UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

SENATUS ACADEMICUS

Minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2020


APPROVAL OF AGENDA

58.1 The Principal opened the meeting, welcoming members of the Senate to the second meeting of the Senate by Microsoft Teams. The attention of members was drawn to the fact that the meeting would be recorded. Members were reminded to state their name before contributing to discussion, to use the chat function to state when they wished to ask a question and to remain muted when not speaking. Members also noted that they could raise hand to contribute to discussion. The Principal invited members to approve the agenda. He noted that no items for routine approval or information had been brought forward for discussion. Members of the Senate approved the agenda and the meeting proceeded.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF 13 MAY 2020

59.1 The Principal invited members of the Senate to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 13 May 2020. No comments or objections were raised, and the meeting proceeded.

UPDATE FROM PRINCIPAL

60.1 The Principal, in providing an update to the Senate, began by noting that he had recently met with colleagues in Schools and Professional Services to talk about the University’s financial position and the plans for resuming activity on campus. The Principal noted that members of
the Senate would be aware that the University had been awaiting confirmation of extra research money from the Scottish Government, which it was hoped would contribute directly to the University’s bottom line and help to ensure that the anticipated shortfall of around £40 million in revenue for the next year was not exceeded. The Principal informed members of the Senate that the Scottish Government had now confirmed that the University had been granted just over £6 million of extra research income, but that this income had some quite significant strings attached. He informed members of the Senate that it appeared the University would be expected to undertake extra activity in return for the grant, which had not been anticipated or hoped for. He noted that the University was looking very closely at how it could comply with the requirements set out, while still being able to use as much of the extra funding to protect its financial position. The Principal noted that with the preparations for blended learning and a higher intake of January starts, he hoped the shortfall would not be exceeded.

60.2 Regarding the resumption of activity on campus, the Principal acknowledged the announcements made by the First Minister earlier in the day. He noted that these announcements included a projected timeline of the 29 June for the resumption of lab-based activity on-campus, with preparations for a return being permitted in advance of this. The Principal stated that the announcement was a step in the right direction for the University. He acknowledged that the Scottish Government’s top priority was the same as the University’s, to protect the safety and welfare of staff and students. He noted his concern that the Scottish higher education sector may be placed at a competitive disadvantage both in terms of preparations for teaching and the resumption of research-based activity, however, acknowledged that this was a very difficult balance to reach.

60.3 Finally, the Principal drew the attention of the Senate to the agenda item on the Aberdeen 2040 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), the measures for monitoring progress towards the commitments that the University had published in its 2040 strategy. The Principal acknowledged that a lot of work was currently ongoing to firefight in the current, extraordinary circumstances, however, reminded members of the Senate of the importance of the University continuing to work to achieve the commitments set out for over the next 20 years, which includes a whole set of commitments around inclusion and the inclusiveness of activity for both staff and students, research and education. He stated that everything the University does is committed to inclusiveness, which includes, for the avoidance of any doubt whatsoever, anti-racism. He stated that the University is completely opposed to racism in all the forms that have been seen across the world in the last few weeks. Members of the Senate note that inclusiveness and anti-racism was right at the centre of what the University is trying to achieve. The Principal noted that the University was moving into a phase of listening to the community on steps to combat racism, both within the University and beyond.

REPORT FROM THE UNIVERSITY COURT

61.1 On behalf of the Senate Assessors, Diane Skåtun provided an update to the Senate of the Court meeting held on 15 May 2020. Diane introduced the paper and drew the attention of the Senate to the following key points:

- It was noted that the meeting of the Court had taken place slightly out with the published timetable, as a consequence of the cancellation of the March meeting and its substitution with a briefing. Discussions were, understandably, dominated by discussions around Covid-19 related business.
It was noted that the Senior Governor had highlighted the implications of the Covid-19 outbreak on the Higher Education sector and the need for the sector to work together in its dealings with the Government, both in Scotland and the UK. Members of the Senate were informed of the Senior Government’s commitment to ensuring the University had a strong voice in such discussions.

