

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

SENATUS ACADEMICUS

Minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2016

Present: Principal, Professors Paterson, McGeorge, Hannaford, MacGregor, Ross, Morrison, Welch, Coyle and Gimlin, Mr M Whittington, Professor Guz, Dr R Neilson, Professor Shennan, Dr S Lawrie, Professor Lurie, Mrs L Tibbetts, Dr J Lamb, Professor Hutchison, Dr A Sim, Professor Friedrich, Dr H Pierce, Dr G Sharman, Professor Duff, Mr S Styles, Dr M Mills, Dr T Argounova-Low, Dr D Lusseau, Professor Pinard, Dr A Rajnicek, Dr M Delibegović, Dr N Mody, Professor Barker, Dr S Fielding, Dr B Timermans, Professor MacDonald, Dr J Oliver, Dr A Ebinghaus, Dr W Vasonselos and Miss G Clarke,

Apologies: Professors Kilburn, Glover and Haites, Ms AM Slater, Professors Baggs, Sahraie, Heys, Skakle and Jolley Dr A Arnason, Professors Davies, Wells, Brown and Campbell, Professors Naphy, Connolly, Masthoff, Dr M Ehrenschtendner, Dr M Beaton, Dr P Bishop, Mrs D Bruxvoort, Professor McCausland, Dr P Ziegler, Dr Y Bain, Dr E Curtis, Ms S Cornelius, Mrs M Stephen, Dr K Groo, Dr A Lewis, Professor Mealor, Dr A Simpson, Dr Z Yihdego, Dr L Bennie, Professor Anderson, Dr J Sternberg, Dr J Baird, Mrs C Dennis, Professor Johnson, Dr J Barrow, Professor Teismann, Dr S Tucker, Dr A Jenkinson, Dr D Scott, Professor Ibbetson, Dr D MacCallum, Dr K Khalaf, Dr M Cruickshank, Dr L Aucott, Dr R MacKenzie, Dr C Black, Dr A Venkatesh, Dr I Cameron, Dr K Foster, Professor Lee, Dr F Thies, Dr N Hoggard, Dr L Williams, Dr D Ray, Dr K Pilz, Professors Akisanya and Kashtalyan, Dr O Menshykov, Dr C North, Dr N Oren, Professor Coghill, Dr R Macpherson, Dr M da Silva Baptista, Dr B Martin, Professor Brittain, Mr L Fuller, Miss Z Howell, Miss A Pavelekova, Mr J Waddell, Miss K Hood, Miss A Sevadjan, Miss D Passinke, Mr D Kaminek, Miss A Sharp, Mr C Herbert, Miss A Hay, Miss C Henssen, Mr I Tashim, Mr F Neldelea, Mr F Archibald, Mr D Rennie, Miss C Christie, Mr C Coyle and Miss S Small

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- 51.1 The Principal invited members to approve the agenda as presented. No comments were raised. In recognition of this, the Principal confirmed that the agenda had been approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 52.1 In opening the meeting, the Principal welcomed all Senators to the final meeting of the 2015/16 academic year. The Principal acknowledged that this would be the last meeting for a number of staff and student Senators and issued his heartfelt thanks to them for all their hard work and commitment in ensuring the University runs well.
- 52.2 Members of the Senate noted the minute of the meeting held on 4 May 2016. Members' attention was drawn to an inconsistency in sections 37.1 (ii), (iii) and (iv) with regards to references to the *February* meeting of the Senate. Members agreed that the record should be amended in each instance to refer to the *March* meeting correctly.
- 52.3 With regards to point 37.1 (iii) of the minute, the Principal noted the recommendation made to refer to the recording of the previous meeting in order to provide clarity on an issue raised regarding Academic Line Management. Senators noted this instruction could not be fulfilled, however, as meetings were, at this time, not recorded. In lieu of a recording and in order to provide Senate with the clarity sought, the University Secretary, Mrs Caroline Inglis, invited the Vice-Principal for People Strategy, Professor Margaret Ross, to provide comment on minute point 37.1 (iii).

