

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

SENATUS ACADEMICUS

Minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2017

Present: Principal, Professors Kilburn, Haites, Paterson, McGeorge, Hannaford, Ross and Irwin, Mr M Whittington, Professors Sahraie, Paton, Heys, Skakle, Jolley, Guz, Wells, Brown and Campbell, Dr R Neilson, Professor Masthoff, Kee and Shennan Dr M Ehrenschtendner, Dr S Lawrie, Dr M Beaton, Dr P Bishop, Mrs L Tibbetts, Dr L McCann, Professor Hutchison, Dr A Sim, Professors Nimmo and Schaper, Dr H Pierce, Dr R Shanks, Dr D R Smith, Mrs M Stephen, Dr A Bryzgel, Dr T Rist, Dr A Lewis, Dr B Tribout, Dr Z Yihdego, Mr S Styles, Dr M Mills, Dr A Oelsner, Professor Anderson, Dr D Lusseau, Professor Pinard, Dr J Baird, Dr M Barker, Professor J Jayasinghe, Dr A Rajnicek, Dr K Kiezebrink, Dr M Macdiarmid, Dr M Delibegović, Dr A Jenkinson, Dr N Vargesson, Dr D MacCallum, Professor Barker, Dr S Fielding, Dr I Cameron, Dr K Foster, Professor Lee, Dr E Nordmann, Dr D Ray, Professor Jovcic, Dr E Pavlovskaja, Professors Akisanya and Kashtalyan, Dr O Menshykov, Dr B Rea, Dr J Oliver, Dr A Ebinghaus, Professor Coghill and Grebogi, Dr da Silva Baptista, Professor Brittain, Dr N Oren, Mr L Fuller, Miss A Boerkoel, Mr K Thomson-Duncan, Mr D Kaminek, Mr M Hickman, Miss D Parsons, Mr L Budrass, Miss C Henssen, Miss L Rossi, Mr N Lazaroz and Miss E Harding

Apologies: Professors Glover and MacGregor, Ms AM Slater, Professors Morrison, Welch and Gimlin Dr A Arnason, Professors Naphy and Connolly, Professor Lurie, Mrs D Bruxvoort, Dr J Lamb, Dr P Sweeney, Dr P Ziegler, Professor Mealar, Dr A Simpson, Dr T Argounova-Low, Professor Johnson, Dr N Mody, Dr G Macfarlane, Dr D Scott, Dr A Venkatesh, Dr F Thies, Dr R MacKenzie, Dr K Pilz, Dr N Schofield, Dr C North, Professor J Feldmann, Dr B Martin, Dr W Vasconcelos, Dr C Black, Mr C Anucha, Miss M Leskovska, Miss K Metcalfe, Miss K Halop, Miss D Passinke, Miss A Hall, Mr A Edirisooriya and Miss J Killin

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- 26.1 The Principal invited members to approve the agenda as presented and as prepared by the Senate Business Committee. As no comments were raised, the agenda was taken to be approved and the meeting proceeded.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 27.1 The Principal invited members to confirm that they were content with the minute of the meeting held on 2 November 2016.
- 27.2 With regards to the discussion held on the Student Experience Paper (minute point 12.4 refers), Dr Rist noted an inaccuracy attributing the suggestion that schools and departments share good practice internally to him. Dr Rist noted that his suggestion had been for the University to look externally and to good practice at other Institutions. The Principal agreed with Dr Rist's observation, noting that he had agreed with Dr Rist's suggestion and he himself had commented that the Institution should also look for good practice internally.
- 27.3 Professor Anderson raised concern regarding the accuracy of minute point 9.3, noting that the Senate had been asked to vote on the policy framework document, subject to amendments to be agreed by sub-group of the Senate. Professor Anderson asked that the minute be amended to state that the vote itself was taken only in principle and subject to the amendments to be agreed.

- 27.4 As no further comments were raised, subject to the amendments noted above, the minute was taken to be approved and the meeting proceeded.

QUESTION TO THE PRINCIPAL

- 28.1 Dr Shanks asked the Principal to inform the Senate of the number of staff at Professorial level who have left the University within the last two years and, conversely, the number of staff appointed at this level within the same period. The Principal accepted Dr Shanks' question but noted that he did not have the data to hand. The Principal committed to respond to Dr Shanks once the data had been obtained.

UPDATE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

- 29.1 The Principal, in providing an update to the Senate, acknowledged there were many issues affecting the University and the Higher Education sector as a whole, he noted, however, that in the interest of time he would focus on updating members on three key areas. The Principal expressed his willingness to answer questions on any issue.

