engaged with the project.
- Dr Mills raised concern regarding the role of link-tutor and the importance of buy-in from a School as a whole to allow for this role to work. Professor Paterson agreed, stating the requirement for long term commitment from Schools.
- Dr Oelsner and Professor Masthoff raised concerns regarding the fact that Rwanda is not open democracy and that this may have a detrimental effect on courses. Professor Masthoff noted restrictions on freedoms of speech, expression and that even BBC broadcasts are not permitted. Professor Paterson acknowledged the points as raised and reassured the Senate that the University is not naive about these issues. He noted the importance of the transformational message the University could deliver.
- Dr Nordmann sought reassurance that when selecting staff to work in Rwanda, LGBT status would be taken into consideration. Although being homosexual is not illegal, Dr Nordmann noted that it is not recognised and that there are widespread reports of the harassment and discrimination of individuals identifying as LGBT. Professor Paterson sought to reassure the Senate as a whole that any member of staff feeling uncomfortable, for any reason, would not be pressured to be involved in any overseas project.

DELIVERY PARTNERS

9.1 The Senate received the three papers on delivery partners, (i) Principles and Procedures, (ii) Partnership with the Interactive Design Institute (IDI) and (iii) Partnership with Transnational Education International (TNE), (copy filed with the principal copy of the minute). Following an open discussion, the Principal moved to address the three specific areas identified for Senate asked to vote on. The Principal invited Senators to specifically raise any further points on the policy framework document (i) Principles and Procedures.

- Professor Anderson noted that the framework does not stipulate that independent due diligence of the student market must also be sought. Noting that the document had been prepared for delivery partners in general and not specific to any one in particular, Professor Anderson agreed to the addition of a clause stipulating the requirement for independent due diligence of a partner but proportionate to the size/nature of the project concerned.
- Professor Anderson also noted a lack of reference to how a partnership might be terminated, should difficulties arise. Professor Anderson acknowledged that while the Agreement would contain clauses on termination, this would not allow the Senate to explicitly raise concerns. The Principal asked Professor Anderson to propose a draft amendment in this regard.
- Dr Martin expressed the utmost importance of seeking consultation within Schools. He noted the impact a project could have on School resources and ability to manage its budget and proposed that this be explicitly stated.
- Dr Mills reiterated the importance of ensuring an appropriate termination clause. Dr Mills specifically referred to (i) any threat to the health and wellbeing of staff/students and (ii) any significant restrictions to academic freedom of staff to the extent to which it affects the probity of degrees as potential reasons under which partnership activity could be terminated. Dr Mills agreed to work with Professor Anderson in determining an appropriate paragraph to be added to the framework.
- Mrs Tibbets added that the framework should also refer to the health and wellbeing of partner staff.

9.3 The Principal invited Senators to approve the policy framework document. The results were noted as follows:

In favour of the approval of the document Delivery Partners:	66
Not in favour of the approval of the document Delivery Partners:	10
Abstaining from the vote:	5

A vote having been taken, the Principal confirmed that the document had been approved, subject to the inclusion of the proposed amendments.

9.4 The Senate received the paper on the partnership with the Interactive Design Institute (IDI) (copy filed with the principal copy of the minute). Mr Whittington, on behalf of the Business School introduced the paper and expressed the positive impact the proposed partnership with IDI was expected to have on the growth of Postgraduate Taught (PGT) student numbers within the School. Noting the highly competitive international marketplace for PGT students, he stated that the project represented an opportunity for the School to make use of the online 'visa-free' space and would enable the online delivery of a programme the University would struggle to do internally. Mr Whittington asserted that the IDI had demonstrated their ability to deliver high quality provision on behalf of the University. He confirmed that the IDI would market and deliver the University's courses/programme on a day-to-day basis with the oversight and quality assurance being undertaken by the University. The Principal invited Senators to specifically raise any further points on the proposed agreement.

- The Dean for Quality Assurance and Enhancement, Professor Shennan, noted that a panel visit had been undertaken to IDI to assess the quality of their provision. Professor Shennan confirmed that the panel had spoken with staff and students and were very impressed with the quality of the provision being provided. Professor Shennan confirmed that the panel had no hesitation in approving ID as a provider of University provision.
- Mr Fuller, on behalf of the Students' Association, also confirmed his confidence in the proposed project. Mr Fuller noted that, as a member of the panel, he found the student experience to be of the highest quality.
- Dr Lusseau asked whether the partnership with IDI was proposed to be specific to the Business School. Professor McGeorge confirmed that there may be other programmes which could benefit, however, had not been determined at this time.