- 52.4 Professor Ross acknowledged that Professor Anderson had expected the minute of the meeting to record that the Senate had voted on all three aspects of his motion to the Senate. Those being:
- (i) the competence of Senate to decide rather than comment on Academic Line Management
 - (ii) the request for reporting to Senate on the rollout of Academic Line Management
 - (iii) an instruction to bring that report to the May meeting of the Senate
- 52.5 Professor Ross confirmed that the handling of the motion was done not by way of specific amendment but, as is demonstrated by the Clerk's notes of the meeting, by way of vote only on the aspects of the motion competent at that time, namely aspects (ii) and (iii). Professor Ross confirmed that aspect (ii) has been addressed and fulfilled by way of reporting to the May meeting and that the Senate were asked at this time if they wished the report to be returned and expanded upon. However, Senate took the decision that it should not.
- 52.6 Professor Ross confirmed that the requirements of the motion had therefore been fulfilled as far as within the competency of the Senate. Professor Ross noted, however, that she would have no objection to the main part of the motion, in relation to reporting, again being discussed and, if appropriate, voted on. Members of the Senate raised no issues of discussion or desire to vote with regards to the rollout or reporting of Academic Line Management.
- 52.7 Aside from these issues as noted, no further concerns were raised and the minute was agreed as an otherwise accurate representation of discussions held.

QUESTION FOR THE PRINCIPAL

- 53.1 In advance of progressing to the items listed on the agenda, the Principal noted a question raised by Professor Norman Hutchison. *'The question I would like clarification on is the university's policy guidance on providing cover for staff on maternity or paternity leave i.e. Is cover provided or are absences expected to be absorbed by other colleagues. A second question is whether there are any plans to review how any policies noted in response to point 1 are enacted in practice given the VSS and on-doing professional services review.'*
- 53.2 In responding, the Principal advised Professor Hutchison and the Senate as a whole that it is not expected that duties be merely absorbed by colleagues and that a central fund to cover such costs was being established. The Principal further acknowledged the importance of the issue raised and clearly stated the establishment of a central fund would ensure issues are not experienced in any one school as a consequence of differential treatment or access to funds.
- 53.3 The Vice-Principal for People Strategy, Professor Ross, providing further comment on the question raised, noting that the issue was intrinsically linked to the institutional Athena Swan submission. Professor Ross acknowledged the proposal for the operation of a central pot around maternity and other leave with a gendered impact, such as paternity leave. Professor Ross stated the importance of those entitled to such leave feeling free to take it and not feeling that doing so was imposition on their colleagues.
- 53.4 Professor Ross, providing detail on the scale of activity across the institution, informed Senators that for the current academic year, 2015/16, the University had 98 instances of leave associated with family friendly policy. 38 of these comprising instances of maternity leave, 34 parental leave (most commonly an extension to maternity leave), 23 instances of paternity leave and 3 instances of shared parental leave. Professor Ross noted that this compared to 119 instances in academic year 2014/15 and 87 in 2013/14. Particularly in

recognition of current tight staffing levels, Professor Hutchison thanked the Principal and Professor Ross for the clarity provided and the reassurance that appropriate policy was in place.

- 53.5 Dr Jeff Oliver queried whether the 'central pot' referred to, was functioning and therefore available to Schools at this time. Professor Ross noted that the business cases for leave associated with family friendly policy (of which maternity leave comprised the majority) are currently considered at College level and then by the University Restructuring Committee. Professor Ross informed Senate that not all instances of leave require 100% cover and various ways of managing leave should be considered. Professor Ross acknowledged that, on occasion, pockets of more than one instance of leave can impact upon one area or School. Professor Ross reassured the Senate that instances such as this were, and would continue to be, taken into account.

UPDATE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

- 54.1 The Principal, in providing an update to members, acknowledged the appointment of the new Cabinet Secretary and the new minister for Universities following the recent Scottish Government elections. He informed the Senate of the Scottish Government announced review of Enterprise Agencies including the Scottish Funding Council (SFC).
- 54.2 The Principal noted that the results of the Scottish Government Spending Review were unlikely to be published before the end of September 2016. The Principal reminded Senators that this would be a multiyear review, complicated by the fact that this would be the first since the new tax powers of the Government. He noted that a better idea of what the likely funding for Higher Education is going to be would likely be available for the next meeting. The Principal acknowledged the challenges of, and competition for, funding and the expectation was little budgetary increases, if any.
- 54.3 The Principal noted the clear priorities of the Scottish Government as (i) Widening Access and (ii) the Economic Benefit of Research and informed members that it should be expected that these will form the basis of any letter of guidance from the Cabinet Secretary.
- 54.4 The Principal updated the Senate on the release of the White Paper in England for consultation, noting that while the impact for Scotland and the University was as yet unknown, this was likely to centre around (i) the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), a major part of the regulatory landscape over the coming months, (ii) changes to research in England including the introduction of UK Research and Innovation. Led by Sir John Kingman, the body will include all Research Councils, the future Research Excellence Framework, 'Research England' and Innovate UK. The Principal stated the importance of recognising that civil servants in Scotland and indeed Wales and Northern Ireland are deeply engaged with the process in England, ensuring clear roles for the devolved nations.
- 54.5 The Principal acknowledged a positive feature of the Research element of White Paper as the legislation that dual support should exist when a new REF is agreed upon. The Principal estimated that the new REF was likely to be introduced in 2021, and that Lord Stern was currently engaged in a major review of how the process will run. Members were informed that further information would likely follow in the late autumn.
- 54.6 The Principal informed the Senate that, following discussion at the last meeting, regarding University discussion with the JNCC, it had been acknowledged that as not all staff members engage with a Union, steps were being taken to establish a Staff Forum. The Principal stated the importance of engaging appropriately with all members of the University.