- 29.2 The Principal updated members on events surrounding Brexit, acknowledging no paper had been prepared for the meeting as a consequence of the fluidity of the UK position in regards to it. The Principal updated Senators on the following three key areas:

- He noted the speech given by the Prime Minister, acknowledging it as helpful in providing clarity on the Government's position on European Union (EU) nationals currently resident in the UK. He noted that Ms Dyker, Head of Human Resources, was working with colleagues affected to ensure they have all the information they require with regards to issues surrounding Brexit, including UK residency.
- The Principal acknowledged the Prime Minister's commitment to research and EU research programmes including Horizon 2020. He updated the Senate on the ongoing midterm review of the programme and discussions surrounding whether excellence would remain the main criterion on which funding was to be awarded. He further noted his own involvement in being part of a Universities UK (UUK) deputation to Brussels to push very clearly for this. The Principal acknowledged ongoing discussion surrounding the push for global research areas and informed the Senate that he would speak on this in April at an event at which the Secretary for Brexit might be present.
- Lastly, he noted the position with regards student mobility and the Prime Minister's update that it would be unlikely that there would continue to be freedom of movement for students as there is now. The Principal expressed his hope that this represented only a starting point and acknowledged the need to stay abreast of agendas and to work closely with the Scottish Government who had, to date, been very clear about the importance of freedom of movement for students. The Principal assured Senate of the amount of work going on in Aberdeen and with other Universities with regards the issue of Brexit.

- 29.3 The Principal updated the Senate on the consultation and operation of the next Research Excellence Framework (REF), following the review of the process undertaken by Lord Stern. He stated that he would be chairing a meeting of UK Universities in February to discuss moving forward in further detail. The Principal expressed his view that the Stern report had made some helpful points and that the key agendas for discussion now were as follows.

- He noted his personal view that the inclusion of all colleagues in the process was positive, however, stated that he hoped the proposed correlation with colleagues and the HESA return represented only a starting point for discussion, noting that

such a correlation would not work in multi-disciplinary areas such as Language and Literature, Social Science and Business.

- He acknowledged the helpful clarification that colleagues would be afforded the opportunity to submit six papers while others could submit less, however, he expressed the need for clarity around the requirements of early career researchers.
- The Principal updated the Senate on the revised agenda around portability, where by papers will now be allocated to the Institution at which an individual was based when they were published. He acknowledged this as wholly positive, specifically as a consequence of the enormous amount of movement by academics seen in the run up to previous REF exercises. He noted that academics had previously been prepared to move Institution for more money and that this revision would enforce communities committed to Institutions and the movement of academics for the right reasons.
- He further noted the positive steps taken by the British Academy push to demonstrate the impact of research on teaching. The Principal stated the importance of clarity on exactly what is meant by impact on teaching and how this could be measured.
- Finally, the Principal welcomed the commitment of the REF to the appropriate assessment of inter-disciplinarity.

The Principal informed the Senate that Professor MacGregor would be leading the University's response to the consultation.

- 29.4 The Principal updated the Senate on the success of the official opening of the new Rowett Institute for Health and Nutrition building by the Chancellor, acknowledging the opportunity provided for staff to demonstrate their research and its impact. The Principal congratulated all those involved in the event. He also noted the forthcoming opening of the Medical Research Centre (MRC) for Medical Mycology and again congratulated all those involved.
- 29.5 Finally, the Principal expressed congratulations to all those involved with Professor Mealor and the Chamber Choir's album launched in support of the Ballater flood appeal. The Principal noted the attendance of the Chancellor and her husband at the launch event and encouraged staff to purchase the album.
- 29.6 The Principal invited members of the Senate to ask any questions they may have arising from his update. No questions were asked of the Principal and the meeting proceeded.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING

- 30.1 The Principal moved to the agenda item of Health, Safety and Wellbeing.
- 30.2 He noted the success of the recent Health and Wellbeing day and congratulated all those involved in it. He updated the Senate that the team responsible for the University's 24-hour contact, developed as part of the Mental Health Strategy, had noted they had received fewer phone calls and more online activity than initially expected. The Principal encouraged Senators to raise awareness of the service, and reminded members of the role all staff must play in looking out for their colleagues.
- 30.3 The Principal invited any questions or comments on Health, Safety and Wellbeing. None were raised and the meeting proceeded.