9.5 The Principal invited Senators to approve the quality assurance aspects of the Partnership with the Interactive Design Institute (IDI). The results were noted as follows:

In favour of the partnership with the Interactive Design Institute (IDI):	65
Not in favour of the partnership with the Interactive Design Institute (IDI):	4
Abstaining from the vote:	10

A vote having been taken, the Principal confirmed that the Senate had approved the quality assurance aspects of the Partnership with IDI.

9.6 The Senate received the paper on the partnership with Transnational Education International (TNE) (copy filed with the principal copy of the minute). Professor Paterson noted earlier discussion about this opportunity and added only that the Partnership would also allow for the opportunity to work collaboratively in Ghana at Lancaster University Ghana (LUG). Professor Paterson drew attention to a visit undertaken by the University to LUG to assess the quality of delivery by TNE. The Principal invited Senators to specifically raise any further points on the proposed agreement.

- Professor Shennan informed the Senate that the panel visit to LUG, had allowed for the interviewing of staff and students. Professor Shennan noted that the panel had found LUG to work very closely with Lancaster and that all quality assurance aspects of the University of Lancaster were embedded. Professor Shennan stated that the panel had found LUG to be clearly adhering to the procedures required of them and felt confident in expressing the ability of Aberdeen in replicating this with its own procedures.
- Professor Hutchison, a member of the panel which had visited LUG, reiterated Professor Shennan's comments noting only that the commitment required of the University to such a project should not be underestimated.
- Mr Fuller, panel member on behalf of the Students' Association, noted his confidence of TNE to provide a high quality student experience.
- Dr Rist questioned the status of the University's activity in South Korea. Professor Paterson noted that this represented a different type of partnership, however, informed the Senate that discussions were ongoing with regard to commencing delivery in Korea in the next year. Professor Paterson noted that the degrees initially proposed for delivery in Korea had been significantly affected by a domestic downturn in the shipbuilding market.

9.7 The Principal invited Senators to approve the quality assurance aspects of the partnership with Transnational Education International (TNE). The results were noted as follows:

In favour of the partnership with Transnational Education International (TNE):	70
Not in favour of the partnership with Transnational Education International (TNE):	5
Abstaining from the vote:	6

A vote having been taken, the Principal confirmed that the Senate had approved the quality assurance aspects of the Partnership with TNE.

INCREASING MARKING TIME IN FIRST HALF-SESSION

- 10.1 Professor McGeorge presented a paper setting out the proposals from the University Committee on Teaching and Learning (UCTL) (copy filed with the principal copy of the minute) regarding an increase of one week to the marking time in the first half-session for courses at level three and above to the end of the first week of teaching in the second half-session (20 January 2017). For courses at levels one and two, the deadline would remain at the end of the first half-session (13 January 2017).
- 10.2 Mrs Tibbetts noted concern as the practicalities of the proposals with regards the health and wellbeing of staff. Mrs Tibbetts noted that large exam groups can often take place on the last day of the examination diet and therefore the possibility of leave becomes impossible. The Principal acknowledged the issue raised and, with input from Dr Mackintosh, agreed that where possible, large exam classes should be scheduled nearer the start of the examination diet.
- 10.3 Professor Pavlovskaja also noted concern regarding the fact that not all large level one or two courses can be scheduled in the first week of the examination diet and therefore it is inevitable that some staff will be forced to mark over the Christmas break. Professor Pavlovskaja further noted that marks were, in the past, returned as late as the third week of teaching.
- 10.4 Mr Fuller noted his contentment with the proposal, acknowledging it as a compromise presented following feedback received from staff and students and discussion at the UCTL. Mr Fuller highlighted the importance of students receiving marks in a timely fashion and

noted the capacity for release of provisional marks provided by the Academic Quality Handbook (AQH).

- 10.5 Mr Whittington queried whether thought had been given to the later return of results for Postgraduate Taught (PGT) students where their curriculum is entirely prescribed. Professor McGeorge agreed that this point could be take away for further discussion.
- 10.6 Following discussion the Senate were asked to vote on the proposals set out in the paper, subject to consideration being given to whether any further extension could be given to the marking deadline for PgT courses.