- 54.7 Dr Oliver, referring to financial aspects of the University, raised the issue of a recent Times Higher Education (THE) article regarding the financial health of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and the statement made that the University of Aberdeen's deficit before exceptional events was approximately £6 billion. Dr Oliver asked the Principal whether this was an issue for the University community to be concerned about. The Principal, responding to Dr Oliver, confirmed that the final position of the University had been a surplus and not a deficit as reported. The Principal acknowledged the importance of being continually financially aware and that the 2016/17 year will be managed by reducing expected surplus as appropriate and looking closely at requirements for the future before making any decisions. The Principal noted that the 2015/16 deficit will, undoubtedly, be much bigger, suggesting a figure of at least £10 million as a consequence of 'FRS102' a new accounting formula in place, taking into account the deficit of USS. He noted that this will not affect all Universities, dependent on the specific pension funds in place, but reassured Senators that there was no reason for colleagues to be concerned by this.
- 54.8 Professor Masthoff asked a question of the Principal, referring to an article also published in the THE ranking HEIs in regard to the size of the gender gap in pay for academic members of staff. Professor Masthoff noted concern that the University was second in this listing. In responding, the Principal clearly expressed his commitment to the closing of the gender pay gap and noted that it had largely been eliminated; with the differentials in the press reflecting structural differences. He noted that, in considering the nine grades of staff at the University, within grades 1-8 there were no specific differences in average salaries. At grade 9 (professorial and equivalent) the Principal acknowledged a distinction between men and women, however, noted that when one takes a differential within the category, recognising those at that level by length of time in post (defined as between (i) 0-5 years, (ii) 5-10 years and (iii) 10+ years) the difference disappears. He noted the reason for this differential as being the increase in recent years in the promotion of many more women to professorial grades.
- 54.9 The Principal stated clearly to the Senate the importance of taking all members of staff employed by the University into consideration in addressing the issue of gaps in pay by gender, despite the focus of the THE article on academic staff. He acknowledged that when controlling by grade, there were no significant differences in pay at the University. He further evidenced the need for grade control at the lower levels of the salary scale, by commenting that many grade 1 or 2 staff, working in catering or as cleaning staff were more likely to be women than men. The Principal acknowledged the concern of staff, as represented by Professor Masthoff, and asked that a paper on the matter be brought to the next Senate.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING

- 55.1 The Principal moved to the agenda item of Health Safety and Wellbeing and informed the Senate of the instigation of safety tours across the University in order to meet with colleagues, look at their working environment and demonstrate the importance of safety. The Principal expressed thanks to colleagues with whom he had met during tours he had undertaken at St Marys, the Foresterhill campus and the Bedford Road depot. He reminded Senators of the importance of Health, Safety and Wellbeing and asked all to engage with tours and to continue to look after each other.
- 55.2 The Principal informed the Senate of an incident involving a colleague working overseas. He noted that this had highlighted the need to review risk assessments in this regard, a task now being undertaken.
- 55.3 The Principal informed members of the Senate that the Vice-Principal for People Strategy, Professor Ross, was leading a short term working group on mental health. Professor Ross confirmed that the working group had begun to meet and was entering into an intense period of work to look at the creation of an action plan to support the staff and students of

the University in dealing with mental ill health. Professor Ross confirmed the help of the Head of the Directorate of Health, Safety and Wellbeing, Mr Naveed Qamar, in taking proactive and preventative steps to address mental ill health. She confirmed that colleagues from across the University had formed the group with the intended aim of preparing guidance, talking about issues and the implementation of support, with anyone else wishing to be involved invited to contact Professor Ross directly.