PRESENTATION ON TEACHING EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK

- 31.1 Professor McGeorge, Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning, provided a presentation to Senators on the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) (copy filed with the principal copy of the minute).
- 31.2 Further to the Presentation, a discussion ensued. A summary of which is detailed below.
- Mr Fuller, on behalf the Aberdeen University Students' Association (AUSA), thanked Professor McGeorge for the presentation on the TEF. He informed the Senate that nationally the trend of Student Associations was to oppose the TEF and that the AUSA student council had echoed this in expressing concern over the potential effect of the TEF for the University. Mr Fuller confirmed, on behalf of the student body, that they were not in favour of the TEF at this point.
 - Dr Lusseau noted that it was clear that the TEF was tenuous in comparison to the Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework (QEF). He asked Professor McGeorge, however, if there was any potential disadvantage to the University in attracting RUK students without entering into the TEF and, additionally, if there was any strategy in place to address the potential marketing tool offered by the QEF. Professor McGeorge, in responding, noted that his advice at this time was not to participate in the TEF. This did not, however, preclude the involvement of the University at a later stage. The Principal reminded the Senate of the Strategic Plan and the engagement of the University in addressing several of the metrics highlighted by the TEF. He further agreed with the importance of marketing and being prepared to celebrate on achievement of the metrics highlighted within the plan.
 - Dr Oliver thanked Professor McGeorge for the presentation. He asked whether there would be any benefit for the University in declaring itself against the TEF and, in so doing, promoting the rigour the University is already subjected to, such as the QEF and the internally devised Quality Assurance model. Professor McGeorge noted Dr Oliver's point and suggested that the QEF being significantly superior should be marketed as such. Professor McGeorge suggested that instead of a negative approach to the TEF, the success of the QEF should be highlighted. Professor McGeorge noted that several countries look to Scotland to seek advice in setting up Quality Enhancement models.
 - Dr Mills asked whether there was any degree of consensus amongst Scottish Institutions on engaging in the TEF. Professor McGeorge stated that an extensive amount of discussion had taken place regarding the issue. Professor McGeorge noted that Institutions had not officially declared their stance yet, however, there were some who had declared themselves out, such as the University of Edinburgh.
 - Dr Rea noted that the view so far presented was largely representative of his constituency. He noted the view of the student body across the sector and asked whether any contingency had been considered regarding a potential national student boycott of the NSS. Professor McGeorge stated he couldn't answer this but did note nervousness within HEFCE as to the student reaction and that, his understanding was, that Ipsos Mori had been asked to undertake the National Student Survey (NSS) earlier than it would normally be.
 - Dr Barker noted the importance of having confidence in our own systems, however, expressed the importance of the views of RUK students who may not understand these systems. He stated the importance of the articulation of our own Quality Assurance and Enhancement processes. Professor McGeorge agreed, stating that Scotland must be confident in its processes.
 - Professor Brown expressed concern about the potential use of two systems in competition with each other. He asked Professor McGeorge if the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) had made clear their position on the TEF. Professor McGeorge informed the Senate that the SFC had been very clear that Scottish institutions are and will remain to be, required to comply with the QEF. Further, they will not

prevent Institutions from joining the TEF, however, the QEF will remain and Institutions will be required to continue with it.

- Dr Oelsner asked if there are any negative consequences of not participating in the TEF. Professor McGeorge noted that there might be a risk of comments that the University did not participate as it was anticipated that we would not have fared well. Professor McGeorge commented that it was imperative the University continue to address the metrics, including the National Student Survey (NSS) outcomes, to address any concern in this regard.

31.3 The Principal invited Senators to vote on participation in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). The results were noted as follows:

In favour of the University taking part in the TEF:	5
Not in favour of the University taking part in the TEF:	84
Abstaining from the vote:	2

A vote having been taken, the Principal confirmed that the decision taken by the Senate was not to participate in the TEF.

PRESENTATION ON THE NEW SCIENCE BUILDING

32.1 Professor Hannaford, Head of the College of Life Sciences and Medicine, provided a presentation to Senators on the New Science Building (copy filed with the principal copy of the minute).

32.2 Further to the Presentation, a discussion ensued. A summary of which is detailed below.

- Mr Styles noted his approval of the plans. He stated his surprise at the height of the building, commenting that it could be higher. He noted the undue limitation of the building being four storeys. Secondly, Mr Styles asked whether the building would have provision for lecture space, as space was currently at a premium. Professor Hannaford acknowledged the point regarding the height of the building, noting that the building must be an appropriate size but also within the current resources of the University. In responding to Mr Styles' second point, Professor Hannaford noted the inclusion of public engagement space, which may be utilised as lecture space. He noted that the next stage of development would investigate this issue further.
- On behalf of Professor Feldmann, former Head of Chemistry, Dr Da Silva Baptista expressed concern to the Senate regarding (i) a lack of satisfactory consultation on the project and (ii) the proposed capacity of the new building. Dr Da Silva Baptista stated Professor Feldmann felt unable to support the proposals at this time. Professor Wells informed the Senate of the work of Estates and the design team in closely examining capacity issues. He stated that the results confirmed that the new building, taking into consideration design enhancements, would provide an excess of capacity compared to that currently in existence. Professor Wells noted Professor Feldmann had not been available when this information was taken to the Chemistry group. He committed to speak with Professor Feldmann. The Principal confirmed with Dr Da Silva Baptista that he was content with this proposal. Professor Hannaford stated the importance of ensuring the new building was appropriate and fit for purpose. He noted that he intended to meet with technical staff to discuss their requirements. He assured the Senate all comments would be taken on board.
- Professor Paton expressed his support of the project and the enhancement of existing provision.
- Dr Shanks asked what the plans were regarding the existing science space and when the new building was scheduled to open. Dr Shanks also expressed the