Yes, in favour of the proposal:	45
No, not in favour of the proposal:	27
Senators abstaining from vote:	2

A vote having been taken, the Principal confirmed that the proposals had been approved and would be implemented with immediate effect.

MOTION ON UNIVERSITY BUILDING PROPOSALS

- 11.1 The Principal, on behalf of Mr Styles, drew Senate members attention to the motion (copy filed with the principal copy of the minute) proposed by Mr Styles regarding major capital building projects, recommended that all such projects should be brought to Senate for discussion and comment before being taken forward by the University Court.
- 11.2 Dr North, presented an amendment to the motion in order to clarify the objectives and actions. Dr North noted that new building projects can have profound implications on teaching and learning and stated that it was essential the Senate was involved in the oversight of such proposals to avoid unintended consequences. Dr North further stated his understanding that a presentation on one proposal at least was moving forward quickly and a presentation on this would be made to Court in December.
- 11.3 The Principal, in responding to Dr North confirmed that the Court would receive a presentation on the new science teaching building proposal but noted that it would not be possible for the Senate to receive the presentation in advance of the Court. He stated that the plans should, however, be made available to the next meeting of the Senate. Dr North, on behalf of colleagues, noted concern that the plans as currently proposed are not workable. The Principal confirmed that Professor Kilburn, Senior Vice-Principal, would ensure a full consultation take place with concerned colleagues in advance of Court.
- 11.4 Professor Kilburn stated that it would be helpful to determine the appropriate definition of 'major' in regards to capital building projects. It was agreed that Professor Kilburn should meet with Drs North, Oliver and Mr Styles to discuss such a definition in further detail.
- 11.5 Following discussion, the Principal invited members to vote on the amended motion. The results were recorded as follows:

Yes, in favour of the revised standing orders:	64
No, not in favour of the revised standing orders:	4
Senators abstaining from vote:	4

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

STUDENT EXPERIENCE PAPER

- 12.1 Professor McGeorge presented to the Senate the paper on the Student Experience in 2015/2016 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minute). Professor McGeorge informed the Senate that the detail of the paper acknowledges a lot of excellent work going on across the University with regards retention, feedback and assessment, however, in doing so stressed that attention needs to be given to the area of assessment and feedback where the University falls well below benchmark.
- 12.2 The Principal noted the fundamental importance of the Student Experience. Conscious of many examples of good practice across the University, the Principal stated the value of sharing this across the campus.
- 12.3 Professor McFarlane acknowledged the work of the University in recruiting more students, particularly PGT, and referenced the success of some programmes in doing so. Professor McFarlane noted, however, that teaching accommodation is not always fit for purpose for and that the infrastructure must be in best possible condition to be able to deliver teaching provision. The Principal expressed his disappointment that issues such as these were being experienced and asked Professor Kilburn to ensure this was addressed.
- 12.4 Dr Rist acknowledged the Principal's statement regarding good practice, noting that school and departments should also look to share good practice internally.

UPDATE ON COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

- 13.1 Professor Kilburn presented a paper (copy filed with the principal copy of the minute) on progress in regard to the Collective Agreement relating to Intellectual Property (IP). Professor Kilburn specifically thanked Dr Mills for his involvement in the work to prepare this document.
- 13.2 Dr Mills drew the attention of the Senate to a typographical error in section 6.2.1, noting that it should read 'other staff and students'.
- 13.3 Dr Martin raised two matters of wording as noted below:
- (i) Regarding point 1.2.1, Dr Martin noted that the definition of commercial activity appeared too vague or general.
 - (ii) Regarding point 6.2.1, Dr Martin noted that this appeared too restrictive.
- In responding, Professor Kilburn agreed that these matters could be taken back to the Working Group and asked Dr Martin for his suggested input on more suitable drafts.
- 13.4 Professor Irwin noted section 5.3 and the stipulation that, without express permission, staff cannot take their own documentation with them when they leave. Professor Irwin expressed concern that this was not standard practice. Responding, Professor Kilburn acknowledged the general rule that the IP belongs to the University. While in general terms the University would be unlikely to be so restrictive this is the legal position. Dr Mills further stated that University practice does vary in this regard, however, this clause represents extensive negotiation on the matter. Dr Lusseau commented that an individual's own IP may be protected by way of 'creative comments'.
- 13.5 In concluding, it was agreed the proposed changes to the wording would be taken back to the Working Group.

