



## SENATE

### MINUTES AND ACTIONS – APPROVED ON 8 MARCH 2023

### 2 NOVEMBER 2022- 14:00-17:00 - MICROSOFT TEAMS

NB text in BLACK is for publication; text in BLUE will be redacted for publication.

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## ATTENDEES *(listed according to the membership as detailed in Ordinance 20)*

- b) **Acting Chair: Professor Janice Kay, Provost**
- c) Professor Neil Gow  
Professor Tim Quine  
Professor Martin Siegert
- d) Professor Rob Freathy  
Professor Andrew McRae
- e) Professor Sallie Lamb (HLS)  
Professor Gareth Stansfield (HASS)
- f) Professor Jo Bowtell (HLS)
- g) Professor Anni Vanhatalo (HLS)  
Professor Adam Watt (HASS)  
Professor Li Li (HASS)

- Professor Nick Stone (ESE)  
 Professor Alex Gerbasi (ESE)
- g) James Hutchinson
- h) Professor Jon Brown (HLS)  
 Professor Claire Hulme (HLS)  
 Professor Joanne Smith (HLS) Professor  
 James Wakefield (HLS)  
 Professor Mark Wilson (HLS)  
 Professor Fiona Cox (HASS)  
 Professor Rebecca Langlands (HASS)  
 Professor Joasia Luzak (HASS)  
 Professor Jane Milling (HASS)  
 Professor Naomi Sykes (HASS)  
 Professor Richard Everson (ESE) Professor  
 Dave Hodgson (ESE)  
 Professor Enrico Onali (ESE)  
 Professor Ion Sucala (ESE)  
 Professor Nicola Thomas (ESE)  
 Professor Geoff Vallis (ESE)
- i) Dr Safi Darden (HLS)  
 Professor William Gaze (HLS)  
 Professor Chrissie Thirlwell (HLS)  
 Dr Samuel Pollard (HLS)  
 Professor Ruth Garside (HLS)  
 Dr Ioanna Kapantai (HLS)  
 Dr Maisha Reza (HLS)  
 Dr Abby Russell (HLS)  
 Dr João Florêncio (HASS)  
 Professor Anna Mountford-Zimdars (HASS)  
 Professor Clare Saunders (HASS)  
 Professor Linda Williams (HASS)  
 Dr Daniel Fountain (HASS)  
 Professor David Jones (HASS)  
 Professor Fabrizio Nevola (HASS)  
 Professor Sue Prince (HASS)  
 Professor Adam Feldman (ESE)  
 Professor Ilke Inceoglu (ESE)  
 Professor Ben Zissimos (ESE)  
 Dr Sharon Strawbridge (ESE)  
 Professor Henry Buller (ESE) Professor  
 Barrie Cooper (ESE)  
 Professor Tim Naylor (ESE)  
 Professor Christine Parkin Hughes (ESE)
- j) Mike Shore-Nye
- l) Lily Margaroli  
 Jack Liversedge

Izzie Dyer  
 Emma de Saram  
 m) Georgi Griškevičienė  
 Lauren Taylor  
 Kira Orchard

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Totty Brobyn	Committee Secretariat Administrator (minutes)
Jane Chafer	Director of Marketing, Recruitment, Communications and Global
Andrew Connolly	Chief Financial Officer
Chris Lindsay	Director of Compliance, Governance and Risk
Linda Peka	Deputy Registrar and Executive Divisional Director of Education and Academic Services
Imelda Rogers	Director of Human Resources
Michael Wykes	Divisional Director, University Corporate Services
Jo Hamilton	Head of Admissions ( <i>for item 2 only</i> )
Catherine Taylor	Senior Quality and Standards Advisor, Quality and Standards ( <i>for item 7 only</i> )

**APOLOGIES:**

Professor Lisa Roberts  
 Professor Mark Goodwin  
 Alison Chambers  
 Professor Dan Charman (ESE)  
 Professor Isabelle Engeli (HASS)  
 Professor Karen Knapp (HLS) Professor  
 Rich Smith