importance of social space for informal learning. Professor Hannaford agreed with Dr Shanks' point regarding informal learning. He stated the existing space would, over time, possibly be refurbished or removed but that discussion on these matters would follow.

- Dr Rea, on behalf of staff in Geospatial technology asked whether computer labs would be included in the new building. He noted the current difficulties in accessing computer labs of a suitable size. Professor Hannaford noted that this was not currently intended, however, stated that discussions were ongoing around the opportunity to include visualisation space. He noted the importance of the building encouraging the use of new and innovative technology in teaching.
- Mr Styles asked for clarification on the timeframe for the project. Professor Hannaford confirmed the estimate was, taking into consideration time for the design and building, approximately 4 years.
- Mr Styles also asked for an approximate project costing. Professor Hannaford confirmed the budget as £35 million.
- Mrs Stephen asked whether there would be any external funding for the project. Professor Hannaford noted that sponsorship would be sought if possible, however his understanding was that funding for core teaching space tended to be less attractive to donors than for research space or research activity. He acknowledged that the public engagement space or specific equipment might attract sponsorship or donations.
- Professor Delibegovic asked whether the building had been modelled on the existing number of students and whether there was capacity for growth in student numbers. Professor Hannaford, in responding, stated there is realistic capacity for growth, recognising that STEM subjects can be hard to recruit to.
- Professor Pavlovskaja asked as to the potential use of the building out with teaching weeks. Professor Hannaford noted potential other uses included postgraduate teaching or research and outreach programmes.
- Professor Masthoff noted concern regarding the fact that the Head of Public Engagement was leaving the University. She asked for the University's commitment to public engagement to be confirmed. The Principal confirmed his commitment in this regard and in looking for the optimal strategy for moving forward.
- Professor Grebogi asked specifically regarding the plans for the Meston building. Professor Hannaford confirmed that the intention was not to leave staff in inappropriate accommodation. He noted that any plans in this regard would likely form the next phase of the development process.
- Dr Mensykhov asked whether office space would be provided within the new building. Professor Hannaford confirmed some space would be available, possibly in the form of communal or hot desk space, but that provision of such space would be limited and not as single occupancy offices. Professor Hannaford noted the importance of providing appropriate space for technical staff.

REPORT FROM THE UNIVERSITY COURT

- 33.1 The Senate received an update from Professor Hutchison on behalf of the Senate Assessors on the meeting of the University Court held on 6 December 2016 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minute). Professor Hutchison specifically noted that the Court had discussed the following:
- (i) At its meeting in November (minute point 7.3 refers) the Senate had agreed to make two proposals to the Court regarding its composition. The first, proposing four of the twelve seats for independent members be reserved for elected General Council Assessors. Professor Hutchison confirmed a good discussion had been held, however, that the Court had rejected the proposal on the basis of the low number of General Council members engaging with the Court. Professor Hutchison

noted the important role for the General Council in encouraging participation. The second proposal, suggesting a change of name from 'Senior Governor' to 'Dean of Court' was also rejected. The Court recognised the title of 'Dean' as an academic term and significantly different from the role of Governor.

- (ii) Professor Hutchison informed the Senate that a good discussion had taken place on the restructuring of the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition and that it had been agreed that the University should review how the process had operated and if there were any lessons to be learnt from it.
- (iii) Professor Hutchison also confirmed that subsequent to the meeting, Mr Martin Gilbert of Aberdeen Asset Management had been appointed as the new Senior Governor.

Professor Hutchison reminded Senate that Court papers and minutes (subject to the removal of confidential items) are available on the Court website.

