

Heriot-Watt University

THE SENATE

Minutes: 06 September 2023

In the Chair: Professor Richard A Williams, Principal and Vice-Chancellor

Present:	<p>Dr Çakıl Agnew Professor Mushtak Al-Atabi Dr Nasir Al Lagtah Dr Ross Alexander Dr Yousef Al-Gumaei Professor Mark Biggs Dr Linda Buchan* Ms Joleen Chong Si Cheng* Professor Malcolm Chrisp Mr Jose Condé Dr Demitrios Cotsovos Professor Paul Dalgarno Professor Dugald Duncan Dr Neamat El Gayar Dr David Ellis Dr Erkal Ersoy* Professor Anna Fenge Dr Fadi Ghaith Professor Igor Guz* Dr Amos Haniff Professor Ted Henry Dr Kirin Hilliar* Dr Timothy Johnson Professor Helinor Johnston Dr Britta Kalkreuter* Dr Craig Kennedy Mr Ryan Koh* Professor Reza Kouhy Professor Angus Laing Mr Andrew Lee Dr Helen Lewis Dr Min-Hsiu Liao* Professor Sara Lombardo Ms Jasmine Low Dr Alex MacLaren</p>	<p>Dr Bill MacPherson Professor Julian Malins Professor Mercedes Maroto-Valer Dr Alistair McConnell* Professor Martin McCoustra Dr Richard McCracken* Professor Dame Heather McGregor Dr Ruaraidh Mcintosh Dr Yvonne McLaren-Hankin Professor Steve McLaughlin* Mr Lee Miles Dr Shameel Muhammed* Professor Gillian Murray Dr Katriona Myhill Dr Hendrik Nahler Dr Yasemin Nielsen Dr Rabee Rustum Dr Chris Rutherford Dr Christian Saemann* Professor Mathini Sellathurai Dr Harpreet Seth* Ms Devanshi Sharma* Mr Nader Shouly Ms Celia Silva* Ms Andrea Sneddon Dr Kathrin Stark Dr Katerina Strani Dr Monica Tamariz Dr George Vasdravellis Dr Kathryn Waite Professor Fiona Waldron Dr Tze Chuen Yap Dr Humphrey Yiu* Professor Hind Zantout</p>
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In attendance:	<p>Mr Nathan Bircham Professor Martha Caddell Mr Iain Dods Professor Fiona Grant Mr Mark Hamid (Clerk)</p>	<p>Dr Maggie King Ms Ruth Moir Ms Susan Orr Mr Marc Quinn Ms Kirsty Scanlan</p>
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Apologies:	<p>Professor Lehel Banjai Dr Anne Bernassau Ms Sue Collier Professor Annie Hill Ms Samantha Kane</p>	<p>Dr Lucy Robertson Mr Scott Anderson Ms Georgia Noble Mr Connel Greenhorn</p>
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* denotes partial attendance