**ACTIONS AND DECISIONS**

MINUTE	ACTION	LEAD
2.12	A further update into the implementation of the recommendations of the Coroner’s Inquest to be brought to a future meeting of Senate.	Registrar and Secretary
2.13	A deep dive on Global Partnerships to be held in the new calendar year	Secretariat
2.14	Jo Hamilton to look into accelerated data sharing and report back to future Senate meeting.	Head of Admissions
12.8	The Provost to take feedback of the processes of shortlisting Honorary Graduands to the shortlisting group.	Provost

## **1. Chair's introduction and Minutes from the meeting of 16 June 2022 (SEN/22/52) and Matters Arising.**

- 1.1. The Chair welcomed Senators to the meeting and the incoming SU President Exeter, Georgi Griškevičienė, along with the new Senators following the restructure and elections.
- 1.2. The minutes of the meeting on 16 June 2022 (SEN/22/52) were approved and an update on actions was provided by the Chair. The outstanding action regarding proposed Senate deep dives was in progress and dates were being confirmed for the New Year.
- 1.3. The DVC Education updated Senate on the action on awarding gaps. The papers on the agenda under item 8 provided some of the insights into the current picture surrounding awarding gaps, however other work that was underway included:
  - looking at awarding gaps by year group at the point of entry and profiles at discipline level which were being shared with departments in order to assist in their own discussions on decreasing awarding gaps;
  - the Module Dashboard created by the PPBI team, allowing module leaders to look at awarding gaps by demographic indicators;
  - Vrinda Nayak's Transformative Education project included work around inclusive practice in teaching and learning practices;
  - Olly Young's work around Assessment Reimagined which will lead to improved positions in awarding gaps.Senate members were to be given the opportunity for further discussion at a deep dive in February 2023 following the TEF submission.
- 1.4. The Chair noted that the expulsion of three students on the recommendation of the disciplinary boards had been approved by Senate via Chair's action.

## **2. Vice-Chancellor's Report (SEN/22/53)**

- 2.1. The Provost referenced the report from the VC, the Provost and the Deputy Vice-Chancellors (SEN/22/53). She added further updates from the sector and internally since the report was circulated:
  - A new Prime Minister brought with them some new appointments; Gillian Keegan, *Education Secretary*; Grant Schapps, *Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) Secretary*; Michael Gove, *Levelling Up Housing and Communities Secretary* and Suella Braverman, *Home Secretary*. Robert Halfon, an Exeter graduate and supporter of degree apprenticeships is the new Minister of State at the Department for Education, taking on the compulsory education brief. The Science brief ownership was unclear
  - The Russell Group and UUK were looking at the policy implications for Higher Education (HE) following the changes in government, flagging their concern in communications with the Prime Minister.
  - The Russell Group was also raising awareness of its excellent record on technical education which was a priority for the new Prime Minister.
  - There was likely to be a continued focus on phasing out government perceived 'low value' degrees.
  - There was potential for an upcoming review of all UK/Chinese research partnerships, with the suggestion that government is set to ban the 30 Chinese funded Confucius Institutes in British universities.

- While awaiting the budget, there was a worrying indication by a BEIS representative that cuts to Research and Development funding had not been ruled out.
- There had been no decision on Horizon Europe. The cabinet committee with responsibility had not agreed whether to enter arbitration, however BEIS was looking at spending some of the Horizon allocation on Research in order to avoid the funds being taken back as an underspend.
- UUK, Advance HE, the Committee of University Chairs, Guild HE and the National Union of Students released a joint statement in anticipation of the Higher Education Freedom of Speech bill reaching committee stage in the House of Lords, stating that universities must “invest in good relations between different groups so that students and staff can discuss complex and controversial topics in a culture of mutual dignity, tolerance and civility”.
- The Provost announced that she would be stepping down in July 2023 but would stay on to support the Vice Chancellor until August 2024 to support special strategic projects.