Members of the Senate noted that the Principal had highlighted the priorities and uncertainties in which the University was operating and provided the Court with a detailed report covering the full spectrum of areas that the University had to take action in.

The Court received a report from the Court Emergency Powers Group, convened to submit an interim draft financial report and to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). All matters that were discussed at the meeting of the Emergency Powers Group were fed back to Court.

It was noted that the Court was presented with a detailed report on the potential financial impact of Covid-19. Given the amount of uncertainties faced by the University, it was noted that this report outlined a range of options available to react to all the various scenarios identified.

Members of the Senate noted that the Science Teaching Hub had been one of the focuses of discussion and that it been agreed that construction would continue once allowed by Scottish Government. It was also agreed to further investigate the option of using the bond to fund the Science Teaching Hub and more work will be presented to the Court on this.

It was noted that the election of the two staff members to Court had been postponed from July to October and that the two current elected staff members would continue until such a time as an election could take place.

Finally, members of the Senate noted the approval of the repatriation request by the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre for some relics from the University’s museum’s collection.

Following the update, Diane invited comments and/or questions from the Senate. The Principal confirmed that construction on the Science Teaching Hub had restarted last Monday. Members of the Senate queried the planned date of completion of the building. It was noted that this was currently unknown. Members of the Senate noted that construction was considerably behind schedule because of the stand down period and that renewed activity would be at a reduced level as a consequence of physical distancing.

**UPDATE ON PLANNING RESUMPTION OF ON-CAMPUS ACTIVITY**

62.1 Karl Leydecker, Senior Vice-Principal, introduced the paper providing an update on planning for the resumption of on-campus activity. He began by informing the Senate that a communication would follow to the whole community tomorrow, following the First Minister’s statement made earlier in the day. He noted that it was great to see that Scotland was going into stage two. He informed members of the Senate that over 70 members of staff had now been on-campus to collect things from their offices and that over 450 staff have had deliveries of IT equipment and other things. Karl stated that the next stage of the plan, which would be outline in the communication to staff, would be to allow staff to come onto campus without the need for an appointment. He explained that this would involve the opening of some buildings, allowing their occupants to enter them on certain days in order to be able to collect materials and potentially to be able to carry out some preparatory activities in specialist spaces where that might be needed. He noted that requests had been received, for example, to use certain recording spaces to allow things to be filmed and subsequently used in blended learning. Karl noted that the communication to the community would provide a fuller update. He invited Marion Campbell, Vice-Principal (Research) and Ruth Taylor, Vice-Principal (Education) to provide the Senate with updates for their areas of responsibility.
62.2 Marion Campbell, with regards research, informed the Senate that there had been a couple of updates since the circulation of the Senate paper. Firstly, she noted that a labs restart could happen at the earliest, according to Scottish Government guidance, at the end of the month (29 June). She extended her thanks to all those who had participated in the sequencing exercise, noting that requests had covered approximately 800 staff across 18 buildings. The Senate noted the logistical jigsaw that had to be established to meet the needs of the requests and Marion stated that Estates & Facilities staff and technicians were working hard to get the buildings prepared. She confirmed that updates would follow in this regard. Secondly, she noted a recent update from the Scottish Government regarding field work. Members of the Senate were informed that a question had been put to the Scottish Parliament regarding field work and that, consequently, clarification had been given that the University can start to think about recommencing outdoor based field work, subject to approval and Covid-risk assessment. Marion informed the Senate that it was hoped that the process for approval and the completion of risk assessments would be written up and available by the end of the following week. She noted that this was a significant move forward and sought the patience of colleagues as work was completed to understand and implement the guidance provided by the Scottish Government.