GENDER PAY GAP

- 14.1 The Principal drew members' attention to the paper providing an update on the Gender Pay Gap (copy filed with the principal copy of the minute).
- 14.2 Professor Masthoff welcomed the progress and obvious reflection demonstrated by the paper but also identified an issue of missing data regarding the proportion of population per band. Professor Masthoff expressed concern that inequality may occur as a consequence of individuals not being promoted as quickly based on band.
- 14.3 Dr Shanks, on behalf of colleagues with regards to Table 2 and length of tenure provided, requested a similar analysis by tenure for other grades. Dr Shanks expressed concern regarding the number of staff appointed to grade 9 and, in addition, the low numbers of female staff at levels 7 and above.
- 14.4 The Principal confirmed that the data requested could be obtained. He noted his lack of surprise by the numbers of staff at grade 9 based on the quality of staff and of the institution as a whole. The Principal affirmed the clear intention of the University to instil strong mentoring provision for the promotion of female colleagues and to ensure manifestly fair procedures are in place. He noted that all staff involved in promotion exercise would receive unconscious bias training.

AOCB

- 15.1 The Principal provided the opportunity for Senators to raise any general matters. No issues were raised.

SENATE COMMITTEE REMITS FOR 2016/17

- 16.1 The Senate approved the remit and composition of Senate Committees for 2016/17 (copy filed with principal copy of minutes).

REPORT FROM THE UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

The Senate approved and noted the recommendations arising from the meeting of the University Committee on Teaching & Learning on 28 September 2016 and 13 October 2016.

1. Support for Study Policy

- 17.1.1 Professor Anderson, on behalf of colleagues within the School of Social Science, requested that the item on the Support for Study Policy be brought forward for discussion. He noted three specific points with regards to the Support for Study policy, as outlined below:
- (i) Professor Anderson expressed concern that the word 'wellbeing' is not defined within the policy. Professor Anderson acknowledged the wider issue of the difficulties in defining 'wellbeing' in Scotland as a whole, including a recent Supreme Court decision which stated 'wellbeing' could not be easily defined as a consequence of its subjective nature. Professor Anderson noted his concern over a lack of definition lay specifically in the potential for personal prejudices or hearsay to influence matters.

- (ii) Professor Anderson noted that it was unclear why it had been felt appropriate to create the Support for Study policy and, in so doing, depart from pre-existing policy. He stated that issues such as those covered by the policy had previously been handled by Heads of School and/or Heads of Department and they did not now feature in this document. Professor Anderson noted the possible difficult outcomes for students the use of this policy could present.
- (iii) Professor Anderson raised concern that the policy had no provision for appeal, complaint or entitlement to make a Subject Access Request to the University.

17.1.2 Professor Anderson confirmed his support for the policy in general but noted concern for the potential for misuse on the basis of the points listed above.

17.1.3 Professor Ross, Vice Principal for People Strategy, in responding to Professor Anderson, thanked him for the raising of these important issues. Professor Ross confirmed that the policy was not intended to replace any other but instead to work alongside policies such as the Code of Practice on Student Discipline (Academic and Non-academic) and Fitness to Practise Policies in use in the Schools of Education and Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition. Professor Ross confirmed that the potential outcomes as listed within the new policy could not be invoked without following the guidelines as laid out within the appropriate respective policies. Professor Ross confirmed that, as is the case with all University policy, routes to appeal and/or complain against any decisions made or procedures followed remained open to students.

17.1.4 Professor Ross acknowledged past practice across the Institution and noted that disciplinary issues would always have involved the Head of Student Support, and that the policy sought only to articulate this practice, not remove the role of Heads of School and/or Section. Professor Ross noted her agreement at the lack of definition for 'wellbeing'. Noting that the University 'knows what it means' in this regard, Professor Ross confirmed that the Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing is looking to determine a relatively simple definition or set of words for the purposes of the policy. Professor Ross stated that given his research in this area, Professor Anderson could helpfully be engaged in these discussions.

17.1.5 Professor Anderson was content with the responses as provided by Professor Ross and no issues were raised. The Senate, without need for a vote, agreed to move forward with the policy.