2.2. The Registrar and Secretary updated Senate on the results of the Coroner’s Inquest into a student death, which laid out as a set of recommendations for the University to consider. The coroner requested that the University review:

- training provision for staff around mental health,
- suicide prevention,
- the processes by which concerns raised by parents and third parties,
- the flexibility and proactivity of suicide prevention response,
- the methods of contacting emergency contacts, and
- the means by which students can contact tutors with their wellbeing concerns.

The University had started immediately on the review and would be providing Council with details at the December meeting and through that address the outcomes and identify the next steps. Improvements had been made since the student’s death and the University had reviewed the UUK guidance on suicide prevention and implemented many of the recommendations, but had subsequently undertaken a gap analysis to glean where further action could be taken. Efforts were still ongoing to align the staff and student wellbeing services under the oversight of the Wellbeing and Inclusion Board. The University would review the detail of the conclusions of the case and then plan additional actions, including a project group, and bring forward a proposal for an independently chaired review next year. All staff and students involved had been offered extra support. Senate would be closely updated as the implementations of the recommendations progresses.

#### **Closed Minute – Confidential**

2.3. In discussions around the need to use data to note the early warning signs and systems, the Dean for Taught Students noted the work going into attendance and engagement data and the investigations underway to find the right systems. Attendance monitoring was variable and further work was to be done on the attendance policy.

#### **Closed Minute - Confidential**

2.4. Jo Hamilton, Head of Admissions, joined the meeting to give a brief update on the current admissions position in the early stages.

#### **Closed Minute - Confidential**

- 2.7. A Senate member requested the acceleration of data sharing to increase engagement with international student recruitment. Jo Hamilton was invited to liaise with academic staff members on specifics and report back to a future Senate meeting.
- 2.8. The Chair gave formal notification to Senate of the appointment of the DVC Global Engagement, Professor Richard Follett, the current Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor and Associate Vice-President International at the University of Sussex. Professor Follett was a fellow of the Royal Historical Society, the Chair of UUK International Africa and Middle East Network, and served on the UUK International Strategic Advisory Board. Professor Anni Vanhatalo served as Senate representative on the panel. This appointment had been approved by the Chair of Council and Professor Follett was due to take on the role early in 2023.
- 2.9. The Provost thanked Professor Mark Goodwin, the outgoing DVC Global Engagement, who was retiring, for his very significant service to the University.
- 2.10. **ACTION: A further update into the implementation of the recommendations of the Coroner's Inquest to be brought to a future meeting of Senate.**
- 2.11. **ACTION: A deep dive on Global Partnerships to be held in the new calendar year.**
- 2.12. **ACTION: Jo Hamilton to look into accelerated data sharing and report back to future Senate meeting.**

### **3. Education an PGR Board Reports (SEN/22/54) and (SEN/22/55)**

- 3.1. Senate noted the reports from both the Dean for Taught Students and the Dean for Postgraduate Research.
- 3.2. The Dean of Postgraduate Research highlighted the priorities for the year ahead including, the cost of living crisis and the impact this may have on Postgraduate Research students, and managing the transition to faculties.
- 3.3. Concerns raised about the provision for PhD students to access wellbeing and welfare services were addressed by the Dean for Postgraduate Research who noted that services had recently vastly improved and all PGR students had access to both student and staff services, with a full time advisor based in the Wellbeing team, specifically for postgraduate students.
- 3.4. The Dean for Taught Students highlighted the following points:
- Following the restructure, the former Faculty Office functions had now been moved into Quality and Standards, with an Education Policy unit being formed to provide the support previous provided by the Faculty Office.
  - The new Associate Dean, who is the new Director of the Centre for Apprenticeships, and their work to support all academics across degree apprenticeships providing guidance and frameworks.
  - Vrinda Nayak's work on Transformative Education and inclusive educational practice.
  - Olly Young, Associate Dean who is pushing forward the agenda on Assessment Reimagined and student experience.