62.3 Ruth Taylor, with regards Education, confirmed that the Blended Learning Task and Finish Group (BLITFG) continued to meet weekly. She extended her thanks to colleagues for their input around the principles for blended learning. She stated that the process had been very productive and that the final set of principles had really benefitted from the input of members of the Senate and others. Ruth informed members of the Senate that the guidance on blended learning was now available online, that it was a live and dynamic document and that it would be updated and/or reviewed on an ongoing basis. She stated that if members of the Senate felt anything was missing from the guidance, she was happy to look at this and revise the guidance appropriately. Members of the Senate noted that training was now in place for blended learning and that, to date, there had been a lot of engagement with it. Ruth noted excellent feedback received for the Centre for Academic Development (CAD) in this regard and noted that if it was felt further training was required, this could be looked at. Ruth updated the Senate that work was now ongoing around Quality Assurance (QA) and the scrutiny of the University’s teaching and learning policies and procedures to identify whether any changes needed to be made to them in the context of Covid-19. She stated that this work was ongoing and that it could be the case that this would follow to the Senate, by appropriate means, for considering and approval.

62.4 Ruth also updated the Senate on work ongoing with regards to timetabling. She informed members that a consultation was ongoing and thanked colleagues for their engagement with it. She noted that this was a set of principles for timetabling that aims to inform the timetabling process and align with the blended learning principles. Ruth updated the Senate that she had already had some feedback around this and was looking forward to getting more. She noted that the same process as previously followed would be used and that a small group would meet to develop the principles further before coming back out to let colleagues see what those look like. Ruth acknowledged that one of the principles relates to the working day. She informed the Senate that, at the moment, timetabling was undertaking modelling based on the current working day (9am to 6pm) and that it was hoped that it would be possible to work with this timeframe. If not, however, Ruth noted that conversations would be undertaken with colleagues. She noted that while the paper suggests that 8am to 8pm may be considered, it wasn’t at this time. Finally, Ruth addressed the use of face to face, in-person and on-campus teaching opportunities. Members of the Senate noted that while the
University wouldn’t be delivering lectures on-campus, students had been told that the University would be open for people to come onto campus and that it must be ensured that new and returning students were offered an experience which supports that. Ruth informed the Senate of the proposed principles in this regard and welcomed feedback on them. Ruth stated that following the closure of the consultation, she would look at all the feedback and review and adjust the principles as appropriate.

62.5 A discussion then ensued, the main tenets of which were as follows:

- Nick Schofield, representing the School Geosciences, asked, in relation to the Government guidance regarding the reopening of labs on 29 June, whether the University would be ready to open, in recognition of the fact that labs will need to be cleaned and risk assessments undertaken. He asked what the realistic date would be on which the University would be able to reopen research labs for work. Responding, Marion Campbell, stated a lot of work had been going on behind the scenes to try and organise the required preparation. She noted that the sequencing work undertaken had identified the order in which buildings are to be assessed by Health and Safety and it was hoped that this could be completed for most buildings at Foresterhill by 6 July. All being well, Marion noted that it was hoped work would be complete in Old Aberdeen by the following week. She urged caution, however, as there was some uncertainty associated with entry to buildings, noting that the results of Legionella tests were awaited. She expressed the extensive work being undertaken by Estates & Facilities staff and the University’s technicians to make this happen.

- The Principal invited Lindsay Tibbetts, representing the Business School, and David Watts, representing the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition, to ask a question regarding workload. Lindsay confirmed to the Senate that the question had been raised regarding the fact that while it was understood that the workload associated with teaching would go to go up dramatically, as a consequence of the move to a blended learning environment, it was also important to prioritise research. Noting that it would not be possible to prioritise all activities at this time, Lindsay asked the Principal and the wider Senate if there were any thoughts and the things that could be deprioritised during this period.

- Responding, the Principal asked if Lindsay had any initial ideas as to what the University could stop doing, at least temporarily. Lindsay noted that, she had been pleased to note that a subset of the Aberdeen 2040 commitments would be looked at during the next 12 months and that further steps like this could be taken in order to help colleagues prioritise. David Watts added that one of the reasons that he and Lindsay had posed the question, had been to seek ideas from the community over what could be deprioritised. He proposed that the annual review process could perhaps be set aside for a year, if practicable.

- Responding, Karl Leydecker stated that following discussions with Heads of School, it had been agreed that it was actually very important that everybody has a conversation in the next month or two with their academic line manager that will allow some detailed discussion about the individual circumstances of staff, their workload, and plans. He noted, however, the intention to slim the annual review process down, perhaps not requiring the filling in of all the boxes and the traditional paperwork associated with the process. Karl stated the importance of having a high-quality conversation with every member of staff, which could help to address the workload issues being experienced.