33.2 Professor Hutchison invited any questions from the Senate regarding the Court update. A brief discussion ensued as follows:

- Mr Styles expressed his disappointment of the Court's rejection of the Senate's proposals, despite reassurances that the view of the Senate was taken seriously. Mr Styles expressed concern that the Senate was invited to comment on matters only when the Court had already previously considered them. Mr Styles highlighted the lack of communication between the Senate and the Court. The Principal, in responding, reminded the Senate of their representatives on Court and their role in this regard.
- Mr Styles welcomed the appointment of Mr Gilbert and proposed the role of Senior Governor become an ex-officio member of Senate allowing them to attend and gain a better understanding of the Senate. The Principal responded to Mr Styles observing the role the Senate Assessors play in portraying the Senate to the Court. He also noted recent changes in the working of Court to allow Senate Assessors to feel comfortable in raising issues from the Senate.

TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION (I) PROPOSAL FOR OVERSEAS CAMPUS IN RWANDA

34.1 Professor Paterson presented the proposal for an overseas campus in Rwanda, East Africa (copy filed with the principal copy of the minute). Professor Paterson noted that the paper provided an update on the project originally presented to the Senate in November 2016. He thanked all those involved in the project and commented that since its initial presentation to the Senate he had now had the opportunity to visit Rwanda himself.

34.2 Professor Paterson invited the Senate to comment on the paper and consequently, a discussion ensued. The main tenets of the discussion were as follows:

- Dr Rea noted several concerns regarding the project. Dr Rea acknowledged that some were broad while others were more specific in addressing specific programmes to be delivered. His broad concerns can be summarised as:
 - The appropriateness of the proposed foundation programme and how well students will be equipped to enter into second year of a University of Aberdeen undergraduate degree programme;
 - The market research undertaken by TNE. Dr Rea stated that this may be both biased and simplistic in its approach and noted that an independent assessment would address the complexities of the project;
 - Dr Rea questioned whether the project was designed to raise the University's international profile or for means of income generation. Dr Rea stated staff sought clarification of this;

- Building a campus in Rwanda despite the existence of resource and/or infrastructure issues within Aberdeen;
 - Concern regarding the requirement for financial outlay for the project when cuts were being faced by staff in Aberdeen;
- Specifically representing his constituency within the School of Geosciences, with the support of all constituents, Dr Rea noted the following more specific concerns:
 - Postgraduate taught programme directors from within the School of Geosciences had not yet been consulted on the content and delivery of their programmes, despite the programmes being listed in the paper to commence delivery in Rwanda in September 2017;
 - With reference to the flying faculty model proposed, Dr Rea questioned the suitability of Geosciences programmes to be delivered in this way. With reference to the Principal's commitment to no staff member being forced to go to Rwanda, he expressed concern as to the ability of the University to deliver these programmes with a lack of expertise and specifically in recognition of their proposed September start date. He further noted that should staff agree to travel, they would have other teaching commitments to seek cover for in Aberdeen;
 - Dr Rea noted concerns regarding the marketplace of Rwanda stating that in over 30 years of teaching GIS systems only one Rwandan student had enrolled on the programme;
 - Dr Rea noted inaccuracies in the data provided in the paper and expressed concern that this represented the rushed nature of the project.
- Dr Rea, in concluding, reiterated his serious concerns regarding the project. Expressing his contentment for the Senate to debate the issue, he stated that he would propose a motion from the floor if necessary. He further stated that staff were concerned with the proposal and any vote taken on it, would be diluted in an effort to have it approved.
- The Principal stated clearly his objection to the statement regarding the dilution or amendment of the vote, noting that Senate would openly debate the issue. He proposed Professor Paterson now be provided the opportunity to respond. Dr Rea apologised for any offence the statement had caused.
- Professor Paterson thanked Dr Rea for the points raised. Addressing the broad concerns raised, Professor Paterson noted the interconnected nature of the points and the responses to them. He provided the following responses:
 - Professor Paterson acknowledged that the market research had indeed largely been carried out by TNE. He stated their presence in the country and their stake in the project as reasoning for the validity of their research. He further noted the desk based research carried out to reinforce the data and crucially, on meeting representatives of stakeholders including the High Commission, British Council and University of Rwanda, at no point was there any sense that the figures provided by TNE were anything other than realistic and that an exciting opportunity had been identified. Professor Paterson also noted that the High Commissioner had informed them of 18 UK Universities expressing interest in the country, demonstrating a real sense of recognition within the UK of the significant opportunities in Rwanda;
 - Professor Paterson acknowledged the points raised regarding the resource and infrastructure issues being experienced within Aberdeen and that of what the initiative was for. In addressing both points, he noted the importance of maintaining and raising the international profile of the University in an increasingly competitive environment. He stated the dimension a project of this nature would add to the University's profile, attracting more international students. He noted the decreasing number of CAS certificates Aberdeen was permitted to offer to international students and the direction of travel by the UK authorities to further restrict the number of international students being permitted to come to the UK.