- 55.4 Dr Martin Mills noted concern regarding the closing down of staff access to the University's counselling service as a consequence of high demand. Dr Mills asked Professor Ross if this closure would be maintained, particularly in recognition of the awareness of the University regarding mental health issues. Professor Ross noted the concern as raised and in responding to Dr Mills, acknowledged that provision of the Counselling Service should not be seen as the only means of support to staff. Professor Ross confirmed that Human Resources (HR), Occupational Health (OT) and, where appropriate, external providers, were available and HR were looking at other means of support including the possibility of a 24 hour support service in an attempt to provide a stronger overall service for all staff.

UPDATE ON COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

- 56.1 Professor Ross, on behalf of the Senior Vice-Principal, presented to the Senate an update on progress made to date by the Collective Agreement Working Group, in particular regarding proposed sections for the Policy on Intellectual Property. It was noted that the proposals were not yet finalised and that the paper should be seen as draft at this point. Professor Ross confirmed that the Group would be continuing in its work and would present their final proposals at a future meeting. Professor Ross specifically acknowledged the work of Dr Martin Mills in researching the approach of other Universities and the development of a methodology, which had led to the draft paper circulated.
- 56.2 Dr Mills confirmed to the Senate the intricacies of the work undertaken and the need for the appropriate balance of issues pertaining to Intellectual Property including, but not limited to, the law, publication and the status of the University as an educational charity. Dr Mills confirmed the intention of the draft paper presented to provide a snapshot in the development of the final version and its intention to provide only an understanding at this time.
- 56.3 Dr Oliver raised a point on behalf of a constituent, regarding the conflict between points 2 and 3.1 (i) in the assertion of the right of the University to claim copyright. Dr Oliver further requested clarification on whether the University would assert copyright for more traditional scholarly publications such as papers and/or books. Professor Ross noted the inconsistency as stated and confirmed that detail such as this within the document would need to be finalised and the precise wording determined. She did, however, acknowledge difficulties associated with an issue such as this and the aim of the document to strike an appropriate balance to meets the needs of the individual, the University and the public purposes of the University, while engendering a culture where commercial output exists and is facilitated in an appropriate way. Professor Ross confirmed that these points would be taken to the working group for their consideration. The Principal thanked Professor Ross for clarification in this regard and noted his own understanding that the University owns copyright in these instances but chooses not to exercise it, a practice to continue.
- 56.4 Dr John Lamb posed a question of Professor Ross regarding whether there had been consideration given to requirement of an individual, on publishing, to associate themselves with their home Institution and thus enforce the sharing of copyright. Professor Ross confirmed that the working group had not considered this, noting an assumption that an individual would declare their home institution. Dr Mills noted the difficulties associated in

enforcing this and the difficulties associated with joint copyright claim and its legal consequences.

PRESENTATION ON DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

- 57.1 Professor Phil Hannaford, Vice-Principal (Digital Transformation), gave a short presentation on Digital Transformation (copied filed with the Principal's copy of the minutes). Following the presentation a discussion ensued.
- 57.2 Dr Lusseau noted his appreciation for the presentation and his support for the direction proposed. He stated, however, the requirement for staff involvement and engagement in such fundamental change. Professor Hannaford acknowledged the importance of the involvement and input of staff in all aspects of the transformation.
- 57.3 Professor David MacDonald stated his own extremely positive experiences working with the e-Learning Team, noting concern only that there were not enough of them. He noted the sometimes difficult experiences of distance learning students as a consequence of a lack of resource. Professor Hannaford thanked Professor MacDonald for his input, acknowledging the importance of such feedback in understanding what students require.
- 57.4 Dr Mills expressed his own reservations regarding the proposed changes, noting that it was also important to meet pedagogic requirements and to deliver the 'personal' element of teaching. Professor Hannaford supported Dr Mills' statement reiterating that teaching spaces will need to be designed to be flexible to allow for a variety of pedagogic approaches in any one session. Professor Do Coyle further added that there is extensive research being undertaken on how learners learn. She noted the importance of taking such research into consideration.
- 57.5 Professor Hannaford noted the importance of the engagement and involvement of the student body in any changes. The Student President elect, Mr Chukwuebuka Anucha, noted the skill base of students in supporting innovation.