- The Principal sought any other ideas about work that could be deprioritised, paused or give less attention to allow staff to maintain essential activity during this period. He informed the Senate that feedback on this could follow following the meeting by way of contacting him or Karl.
Amy Bryzgel, representing the School of Language, Literature, Music and Visual Culture stated that she had recently been conducting annual reviews and therefore had a sense of what some members of staff are thinking and dealing with. She stated that staff were looking to be able to get on and plan for the beginning of the 2020/21 academic year but that this was complicated by the fact that circumstances kept changing. Amy stated that the timetabling consultation had caused a lot of anxiety, particularly regarding proposed minimum contact hours, which, with physical distancing, would mean a potential quadrupling of workload. She further noted concern that the consultation had contradicted a lot of the messages previously received by the School with regard to staff being required to or compelled to come on to campus. Amy stated that staff are having to regularly readjust, and that people do not do well in learning and teaching when there are anxieties. She stated that if staff could be allowed to get on and plan for the beginning of term, according to blended learning, this would help ease the situation.

Responding, the Principal noted that these were helpful points and that he recognised issues around both anxiety and uncertainty. He noted that all activity and the very existence of the University is clouded by uncertainty and anxiety, as the landscape around it changes.

Also responding, Ruth Taylor emphasised that the consultation was exactly that and that she hoped that colleagues had seen from our previous consultations, that the University was really listening. She acknowledged the points raised by Amy, but stated that, perhaps as a consequence of the way the consultation had gone out, there had been a misunderstanding of what had been intended by it. Ruth noted that she couldn’t guarantee that everybody's workload would remain as it had been in previous years and that there were some changes that had to be made, however, the on-campus experience must be managed in the best possible and most efficient way for staff and students. She stated that there were a couple of areas within the document that aimed to set out this intention, but that Amy’s feedback had indicated that more work was required to ensure that this message was much clearer. Ruth further noted that the Blended Learning Principles and Guidance had been provided to Schools, who should now be taking these and considering how to implement them in a way that is most suitable for them. Ruth stated the importance of providing clear direction to timetabling colleagues in order that they can get on and do some modelling so that it can be understood what is possible. Finally, she noted that a parallel piece of work was ongoing to determine what was possible within teaching rooms.

Karl added that the Campus Planning Group would be coming out to the community soon with some sense of what rooms might look like, under physical distancing. He stated that the group would seek to engage in debate with people as to what they think would look right and what wouldn’t be acceptable. He informed the Senate that there were different ways in which rooms could be configured that may make them usable and easy to get in and out of. He informed the Senate that work to assess each room was ongoing and allayed fears that significantly increased levels of teaching would be undertaken. Karl noted that there may be some multiple teaching but that this would be dependent on issues including the determined capacity of campus and whether distancing would be set at one or two metres. He emphasised the complexities and difficulties associated with the return to campus and stated that he wished he could provide more certainty around it but could regrettably not do so yet.

The Principal thanked Karl, noting that work being undertaken to identify what it is possible to timetable in principle does not mean that is what would be taught in practice. He noted that, of course, workloads and personal circumstances amongst other factors would be taken into consideration. He referenced staff shielding as an example of where staff would not be asked to return to campus to teach.
• Frauke Jurgensen, on behalf of the School of Language, Literature, Music and Visual Culture, stated the importance of ensuring student expectations aren’t raised by references to on-campus activity and/or synchronous teaching approaches. She expressed concern as to the workload implications some of these approaches could have. Frauke emphasised the importance of carefully wording the communications to students to ensure they aren’t expecting things that can’t be delivered on.

• Responding, the Principal noted the importance of the University not over, nor under, committing and in ensuring an appropriate balance between both student expectations and stuff expectations and what is reasonable and possible.