- Ongoing activity and the work around mitigation, late penalties and timely feedback, the work going into supporting exams and assessment platforms, and the needs and challenges of education-facing staff in terms of data and data analysis.
- Assessment and feedback action planning.

#### **4. Student President Updates (SEN/22/56 & SEN/22/57)**

4.1. The Exeter President of the Falmouth and Exeter Students' Union drew attention to the following points in her report:

- Removed manifestos in an attempt to be more in line with what students want from their presidents.
- Headline priorities were wellbeing support, campaigning, cost of living.

4.2. The President of the Students' Guild drew attention to the following points in her report:

- Working closely with The Guild.
- Rebuilding community following the Covid years.
- Cost of living crisis is a top priority which was taking a cohesive approach with the Guild.
- Local solutions to local problems, including the accommodation crisis.
- Strengthening the Cornwall campus identity via Exeter Connect.
- Improvements in academic student support.
- The work undertaken by Lauren and Kira and their collective successes.
- Truro students living in Penryn were petitioning for academic tutoring to be moved to Penryn.

#### **5. TEF Update**

5.1. The DVC Education and Student Experience provided a verbal update and brief presentation on the TEF submission. The guidance was published on 7 October 2022 with the deadline for submission being 24 January 2023.

5.2. Outcomes will be Gold, Silver and Bronze and will include a 'Requires Improvement' award.

5.3. There were two pillars of assessment: a Student Experience rating and a Student Outcomes rating: □ Student Experience explores academic experience and assessment, resources, support and student engagement.

- Student Outcomes explores positive outcomes and educational gains.
- Each was assessed on a series of metrics;
  - Student Experience metrics were derived from NSS for the last four years and
  - Student Outcomes were derived from continuation data from first to second year, completion data and progression into graduate level employment within fifteen months of completion of their award.

5.4. The key part of the submission is the 25 page provider submission making the case for excellence, which was read alongside the indicators to obtain an evaluation.

5.5. There was also potential for a student submission which was led by the Students' Guild and submitted alongside the University submission.

- 5.6. The University was showing a strong performance, but the provider submission would have state the case for an outstanding performance. An opportunity to provide evidence, contextual information, ambitions and growth, the work around driving down awarding gaps and the focus on feedback and assessment.
- 5.7. The process of bringing sections together had been divided into five areas, with professional services leads and academics from the educational leadership team appointed to lead in these areas, but the teams would welcome any input from colleagues with expertise or specialist knowledge in these areas.

## **6. Student Survey Results (NSS, PTES, PRES) (SEN/22/58A-C)**

- 6.1. The DVC Education and Student Experience and the Dean of Postgraduate Research presented the reports (SEN/22/58A-C) to Senate.
- 6.2. The DVC Education gave thanks and congratulations to Senate members for the growth and progress made with the biggest improvements in assessment and feedback within the NSS.
- 6.3. The team had been looking at what could be put in place to ensure further improvements, to enable colleagues to do a really good job and ensure that students understand the assessment and feedback processes.
- 6.4. A steering group was formed to be responsive to emerging feedback issues, looking at providing advice and guidance and capitalizing on expertise across the institution, to engage students in the process and made some statements of commitment to show that the University recognised that these issues were not solved by one person alone.
- 6.5. Academic support was being addressed holistically and the team were learning from experience at other institutions.
- 6.6. The Student Experience Partnership Board was developed and had brought about immediate results with the introduction of a £2 meal deal and the Cornwall to Exeter bus service.
- 6.7. The Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) report while shorter and with lower response rates, shared many of its themes with the NSS report and therefore work would focus on those areas to improve issues for both cohorts.
- 6.8. The Dean of Postgraduate Research highlighted that the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) survey had a strong response rate with some robust and consistent data. Overall, feedback was strong and Covid support was a high scorer but research culture was an area of focus for the future.
- 6.9. The Dean noted that paragraph 2.5.2 in the report was misleading, however the question regarding stress had been changed and positive response was higher than hoped but trends would emerge after a few years.
- 6.10. The Dean for Taught Students added that regular communications would be published under the title 'Assessment Matters' to both highlight the excellent practice that already exists across the University,



and to create a forum to share good practice. If any Senate members would like to contribute or incorporate suggestions, please contact Professor Rob Freathy.