PROPOSAL TO INCREASE MARKING TIME

- 58.1 The Vice-Principal for Teaching and Learning, Professor Peter McGeorge, presented a paper setting out proposals to increase marking time in the second half-session examination diet and some associated amendments to the structure of the academic year, specifically in relation to graduation and resit examination dates. Mr Scott Styles welcomed the paper but noted concern that there was no proposal to amend the dates of the first half session. Mr Styles therefore proposed a motion to also increase marking time in the first half-session by moving the deadline to the end of the first week of teaching in the second half-session. Mr Styles noted that this proposal had been considered by Heads of School but had been rejected following consideration by the University Committee on Teaching and Learning (UCTL). Professor McGeorge acknowledged that discussion had taken place at Committee level on this issue, noting that the return of marks to students after second half session teaching had begun and staff undertaking marking at the same time as they are engaged in teaching was considered too detrimental to the student experience. Professor McGeorge further noted the provision within the Academic Quality Handbook (AQH) for the return of provisional marks, and therefore pending confirmation at the examiners meeting, following the first half session. Professor McGeorge informed Senate that discussion had determined moving the date for the return of marks for the first half session diet would be detrimental to students, put undue strain on staff and as the provision for the return of marks without a full meeting of the exam board exists, sufficient flexibility to schools to address this issue.

58.2 Professor Duff voiced his support for Mr Styles' proposal, acknowledging the difficulties associated with the current results deadline. Professor Duff noted that many colleagues work during the Christmas holiday period in order to meet these deadlines, placing enormous stress and strain on them. Mr Liam Fuller, Student President for Education and Employability, confirmed that when the proposed change in the first half session was presented to students, while appreciative of the workload on staff, placed emphasis on the return of their marks, allowing them to know how they have done before beginning the second half session. Dr David Lusseau noted a comment from a member of his constituency raising concern that the change to the second half session could incur a week of field work research time to be lost.

58.3 Professor Richard Wells, reminded Senate of the lengthy period taken to review the academic year previously, and the emphasis at this time put on the student experience and the ability of students to know whether or not they have achieved their first half session results before undertaking the second half session. Professor Wells further acknowledged the University's Committee structure, noting that the issue had been considered at meetings of the Undergraduate committee, Heads of School and UCTL where the conclusion reached was that the first half session deadline remaining as is detailed in the paper provided was the best outcome for students overall. Where issues related to this do arise, steps, such as agility in the movement of exams, should be taken in order to mitigate these.

58.4 Professor Duff suggested that consideration be given to reducing the Easter vacation by a week as a means to gain an extra week of marking in the first half-session but avoiding the deadline for return of marks being after the start of teaching in the second half-session. Dr Wamberto Vasconcelos queried whether the week between graduations and the beginning of the resit diet was required. Dr Mackintosh, Director of Academic Affairs and Academic Registrar, confirmed that this week was essential to allow students to register for resits and for arrangements to be made for students with disability provision to be made.

58.5 Professor MacDonald voiced his support for the comments made by Professor Wells and the work undertaken by the working group on the academic year. He further noted that the length of the Easter break was necessary for courses with field work elements.

58.6 Following discussion, Senate was asked to vote with regards to the proposal to increase marking time in the second half-session examination diet. The results of this vote were:

Yes, in favour of the proposal to increase marking time:	46
No, not in favour of the proposal to increase marking time:	11
Senators abstaining from vote:	1

58.7 The Senate was the asked to vote with regards to the amendment as proposed by Mr Styles to increase marking time in the first half-session examination diet. The results of this vote were:

Yes, in favour of the amendment proposed:	29
No, not in favour of the amendment proposed:	26
Senators abstaining from vote:	2

58.8 Therefore, the Senate approved both the changes to the marking time in the second half-session and the proposed increase in marking time in the first half-session. In regard to the latter, the Principal asked that the Vice-Principal for Teaching and Learning give consideration to how this increase in the first half session marking time might be achieved, with a view to a paper being brought to the next meeting of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF AN ONLINE 'PROFESIONAL SKILLS COURSE' FOR ALL LEVEL ONE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

- 59.1 The Vice-Principal for Teaching and Learning, Professor Peter McGeorge, presented a paper setting out proposals for the introduction of an online 'Professional Skills Course' for all level one undergraduate students. Professor McGeorge informed the Senate that the three-hour online course was comprised of three components: (i) health, safety and wellbeing (ii) equality and diversity and (iii) graduate attributes. He further noted that the course was designed to occupy a period of time at the start of the academic year and could therefore serve as an engagement activity in advance of tutorial engagement and the submission of work.
- 59.2 Dr Jeff Oliver thanked Professor McGeorge for the consistency now evident in the paper and noted a desire from colleagues to be made aware of what the course actually does or delivers in order to relate it to their teaching. Professor McGeorge responded to suggest that the Careers Service, who have responsibility for the course, visit Schools to demonstrate to colleagues what the course contains.
- 59.3 Dr Murilio da Silva Baptista noted that the course would be prescribed for students but not compulsory, in that students who did not achieve a pass would not be prevented from graduating. He did, however, note concern that this fail on a students' transcript in this regard may affect employability. Professor McGeorge acknowledged that there was no reason why a student could not retake the course if they failed to achieve a pass.
- 59.4 Following discussion, Senate was asked to vote with regards to the implementation of the course. The results of this vote were:

Yes, in favour of the introduction of the course:	48
No, not in favour of the introduction of the course:	7
Senators abstaining from vote:	1

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

AMENDMENT TO SENATE STANDING ORDERS

- 60.1 The Senate received a paper from Mr Styles setting out proposed amendments to the Senate Standing Orders. Mr Styles noted that these changes were proposed to enhance clarity around voting procedures. The Principal thanked Mr Styles for his work in preparing the standing orders and asked the Senate to vote on their approval and implementation.

Yes, in favour of the revised standing orders:	43
No, not in favour of the revised standing orders:	4
Senators abstaining from vote:	6

The Senate therefore approved the amendments to the Standing Orders and to their implementation with immediate effect.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES REVIEW

- 61.1 The Senate received an update on the outcome of the Professional Services Review. Introducing the review, the University Secretary, Mrs Inglis, noted that at the meeting of the Court in June 2015, it had been agreed that an intensive review of professional services support should be undertaken across the University, against the backdrop of the implementation of the new strategic plan, the move to school planning processes and the

devolution of budgetary responsibility to school level. Mrs Inglis confirmed that throughout the review process, efforts had been taken to rationalise professional services activities to ensure the provision of high quality, added value support to all. Mrs Inglis stated she had convened a Project Board with representatives from schools, colleges, professional services and the student body to oversee the process and to consider regular progress updates from four identified work streams. These being, (i) Schools, (ii) Teaching and Learning, (iii) Research and (iv) Digital Transformation.

- 61.2 Mrs Inglis stated that each work stream had looked in detail at their key area of activity. Comprised of representation from schools, colleges and the student body, the work streams conducted open and transparent review, engaging with the University community and undertaking extensive consultation including workshops, evidence sessions, open sessions and consultative meetings. Mrs Inglis conveyed her thanks to all those who had contributed to the process, noting that altogether over 20 open stakeholder engagement events had been held and had over 60 written submissions received from individuals. Mrs Inglis advised Senators that although the Project Board had published its final report, it would continue to meet to provide oversight of implementation as per the implementation plan.
- 61.3 The Principal thanked Mrs Inglis and asked Senators to raise any questions or issues regarding the review. Mrs Lindsay Tibbetts, queried point 9 of the report regarding the proposed centralised approach to admissions and the potential impact this could have on the Business School in regards to the requirements for internal control in meeting the needs of accrediting bodies and therefore in achieving accreditation. Mrs Inglis, in responding, noted that single points of failure had been identified in the administration of the admissions process and that a rationalisation of support was proposed in order to avoid this. Mrs Inglis confirmed that there was no intention to reduce the value of current processes and appreciated the accreditation requirements of schools including the Business School. Mr Whittington, Head of the Business School, stated he was aware of the issue and had previous discussion in this regard. Mr Whittington confirmed the decision-making rather than administrative activity is key and that discussions with Professor McGeorge were already underway regarding making this work.
- 61.4 Dr David Lusseau raised a question regarding the proposed reduction of IT infrastructure and sought reassurance that a transition to differing means of IT provision, such as the support of individual's personal device, would be delivered in parallel with required IT services. Professor Hannaford, Vice-Principal and convener of the Digital Transformation work stream, confirmed that PCs would only be reduced where demand for them had not existed. Professor Hannaford stated he was conscious of providing better services for individuals with their own devices and confirmed that the University Wi-Fi provision had already been quadrupled. He further stated his awareness of continued investment in this as well as the need to look at other potentially useful mechanisms for improved service.
- 61.5 Professor Karin Friedrich presented a motion regarding the proposals contained within the Review specifically around (i) the centralisation of Postgraduate Taught (PgT) Admissions and (ii) the separation of PgT and Postgraduate Research (PgR) oversight with the creation of a single Graduate School with responsibility solely for PgR. In particular, she proposed that:
- (i) Senate believes that the proposal to centralised PG admission is ill advised and will impede the recruitment and selection of PG students, and (ii) Senate resolves that recommendations of Professional Services Review SEN15:28 proposals 9 (i) and 11 (i-iii) be rejected.*
- 61.6 Professor Friedrich noted the motion raised as a reflection of concerns by colleagues, particularly across Arts and Social Sciences disciplines. Regarding (i) the centralisation of PgT admissions, Professor Friedrich noted concern as to the potential loss of personal