• Ralph O’Connor, on behalf of the School of Language, Literature, Music and Visual Culture, acknowledged the complexities of the situation and thanked Ruth and Karl for their reassurances. He noted concern, however, that several staff, who for reasons of themselves or their family’s health situations, may be shielding. He further noted that from a review of initial survey results from the staff Covid-19 survey, approximately 21% of respondents have home schooling responsibilities, which may well continue into the autumn. While acknowledging that assurances had been made regarding staff in these situations and that they will not be compelled to come into campus, he stated that these needs must not be contradicted by the drafts of any frameworks that go out about timetabling. Ralph stated it would be great if future documents of this kind could have those constituencies shielding people, people with home schooling or caring responsibilities at the very start so that there isn’t this cognitive dissonance because that has been very stressful for people.

• The Principal, responding, stated that Ralph was right in stating that the University must make sure that communications are consistent. The Principal reiterated that the University would not be require anyone to come onto campus whose circumstances mean that it is inappropriate for them to do so. He noted that messaging must be consistent with that.

• Ruth, also responding, thanked Ralph for his feedback. She noted that this had been the intention of what had been communicated and that she would reflect upon what had been said to ensure this was articulated in the right way in the future. Ruth reassured Ralph and others that the feedback received would be reflected upon before a further version was circulated.

• Hazel Hutchison, representing the School of Language, Literature, Music and Visual Culture, stated that the First Minister, in her statement had suggested that Schools might go back in August in an environment where the country has reached phase four. While acknowledging that this reiterates the difficulties of planning ahead, this is a positive announcement.

• Responding, the Principal agreed with Hazel, stating that he had felt the First Minister’s statement had been encouraging. He noted that the Government’s expectations on schooling had moved enormously in the last five or six days.

62.6 The Principal thanked members of the Senate for their contribution to the discussion. He noted that the feedback received had been enormously helpful.

ABERDEEN 2040 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

63.1 The Principal invited Karl Leydecker, Senior Vice-Principal to provide a presentation on the Aberdeen 2040 Key Performance Indicators, a copy of which is filed with the principal copy of the minute.

63.2 The Principal acknowledged the presentation as helpful and a very good summary of what the University is seeking to achieve. He emphasised that the University was seeking to avoid the
use of performance indicators for their own sake but to successfully track progress, or a lack thereof, towards the 20 objectives that had been set. The Principal reminded members of the Senate that the objectives had been agreed upon by the University community as a whole and that there needed to be a mechanism in place for checking whether a good job is being done in meeting them. The Principal welcomed further comments and or questions from members of the Senate. A short discussion ensued, the main tenets of which were as follows:

- Jeff Oliver, representing the School of Geosciences, thanked Karl for the presentation. Jeff expressed concerns regarding the need to measure some of the objectives, such as interdisciplinarity and internationalisation. He noted concern that once very narrow parameters are placed on what counts and what doesn’t count, situations are immediately created where game playing becomes quite common. Jeff further stated that although he accepted that the Scottish Code for Governance requires KPIs, that they should have a regard for the interests of students, staff and stakeholders. He stated whether a focus on measurement could perhaps twist things in an unhelpful way and that a focus on the promotion of good research, interdisciplinarity and internationalisation would be more appropriate. Jeff emphasised the importance of bringing the University community together and encouraging enthusiasm as opposed to the retrospective activity of accounting to whether an objective has been achieved.

- Responding, the Principal reinforced the fundamental point, that while the point of the strategy is to achieve its objectives, not to measure the achievement of them, the University must be able to evaluate whether the right actions are being taken and whether progress towards the achievement of the objectives is being made. He noted the KPIs discussed as seeking to do so economically and using as few indicators as possible, ideally one for each commitment. The Principal stated that he was open to using qualitative as well as quantitative data in order to make assessments.

- Also responding, Karl stated that the missing piece in these discussions was the action plan, which would provide the detail of the actions being undertaken to meet the agreed objectives. He noted that although there hadn’t been the time to put this in place yet, it would be completed to explain the actions behind the objectives, such as what the University is going to do about the climate emergency and driving the interdisciplinary research agenda. Karl noted that the plans exist to some extent, but that work has been paused. Karl further agreed to consultation ahead of the setting of any targets.