- Professor Paterson noted the importance of a range of strategies to address this issue and in ensuring the University remain secure and sustainable. He noted the importance of future income generation from the project and as part of a broader long-term transnational education strategy.
- With regards to the foundation programme, Professor Paterson confirmed the involvement of the University in its development. He acknowledged the concern of staff in having not yet been consulted, however, he assured the Senate that he sought to get the balance between not involving staff too soon and consulting staff right. Professor Paterson reiterated previous commitments to resource and capacity needs to deliver programmes and also in ensuring Schools were committed to the delivery of their programmes.
 - Addressing the more specific queries regarding the School of Geosciences programmes proposed for delivery, Professor Paterson assured Senators that programmes would be tested in this regard and the thoughts and views of staff taken on board before commitment to the delivery of programmes was made. He further assured Dr Rea and the Senate that views regarding delivery methods would also be taken into consideration and programmes only delivered where the quality of provision could be assured.
 - Regarding the marketplace, he acknowledged the fact that only one Rwandan student had previously been enrolled on the programme, however, noted that this was unsurprising given the requirements of students to travel.
 - Where flying faculty would have an impact on undergraduate provision in Aberdeen he stated that this was a matter for Schools to discuss and ensure that appropriate resource was in place where Schools were minded to take these things forwarded.
- Dr Rea stated that as soon as programmes had been identified, dialogue should have begun to facilitate the delivery of these programmes. Professor Paterson acknowledged the point made. He stated that Heads of School had been involved from a very early stage.
 - The Principal proposed that no programme would be delivered where a programme director was not content, entirely comfortable or engaged in its delivery. Dr Rea accepted this as an entirely reasonable proposal.
 - Professor Wells stated that the University, as an entry qualification to undergraduate degree programmes, already accepts a wide number of foundation programmes designed by other providers. He noted the TNE model would allow for significant University input and oversight. Professor Wells further noted that Schools would be required to input into the foundation programmes offered to ensure students would be equipped to enter into undergraduate study.
 - Dr Ebinghaus asked Professor Wells if there was a timetable to approach Schools in this regard. Professor Wells responded to assure the Senate that as soon as the position to go ahead was agreed, conversations between University staff and TNE would be expedited.
 - Dr Oliver reiterated Dr Rea's comments, specifically echoing concerns raised that staff had not been engaged at an earlier stage of discussions. Professor Paterson fully accepted the point raised. He expressed the difficult balance in when staff should be engaged. He committed to staff input and consultation, if the project was approved.
 - Professor Akisanya questioned the proposal for four TNE projects to commence in September and the capacity of the University to undertake this. Professor Paterson responded to assure Senate that decisions in this regard were not taken lightly, with issues of capacity, resource and value taken into account. Professor Paterson acknowledged that Schools may be involved in more than one of these projects and that Heads of School would need to judge carefully the ability of their School to be involved. Where challenges did exist, Professor Paterson acknowledged that these would be discussed fully to ensure quality would not be compromised.

- Professor Akisanya questioned whether, if some programmes were to be removed from the proposal, if once the provision had been agreed, revised financial calculations should be resubmitted to the Senate before approval could be made.
- Dr Da Silva Baptista noted that further data would help support the paper and its description of the value of the project. Professor Paterson stated some of the data within the paper, such as demographic growth and undersupply, was very compelling. Professor Paterson stated his willingness to provide more data, if required.
- Professor Anderson raised concerns on behalf of the School of Social Science. In general, Professor Anderson noted the excitement of staff regarding transnational education. Concerns were raised, however, regarding the rushed nature of this specific proposal, exemplified by the lack of consultation with staff, inconsistencies within the proposal with regards TNE as a company and reference to a signed memorandum with TNE not provided to the Senate. Professor Anderson noted concern that this memorandum might represent an agreement already made with TNE for the delivery of programmes. Professor Anderson reiterated concerns regarding the market analysis undertaken and its failure to address the educational market in Rwanda. He expressed the desire of Senators to review data in this regard. Professor Anderson also referred to an agreement between a subsidiary of TNE with Edinburgh Napier University. He questioned the relationship between TNE and other UK Institutions. Professor Anderson referred to the Handbook on Transnational Education and the requirements of the Senate in considering and approving proposals of this type. Professor Anderson expressed concern that this paper had not followed the process laid out within the handbook. He expressed the commitment of the University to transnational education, however, again expressed concern as to the rushed nature of this specific project.
- Professor Paterson confirmed that there was no commitment to the delivery of programmes and there would not be without the commitment of the University Senate. Professor Paterson confirmed that the University was aware of TNE's relationship with Edinburgh Napier in projects unrelated to those being pursued by Aberdeen. The Principal stated, however, that in the event that the Senate did not vote to approve the project, the University would be replaced with another partner.
- Professor Irwin acknowledged the concerns raised by colleagues, however, stated that as a Head of School engaged in discussion with Professor Paterson, she understood this to be a preliminary, exploratory stage of the project and that colleagues were not to be engaged until the project was agreed upon and consultation became necessary. Professor Irwin further stated her positivity around the Rwandan project for both Aberdeen, in its expanding its global profile, and in developing the post-colonial education model in Rwanda.
- Professor Paterson echoed the positivity and excitement expressed by Professor Irwin. He noted the importance of supporting the education model in Rwanda but also in working in partnership with those in Rwanda. He stated the need for thought surrounding capacity in academic, support and management terms and, if an international campus is agreed upon, how this new phase fits with the existing Aberdeen model, quickly, creatively and constructively.
- Professor Anderson asked whether this was a firm proposal to begin delivery of programmes or whether approval of the paper would commence discussions only. Professor Paterson confirmed the programmes listed under 'rollout' should be 'proposed rollout'.
- Professor Guz, with reference to resources, commented that the document appropriately covered concerns regarding resource issues.
- Professor Wells acknowledged concerns raised regarding the perceived rushed nature of the project. He reminded the Senate that the proposal was first brought to the University over two years ago and that a lot of time had been dedicated to it since. He confirmed that a number of proposals are received and rejected by the University on an annual basis and that proposals will only reach consultation stage when there is confirmation that they will proceed. Professor Wells fully accepted the volume of work and detailed conversations still to be undertaken.