communication with an applicant on the part of the school, particularly at admission and arrival stage. She noted this may be more acutely felt within Arts and Social Science disciplines as students are less likely to be recruited in teams. She noted concern over a lack of detail or design of the proposed Graduate School and queried how much power would be left with the schools, particularly regarding communication. Professor Friedrich did acknowledge there were some advantages to a central Graduate School and stated these had been taken into account. She noted her concern for the removal of control from schools, particularly in recognition of the fact that Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are issued to schools surrounding recruitment and admissions.

- 61.7 Regarding (ii) the separation of PgT and PgR oversight, Professor Friedrich noted considerable concern regarding the fact that a new Graduate School would not include PgT, thus removing the ability for 'feeding through' and the conversion of PgT students to PgR. She noted the stated exclusion of the alignment of PgR research streams with PgT and expressed concern regarding the cultural clash this change may create, a potential feeling amongst PgTs of exclusion and a possible branding of PgT alongside Undergraduate (UG). Professor Friedrich, in further highlighting the potential problem quoted feedback from Professor Grant MacAskill regarding his own experience of a similar model and its failures at the University of St Andrews.
- 61.8 In response to those issues pertaining to PgR, the Vice-Principal for Research, Professor Bryan MacGregor, acknowledged existing differences in approaches to admissions taken across disciplines and an existing level of central oversight. Professor MacGregor stated that the proposals for a central Graduate School were not designed to enforce centralisation of activity but to bring existing resource together in order to rationalise and enhance support. Professor MacGregor clearly stated that there was no question of not involving schools in the process, confirming that it would be a requirement that they be intimately involved. He further noted the intention of the proposals to provide a clear focus for staff and students, enhance the student experience and provide a more coherent experience for all.
- 61.9 Professor MacGregor confirmed a steering group with academic and administrative representation from each college would be established in order to consult extensively on the Graduate School proposals. He noted a Postgraduate Research Dean would be appointed to provide oversight of PgR and that a possible timetable would allow for implementation in February 2017. Professor MacGregor acknowledged the need for a strategic and coherent approach to the transition, recognising the ambitious targets for the recruitment of PgRs of approximately 34% over the next four years.
- 61.10 Professor MacGregor noted that the current PgR model is not perfect and while there is no suggestion that there is an ideal solution, he noted the need to improve it, in partnership between schools and the centre. With reference to data collected concerning completion rates, where completion is defined as submission within 48 months for full time students and 96 for part time students, Professor MacGregor noted that the average percentage return is 50% with data ranging from 25-90% across disciplines. He noted the significant scope for improvement demonstrated by this.
- 61.11 In response to those issues pertaining to PgT, the Vice-Principal for Teaching and Learning, Professor Peter McGeorge, echoed the sentiment of Professor MacGregor and the need to rationalise and enhance professional services support. Professor McGeorge informed the Senate of an expected substantial increase in PgT student numbers over the coming years and noted that the University must be efficient in bringing together a number of diverse activities in order to support students and staff. Professor McGeorge also spoke of the importance of involving academic staff at all stages of recruitment, noting his agreement with Senators that academic staff are integral in the process. Professor McGeorge acknowledged the concerns of Professor Friedrich regarding the conversion of PgT students to PgR but noted that while this could be mitigated, the importance in the

transition of UG to PgT should not be underestimated, especially taking into account a decline in students opting to undertake this route in recent years.