- Alfred Akisanya, representing the School of Engineering, also thanked Karl for the presentation and for the clear recognition of the differences between disciplines. Alfred expressed concerns at surveying students and receiving quality data in return from them, cautioning survey fatigue.

- Responding, Karl acknowledged the point raised and committed to considering how best to survey students, perhaps using a short, focussed and pithy approach. Karl stated a secondary benefit of surveying students, in raising the profile of Aberdeen 2040, amongst the student body.

- The Principal sought clarification as to the next stage for the consideration of the paper, following its approval by the Senate.

- Karl confirmed that the paper would be considered by the Policy and Resources Committee and by the University Court at the end of the month. On the assumption that the paper is approved, he noted that there would then be a lot of work to do to define the measures and provide a little bit more specificity about exactly how these will be progressed. Members of the Senate noted that this work would continue over the summer and those measures the University will focus on in the coming year will be prioritised. Karl stated that there would also be further consultation with colleagues. He
noted that he would expect to be able to report back to Senate at its next meeting in the autumn with an update.

63.3 The Principal thanked Karl and members of the Senate for their contribution to discussion. He confirmed that following discussion, the Senate was content to endorse the paper and to move forward with this to the next stage of work required.

GOVERNANCE OF TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION

64.1 Richard Wells, Vice-Principal (International Partnerships) introduced the paper on the Governance of Transnational Education. Members of the Senate were informed that the paper sought to set out the results of a working group, convened to consider learning from current and previous transnational projects, including experiences in both Qatar and Korea. Richard noted that the paper set out a clear governance structure for current and future transnational initiatives alongside clear detail on what is expected in the formulation and approval of future transnational initiatives. These structures include, the selection of proposals for development being undertaken by a new group, the International Advisory Group (IAG), a small subcommittee of SMT, and the setup of the International Partnerships Committee (IPC), to oversee both the development of projects approved by the IAG and also live projects currently running. Richard stressed the integral role of Senate and its subcommittees and their continued role in scrutinising and approving potential delivery partners and included within the paper were the fundamental principles statement agreed by the Senate. In addition, Richard stated that the paper set out to describe the nature and level of information that a successful project proposal would be expected to have and drew colleagues’ attention to the risk appetite statement in Appendix II, against which projects would have to be aligned. Richard stated that the overall purpose of the structures were to ensure that any future international partnerships are aligned fully with the commitments of Aberdeen 2040 and have been subject to an appropriate level of challenge and debate across all parts of the University prior to approval. Finally, he noted the intention that following approval, to set up a full international partnerships website that will include all the information both on current international partnerships but also information as to how to go through the process described and the sorts of information that will be expected. A short discussion then ensued, the main tenets of which were as follows:

- Alfred Akisanya, representing the School of Engineering, asked whether these proposals related solely to transnational education and therefore would not include research partnerships.
- Responding, Richard noted that the proposal does include research partnerships and Marion Campbell, Vice-Principal (Research), is on the group. He clarified, however, that this would not include research applications between a member of staff and an international colleague but bigger projects, such as the setting up of a joint Research Institute.
- Richard responded to a comment raised by David Watts, representing the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition. He committed to talking with David further regarding his concerns, but in respect of a concern regarding human rights, Richard stated that this that would be a clear part of the due diligence expected to be undertaken prior to any approval.
- David Anderson, representing the School of Social Science, thanked Richard for the paper. He stated he was glad to see that the Senate would continue to have a role in the supervision of new activities. David sought clarification as to where Senate’s role is detailed in the paper. David further noted that it appeared that the decisions proposed
for approval had been made by what had been described as a small efficient group, which didn’t include Senate representation and that only larger projects, after they’ve gone through a gatekeeper, would then have Senate consultation.

- Responding, Richard provided clarification that the paper refers to previous Senate papers, i.e. the bottom of page 2 refers to Senate document 1817, which outline the role of Senate and its subcommittee is in the approval of delivery partners for transnational education, as have previously been discussed and approved by the Senate. As such, Richard confirmed that the role of Senate remained, and would continue, as previously discussed and approved. Richard also confirmed that the role of the small efficient group is simply to make sure that any proposal upon which development effort is expended is a proposal that is one which fits the key criteria.