MINUTE REF		ACTION BY	ACTION DATE
M23/46	CHAIR'S WELCOME & NOTE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE		
	<p>The Principal and Vice-Chancellor welcomed all participants to the meeting, especially those new members of the Senate who were attending for the first time.</p> <p>The apologies for absence were noted.</p>		
M23/47	MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 15 JUNE 2023		
	<p>The Senate received and approved as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2023.</p>		
M23/48	MATTERS ARISING & ACTION LOG		
	<p>There were no matters arising from the minutes or actions outstanding to comprise an action log.</p>		
M23/49	REPORT OF THE JOINT MEETING OF COURT AND SENATE HELD ON 10 MAY 2023		
	<p>The Senate received a report from the Vice-Principal summarising the feedback which had been received from the joint meeting of the Senate with the Court in the preceding semester. He noted that the views expressed supported the importance of sport, in its various forms, to the University community and that there was a manifest need for the opportunities and facilities offered to be inclusive for all. A key theme highlighted the challenges of providing provision on and off campus, and the desire, within financial constraints, to provide opportunities to a similar level globally.</p> <p>The Senate noted the update.</p>		
M23/50	PRIORITIES FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2023/24 INCORPORATING PRINCIPAL'S REPORT		
	<p>The Senate received a series of presentations by the chairs of the Senate's Committees setting out priorities for the academic year and framed by an introduction from the Principal and Vice-Chancellor.</p> <p>The Principal also noted his report on recent developments within the University and higher education more generally, it having been circulated in advance. He noted an aspiration that the Senate should meet in person at least once during the academic year.</p> <p>In his introduction, the Principal noted the challenging times being faced by the University and the wider sector, particularly in terms of international recruitment. He opined that clarity of purpose would allow the University to face these challenges. He also highlighted anticipated funding challenges which would affect the academic work which the Senate was tasked to lead on, and that the Global College was intended to secure international recruitment and its funding streams.</p> <p>He noted that the University was now half-way through its strategy 2025 and that its QS rankings had exceeded expectations; the University had also managed to achieve success in recent surveys including being ranked 1st in Scotland and 2nd in the UK for Postgraduate Positive Outcomes.</p>		

M23/51 PRIORITIES FOR THE UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH & INNOVATION

Professor Steve McLaughlin, Deputy Principal (Research & Impact) presented the year's priorities for the University Committee for Research & Innovation (UCRI) as its chair.

M23/52 PRIORITIES FOR THE UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOR LEARNING & TEACHING

Professor Malcolm Chrisp, Deputy Principal (Education & Student Life) presented the year's priorities for the University Committee for Learning & Teaching (UCLT) as its chair.

M23/53 PRIORITIES FOR THE UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOR QUALITY & STANDARDS

Professor Fiona Waldron presented the year's priorities for the University Committee for Quality & Standards (UCQS) as its chair, assisted by Dr Maggie King, Head of Academic Quality.

Following the three presentations from the Committee chairs, the Senators divided into breakout sessions of around 6-10 members to discuss two questions posed by the Chair, viz.:

- How can we ensure these priorities can be delivered as part of a global university?
- What are some of the challenging areas and how might we work together to achieve them?

M23/54 FEEDBACK FROM BREAKOUT SESSIONS

The Senate **received** feedback from three rapporteurs from the breakout sessions and agreed that all feedback would be collated and received at the next Senate meeting.

Clerk

October
2023

The rapporteurs selected to feed back to the Senate meeting noted a desire the drive engagement between staff and foster a sense of community, which may have been lost during the pandemic, by bringing colleagues together. It was suggested that, at the Senate level, business should seek to go beyond the reporting of information and that engagement could take place more widely through town hall meetings and other forums.

The rapporteurs also noted a focus on ensuring that University strategy could be meaningfully implemented at an operational level, together with aspirations to ensure that flexibility in learning and teaching could be achieved, with the option to relax certain requirements to facilitate this.

A desire to promote cross-campus collaboration around research, in order to deliver a good return on capacity which had been invested for research across the University's global footprint and maximise research funding, was also expressed.

M23/55 HERIOT-WATT UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA CONSTITUTION (SEN-23-31)

The Senate **received** and **endorsed** the proposed new constitution for Heriot-Watt University Malaysia for onward approval by the Court and Malaysia Board.

During the discussion of the proposed constitution, it was noted that the document used a diversity of terms (notably for the Primary Academic Units) and suggested that these should be standardised in order to provide consistency with the University's other governing documents.

M23/56 ANNUAL SFC REPORT ON QUALITY (SEN-23-32)

The Senate **received** and **endorsed** the final draft of the HWU Annual Institutional Quality Report 2022/23 which had been circulated to Senators in advance.

M23/57 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of other business.