## **7. Degree Outcomes:**

### **- Supplemental Report to the Degree Outcomes Statement 2022 (SEN/22/59) - The Undergraduate Degree Classification Summary Report, with Overview, Development and Next Steps (SEN/22/60)**

7.1. The DVC Education and Dean for Taught Students took Senate through the reports along with Catherine Taylor, Senior Quality and Standards Advisor, Quality and Standards present to answer questions. The following headlines were noted:

- There were notable trends: UUK and various ministers of state looking to address unexplained grade inflation and driving down awarding gaps across the wider sector.
- The team would be looking at these concerns from an Exeter perspective while addressing our students concerns around assessment and feedback.
- There were no simple solutions but progress was being made via monitoring undertaken by the Degree Outcome Steering Group at institutional level, but also the close scrutiny at department and discipline level.
- There was significant growth in the previous two years of first class honours, with the first drop of 3% in 2022, reflecting the change in assessment practice from open book, online examinations to closed book, in person examinations.
- First class awarding patterns vary significantly between faculties.

#### **Closed Minute - Confidential**

- The awarding gap between those who had disclosed a disability and those who had not, had closed. Conversely the gap between black students and white students remains very high, highlighting the need to understand better the intersection between ethnicity and awarding gaps.

7.2. Senate were asked:

- To review the report and confirm to Council that it gave assurance of academic standards. Senate confirmed to Council that the report had assurance of academic standards.

7.3. Senate discussed the reports, noting:

- The value of the insights of long-standing members of staff and their views on improving standards.

## **8. Doctoral College Strategy 2030 Plan (SEN/22/61)**

8.1. The DVC Research and the Dean for Postgraduate Research provided an overview of the plan, highlighting that following the PRES and the CEDARS (Culture, Employment, Development and Academic Research Survey) responses had largely concluded that the University was doing well.

8.2. Feedback highlights issues around limited PGR space, research culture and mental health support. The last review took place in 2018 but with the new deal for PGRs from UKRI, as signatories for the

Research and Development Concordat and to ensure the Doctoral College is able to encourage the diversification of recruitment to achieve financial stability, the review was timely.

8.3. The DVC Research particularly noted sections 2.1.2 which defined the scope and the ambit, and 2.13 which was the deliverables. He highlighted the three phases of the review:

- phase one focused on strategy and objectives,
- phase two looked at mapping into new academic structures, and any changes would need to come through Senate for approval and
- phase three would deal with alignment of Professional Services with the Doctoral College. The review was due to conclude early to mid-summer 2023 with the aim of implementing the recommendations in the 23-24 academic year.

8.4. Direct engagement will be sought from Senate members during the review.

8.5. Following a question from a member of Senate regarding the changing face of PGR, the DVC Research agreed that there would likely be substantial changes that would need to be accommodated within the review. There would be opportunities to explore new markets and seek industrial support for studentships which would form part of the strategy in terms of sustainability.

#### **9. Senate Review Implementation Group Update and Halpin Review of Progress - Roles and Responsibilities of Senate Members (SEN/22/63)**

9.1. The DVC Research updated Senate on the progress of the Senate Review Implementation Group which was acting on the recommendations provided by the Halpin Partnership external review of Senate in 2021. The group had looked at all 5 of the priority recommendations, 14 recommendations and 18 suggestions and had added some additional suggestions, all of which were to be acted on in order to improve the way in which Senate engages with its academic communities, with Council and with the various constituents that it represents.

9.2. The Roles and Responsibilities of Senate Members was listed as the first priority recommendation on the report. This was included in the induction of new Senate members in October, which was also a priority recommendation in the review.