- David Anderson suggested the document be amended to provide clarification in this regard. Responding, Richard confirmed that the text could be edited to better reflect this intention.

- Lindsay Tibbetts, representing the Business School, asked whether there would be a similar process put in place for partnerships, such as that with AFG in Qatar.

- Responding, Richard confirmed that the process was intended to cover all international partnerships and would include, for example, if the University to was to engage in another partnership, such as that in Qatar. Richard provided clarity that Senate and its subcommittees would therefore have a key role in approving, for example, AFG as a competent partner but that would only be one part of the process of going all the way through this procedure.

- The Principal confirmed that the proposal put in place many more checks for the University, to ensure that it proceeds only with appropriate international partnerships.

- Tom Rist, on behalf of the School of Language, Literature, Music and Visual Culture, stated that he remembered that, a couple of years ago, the Principal had stated that he felt there would be a 10 year pause on proposals such as international partnerships.

- Responding, the Principal stated that he had likely been referring to the fact that he did not envisage any further major international partnerships on the scale of the partnership with AFG and Qatar within the next 10 years. He stated that he felt this remained true, however, did not mean there wouldn’t be any other international partnerships of any kind.

63.4  The Principal thanked Richard and members of the Senate for their contribution to discussion. He confirmed that following discussion, the Senate was content to endorse the paper.

**OPPORTUNITY FOR SENATE MEMBERS TO RAISE ANY OTHER ITEMS OF ACADEMIC INTEREST FOR DISCUSSION**

65.1  Members of the Senate raised no other items of academic interest for discussion.

**REPORT FROM THE UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON TEACHING AND LEARNING**

The Senate noted the actions taken by the University Committee on Teaching and Learning at its meetings on 21 May 2020.

1.  **Update on the Blended Learning Implementation Task and Finish Group**

66.1  The UCTL received and discussed a paper providing an update on the Blended Learning Implementation Task and Finish Group (BLITFG). The Committee noted updates on the work of the BLITFG’s action plan, workstreams and communication strategy. The Committee agreed
to consider items from the group at forthcoming meetings or, if appropriate, by way of circulation.

2. Implications of Blended Learning for the Delivery of Teaching and Learning in Academic Year 2020/21

66.2 Members of the Committee received a paper outlining the anticipated implications of Blended Learning for the delivery of teaching and learning in academic year 2020/21.

3. Guidance for Blended Learning

66.3 Members of the Committee received a document providing Guidance for Blended Learning. The Committee were enthusiastic regarding the proposals in the paper and approved the continuation of the project.


66.4 Members of the Committee were provided with an initial update on the communications strategy for the implementation of Blended Learning, noting that the strategy would be finalised by 29 May.

5. Risk Assessment for Learning and Teaching

66.5 The Committee received and discussed an updated extract of the University’s Risk Assessment in respect of Learning and Teaching, during the impact of COVID-19.

6. Reading List Project

66.6 Members of the Committee were provided with an update on the Reading List Project.

7. Internal Teaching Review (ITR) During the Impact of COVID-19

66.7 The UCTL approved proposed changes to the Internal Teaching Review process during the impact of COVID-19. The Committee agreed that a small group would convene to discuss forthcoming ITRs.

8. Quality Assurance (QA) Actions Taken and in Progress as a Result of COVID-19

66.8 Members of the UCTL received a paper providing an update from the Dean for Quality Enhancement and Assurance on the Quality Assurance (QA) actions taken and in progress as a result of COVID-19.

9. Annual Course and Annual Programme Review

66.9 The UCTL approved a paper on the Annual Course and Annual Programme Review exercises, noting that further updates would following to future meetings for consideration and approval.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO SENATUS ACADEMICUS

67.1 The Senate noted that the Senate Business Committee approved the timeline for election of non ex officio members to the Senate as detailed (copy filed with principal minute).