M23/58 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 18 October 2023
Thursday 30 November 2023
Thursday 08 February 2024
Wednesday 24 April 2024
Thursday 13 June 2024
Wednesday 08 May 2024: Joint Meeting of Court & Senate

Heriot-Watt University

THE SENATE

Minutes: 18 October 2023

In the Chair: Professor Richard A Williams, Principal and Vice-Chancellor

Present:	Dr Nasir Al Lagtah Mr Scott Anderson Professor Lehel Banjai Professor Mark Biggs* Dr Linda Buchan Dr Florence Chiao Mei Choong* Professor Malcolm Chrisp Mr Jose Condé Dr Demitrios Cotsovos* Professor Paul Dalgarno* Professor Dugald Duncan Dr Neamat El Gayar* Dr David Ellis Dr Erkal Ersoy Professor Anna Fenge* Mr Connel Greenhorn Professor Annie Hill Dr Kirin Hilliar Dr Timothy Johnson Professor Helinor Johnston Dr Craig Kennedy Mr Ryan Koh Professor Angus Laing Dr Helen Lewis* Ms Jasmine Low* Dr Alex MacLaren* Dr Bill MacPherson	Professor Julian Malins Professor Martin McCoustra Professor Dame Heather McGregor* Dr Yvonne McLaren-Hankin Professor Steve McLaughlin Dr Shameel Muhammed Professor Gillian Murray Dr Katriona Myhill Dr Hendrik Nahler Dr Yasemin Nielsen Mr Larry O'Brien Ms Anaswara Pradeep Dr Rabee Rustum Dr Chris Rutherford Dr Christian Saemann Professor Mathini Sellathurai Dr Harpreet Seth Ms Devanshi Sharma* Mr Nader Shouly* Ms Andrea Sneddon Dr Kathrin Stark Dr Monica Tamariz Dr Kathryn Waite Professor Fiona Waldron Dr Euan Winton Dr Humphrey Yiu Professor Hind Zantout
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In attendance:	Professor Martha Caddell Ms Aisling Creedon* Mr Mark Hamid (Clerk)	Ms Samantha Kane Dr Maggie King Ms Ruth Moir
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Apologies:	Dr Çakil Agnew Professor Mushtak Al-Atabi Dr Anne Bernassau Mr Andrew Lee Dr Min-Hsiu Liao Professor Mercedes Maroto-Valer Dr Alistair McConnell	Dr Ruaraidh McIntosh Mr Lee Miles Ms Georgia Noble Professor Joanne Porter Dr Katerina Strani Dr Tze Chuen Yap
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* denotes partial attendance

MINUTE REF**ACTION BY****ACTION DATE****M23/59****CHAIR'S WELCOME & NOTE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The Principal and Vice-Chancellor welcomed all participants to the meeting. The apologies for absence were noted.

The Chair invited the University Secretary to update the Senate on the forthcoming review of the effectiveness of Court and Senate, to be undertaken by Advance HE. It was noted that Professor Fiona Waldron would serve on the review steering group as a representative of the Senate's members, and that the Senate would continue to receive further updates.

The Chair noted that nominations for the positions of Dean of the University (Science and Engineering) and Dean of the University (pan-University constituency) would be open until Monday 06 November, and that all Senators were asked to encouraged suitable staff to nominate for these roles.

In response to a question about the use of the Teams chat function, it was noted that the request that Senators refrain from using it to discuss matters of substance was based on best practice, both to focus the deliberations of the Senate on a single discussion and also to avoid the creation of a disclosable record under freedom of information legislation.

M23/60 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 06 SEPTEMBER 2023

The Senate **received** and **approved** as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 06 September 2023.

M23/61 MATTERS ARISING & ACTION LOG

There were no matters arising. The Senate reviewed the Action Log and noted that the forward plan of Senate business would be circulated following the meeting.

M23/62 REPORT FROM THE PRINCIPAL & VICE-CHANCELLOR (SEN-23-35)

The Senate **received** a report from the Principal, providing a summary of the University's progress and achievements, according to key strategic themes, as well as details of other developments in the wider Higher Education sector.