- Professor Masthoff expressed concern regarding the funding implications of the programme. She stated concern as to the potential for appropriately marketing and recruiting to the programme for September 2017. With regards to specific programmes, Professor Masthoff agreed there could be potential for recruitment, however, noted financial gain would be limited and may stop international students from coming to Aberdeen. She raised concerns that the financial risk may be too great.
 - Professor Paterson reiterated that the project represented part of a transnational education strategy and part of a set of overseas campuses with differential opportunities for income. Professor Paterson noted the importance of hedging against challenges. Professor Paterson expressed concern that being tentative at this stage would have serious implication for the University where other Universities are moving forward very quickly.
 - Acknowledging that the proposed Rwandan campus would follow the UK academic year, Dr Lusseau asked when the end of the secondary school year is in Rwanda, in regard to ensuring a mismatch of academic years is not imposed. Professor Wells confirmed that both School and University academic years in Rwanda follow the UK model.
 - Professor Jolley stated that the University must move forward and engage in international projects, however, in so doing, he noted the current pressures on Schools and the failure to recruit to programmes including those listed in the proposed rollout in Rwanda. He asked that consideration to staffing levels be given, particularly where a background such as transnational education exists.
- 34.3 The Principal thanked Senators for their input and provided clarification that should the Senate vote determine to vote in favour of proposal that (i) no programme would go ahead without the approval of the School and Programme Director concerned and (ii) no undergraduate foundation programme would go ahead unless the School and appropriate admissions team were content with the content of it. Acknowledging the financial issues raised, the Principal stated that, should the Senate approve the proposal, any amendments to the financial programme should be made in advance, as far as practicable, of the progression of the paper to the Court.
- 34.4 Dr Rea expressed concern with this position and that the vote would progress in this vein. Dr Rea proposed that the paper be returned and that discussion with Programme Directors take place in advance of a vote on the proposal. Dr Lusseau asked the Principal if a delay was imposed, whether he felt the opportunity for the project would be lost. The Principal confirmed he felt it would be the case that TNE would walk away. Professor Pavlovskaja added that she did not feel the decision rested with Programme Directors and thus a decision could be made. Professor Anderson proposed that a programme of implementation be returned to the Senate, if the project was approved.
- 34.5 In recognition of the points raised, the Principal proposed the vote be taken on the basis of the approval of the project, subject to the programme for delivery and implementation being submitted to the UCTL and Senate. Dr Rea expressed concern regarding this proposed vote. The Principal reiterated his commitment to the approval of Schools before any programme would be delivered and clarified that no programme would proceed without the commitment of the Head of School, Programme Director and members of School staff.
- 34.6 The Principal confirmed a vote would now be taken on whether or not the University should move towards a programme in Rwanda. Yes or no, conditional on any academic programme undertaken as part of the project would have the full agreement of the School, in particular the Head of School, relevant Programme Director and the members of the School and that any academic programme thus agreed would be approved by way of the UCTL and Senate. The Principal further clarified that Schools should act as democracies in regards to the discussion of programme delivery, hold appropriate discussion and take a view on the basis of the involvement of all staff.