2. Degree Classification

17.2.1 Dr North requested that the item on Degree Classification be brought forward for discussion, highlighting to Senate his concerns regarding the proposals within the paper and what was being asked of colleagues in this regard. Dr North acknowledged the proposal, that Schools continue to classify degrees on the basis of Grade Point Average (GPA) and the Grade Spectrum and did not disagree with this, however, raised issues with the reasoning provided within the paper for doing so. Dr North focussed on two key points as outlined below:

- (i) The assertion within the paper that Schools were not making sufficient use of A1 and A2 grades. Dr North noted the criteria for these grades includes references to 'outstanding and superior' and therefore expressed concern that colleagues were being asked to modify their understanding of these descriptors.
- (ii) Furthermore, Dr North noted his surprise at the lack of concern within the paper regarding B3 and C1 grades. Assuming there should be a 'normal' distribution of grades, Dr North queried that it would not be reasonable to expect not significant distribution within the A band but a higher proportion of marks across the C band. Dr North asserted his overarching concern that the process is premised on a 'normal' distribution which will always suppress extremes.

- 17.2.2 Responding to Dr North, Professor McGeorge, Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning, noted Dr North's agreement with the proposal to classify students using both processes for a further two years. Professor McGeorge asserted that he would not, however, expect a fully normal distribution of marks, on the basis of the highly selected student body studying across the University and that he would anticipate a distribution of marks skewed to the higher bands of the scale. Professor McGeorge, referring to the Student Experience paper (minute point 13 refers), stated that approximately 10-13% of courses do not make use of the grades within the A band at all. Although grades such as A1 and A2 do refer to 'outstanding' and 'superior' Professor McGeorge clarified that while lack of use of such grades was not specific to Aberdeen, these descriptors should be taken in the context of the level at which the student is studying and the circumstances provided to them.
- 17.2.3 Dr North agreed with Professor McGeorge that the task to educate colleagues regarding appropriate use of the higher grades was difficult, as it also had been under the Common Assessment Scale (CAS). The Principal agreed strongly with this and encouraged appropriate marking across the Institution. Dr North further commented that he felt an arithmetic average was not the correct or appropriate statistic to use.
- 17.2.4 The Senate, without need for a vote, agreed to move forward with the proposals as laid out in the paper.

3. UK Undergraduate Recruitment 2017

- 17.3 The Senate was informed that the item relating to RUK Undergraduate Recruitment 2017 had been withdrawn for further consideration of other proposals that would allow the University to increase recruitment of RUK students.

4. Enhanced Study at Levels 3 and 4

- 17.4 The Senate approved, on the recommendation of the UCTL, amendments to Enhanced Study requirements at levels 3 & 4 (copy filed with the principal copy of minutes).

5. Validation Agreement with Persona Training and Development Ltd

- 17.5 On the recommendation of the UCTL, the Senate, for its part, approved the recommendation, on academic grounds, that the 'Psychological Wellbeing Counselling and Psychotherapy' programme delivered by Persona Training and Development Limited should be validated by the University, with immediate effect for a period of three years, leading to PgDip and MSc awards of the University of Aberdeen (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

6. UG Entry Requirements and Home Fees Recruitment

- 17.6.1 The UCTL discussed the proposals (copy filed with principal copy of minutes) regarding Undergraduate entry requirements and home fees recruitment. The Committee noted the concerns regarding the UK's exit from the European Union and the potential effect this could have on undergraduate recruitment.

- 17.6.2 The Committee noted that EU students currently have the same fundable status as Scottish students, however, as the Scottish Government may change this, the University must take action in regards to its recruitment strategy of Scottish students. The Committee noted the uncertainty posed by Brexit and the University's statement that for academic year 2016/17 EU fee status will remain equitable to home fee status but such status cannot be confirmed for future years.
- 17.6.3 The Senate noted that the UCTL had noted their agreement of the publication of minimum and typical entry requirements as proposed.

7. Prospective Student: Engagement and Enquiry Management

- 17.7 Senate noted that the Committee had discussed the proposals (copy filed with principal copy of the minutes) with regards to Engagement and Enquiry Management. The Committee agreed with the proposals, acknowledging that the next stage of the OneSource Student Lifecycle project will replace the systems currently in place

8. Delivery Partners

- 17.8 The Senate noted that the UCTL had received the proposed handbook in respect of National and International Delivery Partner activity. The UCTL, for its part, approved the handbook and agreed that it should be passed to the Senate for approval.