- 61.12 Professor Duff noted his reassurance following the clarity on the position of PgR and PgT as provided by Professors MacGregor and McGeorge. Professor Duff noted existing practice within the Law School, the role of academic staff in this regard and liaison with central services such as the Student Recruitment and Admissions team.
- 61.13 Dr David Lusseau asked whether the final decision on a students' academic eligibility for admission would remain with schools. Professor McGeorge confirmed that the criteria on which the decision to admit, or not, would be taken, would continue to be set by the schools and where divergences occur, an academic member of staff would step in.
- 61.14 Dr Jeff Oliver commented on the potential perceptual issue which may occur for North American students, who associated PgT study with a Graduate School and PgR. Dr Oliver noted that the relegation of PgT may have a negative impact in terms of recruitment in this regard. Acknowledging this concern, Professor McGeorge stated the importance of the University conveying perception appropriately. He further noted that student identification is often with the School in which they are based and not a Graduate School.
- 61.15 Mr Styles stated his support for the motion presented and voiced concerns regarding the proposed appointment of Deans in the areas of PgR and PgT. Mr Styles noted that the appointment of these individuals and the salaries paid to them, was bureaucratic and unnecessary. Professor MacGregor confirmed that the appointment of Deans would reduce the number of senior positions, which currently stands at 3 Heads of Graduate School and 3 Directors of Teaching and Learning.
- 61.16 Dr Murilio Silva de Baptista asked whether, if administrative control of PgT and PgR was to be at central level, would the requirements of different schools be taken into account and the needs to students met. Professor MacGregor confirmed that issues such as supervisors and monitoring would not be lost but become more effective and carefully administered, ensuring, for example, that submissions are received and in time.
- 61.17 Professor Wells stated his own appreciation of the University's central services, noting the crucial role departments such as marketing and alumni relation play in his work as regional Dean. Professor Wells stated the ability to do that is governed by an ability to work as a centre in partnership with schools. Professor Ross echoed Professor Wells' comments, noting the preparedness of the School of Law to work on their own and in liaison with central services as required.
- 61.18 Following discussion, Senate was asked to vote with regards to the approval of Professor Friedrich's motion. The results of this vote were:

Yes, in favour of the motion proposed:	22
No, not in favour of the motion proposed:	22
Senators abstaining from vote:	8

Therefore, following discussion, and a vote, it was agreed that two Senate representatives should work with Professors MacGregor and McGeorge to move forward with these aspects of the Review. In closing, the Principal, making a personal statement, stated that the thesis submission rates as quoted was unacceptable. He requested a paper be brought to the next meeting of the Senate providing further information on this issue.

AOCB

- 62.1 The Principal provided the opportunity for Senators to raise any general matters. Dr Oliver raised the issue of the recording of the attendance of Senate members on the University website. The Senate agreed that this would begin in the coming session, Academic Year 2016/17.
- 62.2 Dr Martin Mills raised the issue of the Prevent legislation and the University's response. Current procedures presented in response to the legislation require reporting on actions taken to the University Management Group (UMG). Dr Mills proposed that reports in this regard (including incidents/case studies etc.) also be submitted to the Senate, allowing for wider institutional dissemination and consideration by the University's central academic body. The Principal was content to agree with this proposal, comprising a short summary report to Senate, on an as required basis.
- 62.3 Dr Mills also noted concern as to the official figure stated of £240 million spent across the UK on an annual basis on the Research Excellence Framework (REF). The Principal acknowledged the concerns raised and noted that work undertaken by an academic colleague to estimate the 'real' cost of work on the REF had calculated this as over £1 billion. Members of the Senate did, however, note the high regard for the REF and its existence as a means of distributing significant amounts of money and the allocation of funds based on quality and a high level of quality.

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 11 May 2016.

1. Changes to General and Supplementary Regulations

- 63.1 The Senate approved, on the recommendation of the University Committee on Teaching and Learning, and forwarded to the University Court, the draft resolution 'Changes to Regulations for Various Degrees' (copy filed with the principal copy of minutes).

The Senate also agreed to ask the University Court, that, in accordance with the provisions of Section 6 (2) of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, the draft Resolution be passed forthwith, so that the amended provisions may be applied with effect from date on which they are passed by the University Court.

2. Readmission to Study Policy

- 63.2 The Senate approved, on the recommendation of the University Committee on Teaching & Learning, the Readmission to Study Policy (copy filed with the principal copy of minutes).

REPORT FROM THE UNIVERSITY COURT

The Senate approved the recommendation arising from the meeting of the University Court on 22 March 2016.

1. Draft Resolution No () of 2016 [The John Nisbet Chair of Education]

- 64.1 The Senate endorsed the Draft Resolution to establish a "John Nisbet Chair of Education".

**RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK (REF):
REPORT ON INSTITUTIONAL PREPARATIONS**

- 65.1 The Senate noted the paper on the Research Excellence Framework (REF): Report on Institutional Preparations (copy filed with the principal copy of minutes). The paper provided information on external policy development of the next Research Excellence Framework, and on open access requirements introduced by the funding councils. It also provided an update on institutional preparations to date.