In favour of the University moving forward with a programme in Rwanda:	62
Not in favour of the University moving forward with a programme in Rwanda:	11
Abstaining from the vote:	3

A vote having been taken, the Principal confirmed that the decision taken by the Senate was to move forward with a campus in Rwanda.

TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION (II) TNE UPDATE

- 35.1 Professor Paterson noted that some of the issues raised by way of this brief update on Transnational Education (copy filed with the principal copy of the minute) had already been raised, however, he confirmed the intention of the paper to provide a sense of the projects currently under consideration.
- 35.2 Professor Paterson confirmed these projects to include Rwanda, Ghana, Dubai, Sri Lanka, Qatar and Egypt. Professor Paterson confirmed that all proposals were at varying stages with only Rwanda now having approval to progress, subject to conditions. Professor Paterson welcomed any questions on the paper or the projects named within it.
- 35.3 Dr Lusseau asked whether there would be opportunity to capitalise on potential footprints and develop further provision, such as short courses, for delivery as a consequence. Professor Paterson confirmed there were many opportunities for development in a range of areas.
- 35.4 Mr Whittington acknowledged the clear complexity of looking at so many opportunities at once and sought to reassure the Senate of the level of contact and engagement the Heads of School had with Professor Paterson.
- 35.5 Professor Jolley raised concerns regarding the recent devaluation of Egyptian currency and consequently the proposed involvement in countries such as Egypt. Professor Jolley sought clarification of the impact of such a devaluation and the strategy in place should such an incident occur during implementation. Professor Paterson acknowledged the importance of currency fluctuation in all aspects of teaching provision, including the attraction of international students to Aberdeen. Professor Paterson noted the very early stage of the Egypt proposal and again reiterated the broad strategy of approach with regards transnational education.

REPORT ON OUTCOME OF SENATE SURVEY

- 36.1 Professor Kilburn, Senior Vice Principal, presented to the Senate the report on the outcome of the Senate Survey. Introduced as part of the Senate Effectiveness Review, Professor Kilburn confirmed that the survey had taken place in October 2016.
- 36.2 He confirmed the paper provided data in response to the numerical questions asked and that the Senate Business Committee (SBC) had considered the written answers submitted. He noted that a summary of the responses where fewer than 50% of the respondents were giving a positive response, these being identified as the most problematic issues, was provided. Professor Kilburn asked the Senate for their comments which would be discussed with a view to making recommendations to the Senate at the SBC.
- 36.3 Professor Kilburn asked that responses to the survey be sent to the Clerk to allow for collation and consideration by the SBC. Professor Hutchison expressed the willingness of the Senate Assessors to be approached and to convey the feelings of the Senate to the Court. The Principal urged Senators to make any comments.

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 7 December 2016.

1. Changes to General and Supplementary Regulations

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

2. Course Choice at Levels 1 and 2

- 36.2 The Senate approved, on the recommendation of the University Committee on Teaching and Learning, the amendment to the course choice process for students in levels 1 and 2 to combine the 'Enhanced' and 'Other' categories (copy filed with the principal copy of the minute). Senate noted that both these items had been considered subsequent to the meeting of the Committee in December. This was necessitated due to the timing of the Christmas vacations and the deadline for Senate papers.

3. Teaching Excellence Framework and Strategic Issues

- 36.3 The Senate noted that the Committee had devoted the majority of discussions at the meeting to key strategic issues within learning and teaching. In particular the Committee were updated on current discussions within the Higher Education (HE) sector generally regarding the implementation of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). The Committee noted the requirement that the University must respond with a submission by the deadline of 25 January 2017 if the University decided to engage with TEF. It was further noted that the University intends to align itself with the majority of the HE sector in Scotland: the majority view amongst Scottish HE institutions at the time of the meeting was not to engage with TEF. It was noted that this position was being kept under review by senior management and if it were to change then the University's position would be reviewed

DELIVERY PARTNERS HANDBOOK

- 37.1 The Senate approved updates to the Delivery Partners Handbook made in response to comments received at the November meeting of the Senate (copy filed with the principal copy of the minute).
- 37.2 Professor Wells specifically expressed his thanks to those involved in the process of amending and finalising the handbook.

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- 38.1 The Principal encouraged Senators to sign a 'welcome wall' at the library, a Universities Scotland initiative to promote the openness of Scotland to students from across the world. He further asked Senators to encourage all staff to take part.

- 38.2 The Principal noted that the next meeting of the Honorary Degrees Committee would take place before the next Senate. He encouraged Senators to nominate individuals should they wish to do so. The Principal confirmed equal numbers of men and women are considered by the Committee before being referred to Senate for approval.