9. Collaborative Provision: Transnational Education International (TNE)

- 17.9.1 The Senate noted that the UCTL had received the report in respect of a University led visit to Lancaster University Ghana (LUG) in addition to a cover paper providing background information regarding the University's proposed relationship with a delivery partner to deliver transnational education. The UCTL noted the work of the panel in observing how LUG operated, the quality of the infrastructure on-site and meeting with staff and students. The UCTL noted the panel's perceptions in regards to the spirit of the campus, strong links with the University of Lancaster, extra-curricular activities of LUG students, engagement with local community and the positive experiences of their student population and their interaction with the University of Lancaster Students' Association. The panel expressed to the UCTL their confidence in the ability of such a model in providing an equivalent student experience to that provided in Aberdeen.
- 17.9.2 Senate noted that on the recommendation of the panel and the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC), the UCTL were content to approve the Quality Assurance model, if appropriately resourced, as proposed and evidenced by the University of Lancaster in partnership with TNE at LUG.

10. Dates and allocations for November 2016 graduations

- 17.10 The Senate noted that the UCTL had approved the dates and allocation for the November Ceremonies as summarised below, approved by the Convener of the UCTL during the summer:

Thursday 24 November at 11.00 a.m.

Higher and First Degrees in the Schools of Language & Literature, Geosciences and Law

Thursday 24 November at 3.00 p.m.

Higher and First Degrees in the Schools of Biological Sciences, Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition and Psychology.

Friday 25 November at 11.00 a.m.

Higher and First Degrees in the Business School and the Schools of Divinity, History & Philosophy and Social Science

Friday 25 November at 3.00 p.m.

Higher and First Degrees in the School of Education, Natural & Computing Sciences and Engineering.

11. Latest dates for the return of Examination Results 2016/17

- 17.11 The UCTL approved the dates for the return of results for 2016/17 available at <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/teaching/exam-results-and-change-of-marks-678.php>. The dates approved include the amendments necessary to provide the increased marking time detailed in SEN16:03.

12. Term Dates to 2028

- 17.12 The UCTL approved the provisional dates of term until 2027/28.

13. Korea Campus – Dates of Term

- 17.13 The UCTL, for its part, approved the draft academic calendar for the Korea Campus.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE SENATE EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW

- 18.1 The Senate approved the matters arising from Senate Effectiveness Review relating to (i) the composition of Senate and (ii) the timing and frequency of Senate meetings (copy filed with principal copy of minutes).
- 18.2 In regard to the composition of the Senate, the Senate, for its part, approved (i) the Ordinance [Amendment to the Composition of the Senatus Academicus] and (ii) the Resolution [Election of Readers and Lectures to the Senatus Academicus] and agreed to forward these to the University Court.

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE SUPPORTING RESEARCH

- 19.1 The Senate approved proposals regarding revisions to the committee structure supporting research (copy filed with principal copy of minutes).

SENATE ELECTIONS

- 20.1 The Senate noted the appointments made in the recent Senate elections (copy filed with principal copy of minutes).

APPOINTMENT OF SENATE ASSESSOR TO THE UNIVERSITY COURT

- 21.1 The Senate noted that following recent elections Professor Delibegovic was elected as a Senate Assessor for the College of Life Sciences & Medicine with immediate effect until 30 September 2020.

SENATE APPOINTMENTS

- 22.1 The Senate noted that the Senate Business Committee had approved the appointment Professor A Ludbrook, Professor H Wallace, Professor G Coghill and Professor K Edwards as members of the Gifford Lecture Committee.

The Senate further noted that the Senate Business Committee had agreed that the membership of the Appeals Panel should be drawn from all Senate members together with all Directors of Professional Services.

ANNUAL STUDENT SURVEY

- 23.1 The Senate noted an Annual Senate Survey was issued to all Senate members in 2015/16 in line with the recommendation in the recent Senate Effectiveness Review. The survey closed on Friday 14 October 2016. The results from the survey would be considered in the first instance by the Senate Business Committee at its next meeting.

STUDENT POPULATION 2016/17

- 24.1 The Senate noted the paper which reported on the Student Population in 2016/17 (copy filed with principal copy of minutes).

ITEMS DEFERRED TO NEXT MEETING

- 25.1 The Senate noted that the Senate Business Committee, in agreeing the Senate agenda for the meeting on 2 November 2016 agreed to defer the item on PhD Completion Rates. At the June meeting of Senate, it was agreed a paper on this should be brought back to Senate however it was felt that deferring to February 2017 would allow further detail to be provided and the Committee was also mindful of the size of the November agenda.