9.3. The document sets out the Senate member role description and how that fits into the broader governance arrangements in terms of the committee structure, it also sets out ten key responsibilities and a number of principal priorities and contributions.

9.4. This document will published on the Senate website following approval.

9.5. Senate **APPROVED** the paper.

#### **10. Academic Freedom Agreement (SEN/22/64)**

10.1. The Chair of the Academic Freedom Task and Finish Group, Professor Gareth Stansfield, updated Senate on the Group's work.

10.2. The agreement benefitted from several members of the group with engagement from internal experts from the University to discuss EDI, free speech and internationalisation.

10.3. Senate discussed the agreement noting:

- The agreement had been approved by UEB and UCU and was now presented to Senate for approval.
- The 2010 Equalities Act was discussed at length by the task and finish group to ensure alignment with the agreement, but a Senate member requested clearer indication of the alignment to form part of the external framework section of the document.

10.4. Senate **APPROVED** the paper subject to further Equality Act 2010 work.

**11. Department name change from HASS Penryn to Humanities and Social Sciences, Cornwall (SEN/22/65)**

11.1. The PVC HASS (Professor Gareth Stansfield) informed Senate of the intent to change the name of HASS Penryn, which was established during the faculty restructure, to Humanities and Social Sciences, Cornwall.

11.2. The name change had been approved by the HASS Faculty Executive Board and SRG and is brought to Senate for approval.

11.3. Senate **APPROVED** the name change.

**12. Items brought forward from part II (SEN/22/66)**

12.1. Student Cases Annual Report (SEN/22/67) was APPROVED.

12.2. Honorary Graduate Nominations (SEN/22/68) was APPROVED.

12.2.1 A Senate member queried the process for selecting the shortlist of nominees when the work of some nominees could be viewed as directly contradictory to the values of the University. The Senator raised concerns about a number of nominees they believed to have been chosen due to their celebrity status, over longlist nominees who had been successful out of the limelight. They highlighted the sense of erasure of those who do important work.

12.2.2 The Provost noted the dissatisfaction of the Senate member and would take it to the shortlisting group for the nominations for the next academic year.

12.3. Terms of Reference and Membership for Education Board (SEN/22/75) was APPROVED.

12.4. Terms of Reference and Membership for Postgraduate Research Board (SEN/22/77) was APPROVED.

12.5. Academic Promotions Report (SEN/22/78) was APPROVED.

12.6. **ACTION: The Provost to take feedback of the processes of shortlisting Honorary Graduands to the shortlisting group.**

**13. Chair's Closing Remarks**

13.1. The Registrar noted the suggestion of the addition of a Council item on future Senate agendas to improve understanding of the work of Council.

13.2. The Provost thanked Senators for joining the meeting and engaging.

**Dates of meetings for 2022/23**

8<sup>th</sup> March 2023

17<sup>th</sup> May 2023 – Joint Council and Senate meeting

21<sup>st</sup> June 2023

## **Part II Papers**

Annual Student Cases Report **(SEN/22/67)**

Degree Apprenticeships Update **(SEN/22/68)**

Honorary Graduate Nominations **(SEN/22/69)**

Annual Report of Senate **(SEN/22/70)**

Council: Minutes of the May and October 2022 meetings **(SEN/22/72 & 73)**

Education Board: Minutes of the October 2022 meeting **(SEN/22/74)**

Education Board: Terms of Reference and Membership **(SEN/22/75)**

Postgraduate Research Board: Minutes of the October 2022 meeting **(SEN/22/76)**

Postgraduate Research Board: Terms of Reference and Membership **(SEN/22/77)**

Academic Promotions Report **(STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL) (SEN/22/78)**

Senate Appeals Report **(STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL) (SEN/22/62)**

Awards of Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates and Conferment of Degrees in Absentia: The award lists, approved by the Vice-Chancellor on behalf of Senate, since the last meeting may be inspected by contacting Student Records.