The Principal highlighted the need to focus the University's academic priorities around the stabilisation and transformation of the university as it undertook the second part of Strategy 2025. He noted the pressures of rising costs and the continued fall in the percentage of income which is received from central government, which would necessitate further development of international and rUK markets. He noted the focusses of the Student Partnership on student isolation, cost of living pressures and a desire to increase global connectivity.

In order to address the feedback received the Principal delivered [a presentation](#) which built on the feedback which had been gathered from the launch meeting of the Senate held on 06 September. The report, which identified seven themes and proposed six actions, was discussed by the Senate.

Commenting on the report, Senators highlighted issues with the complexity of systems, the effectiveness of marketing strategies to engage with and recruit prospective students, and the importance of improvement to staff and student experiences taking place in parallel.

The Senate **noted** the report.

M23/63 UPDATE ON STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 23-24

The Senate received [a presentation](#) by the Deputy Principal (Education & Student Life) and Professor Paul Dalgarno setting out developments in the University Committee for Learning & Teaching's priorities for the academic year, and from Dr Maggie King relating to developments in the Quality Enhancement and

Standards Review (QESR). Professor Dalgarno particularly focussed on the Transforming Assessment project, which he was leading, and the proposal being made to allow staff and schools to adopt the most effect methods for assessment for their specific courses.

Commenting on the report, Senators affirmed the importance of working with course leads to ensure that new approaches were developed in partnership, and the challenges of working with students who may not be familiar with certain forms of assessment. It was agreed that all staff should work with the Learning & Teaching Academy and relevant Directors of Learning and Teaching to achieve positive outcomes.

Dr King outlines the Phase 1 arrangements for QESR including the key milestones, noting the focus on assurance.

The Senate received [a presentation](#) by Professor Fiona Waldron setting out developments in the University Committee for Quality & Standard's priorities for the academic year. Professor Waldron noted that the committee continued to operate according to its five-year plan for monitoring and review.

M23/64 UPDATE ON RESEARCH & INNOVATION PRIORITIES INCLUDING THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

The Senate received [a presentation](#) by the Deputy Principal (Research & Impact) and the Deputy Principal (Business & Enterprise) setting out developments in the University Committee for Research and Innovation's priorities for the academic year and focussing on the development of the Graduate School.

The Deputy Principal (Research & Impact) highlighted the links between his updates and the delivery of Strategy 2025, noting the aspiration to increase research funding to £65m annually, as well is proposals to develop the innovation district and GRIs.

He noted the [proposed timeline](#) for the Graduate School, which would have a soft launch in January 2024 with a skills and development offering, while work was ongoing to develop a suitable location for the school and recruit staff.

Commenting on the update, the Principal praised the transition from an approach focussing on individual disciplines to one which could realise collective potential.

M23/65 REGULATION B1: SPORTS UNION (SEN-23-37)

The Senate **received** and **approved** a paper proposing to rescind Regulation B1: Sports Union following the completion of a project to restructure the governance of the Sports Union which had been approved by the Court at its most recent meeting.

M23/66 SENATE COMMITTEE FOR INTERIM BUSINESS & EFFECTIVENESS: REPORT OF MEETING OF 28 SEPTEMBER 2023 (SEN-23-38)

The Senate **received** and **noted** the report of business conducted by the Committee since its previous report to Senate.

**M23/67 UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOR LEARNING & TEACHING:
REPORT OF MEETINGS HELD ON 07 JUNE 2023 AND 13
SEPTEMBER 2023 (SEN-23-39)**

The Senate **received** and **noted** the report of business conducted by the Committee since its previous report to Senate.

**M23/68 UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH & INNOVATION:
REPORT OF MEETING HELD ON 29 MAY 2023 (SEN-23-40)**

The Senate **received** and **noted** the report of business conducted by the Committee since its previous report to Senate.

M23/69 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no further items of business.

M23/70 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Thursday 30 November 2023
Thursday 08 February 2024
Wednesday 24 April 2024
Wednesday 08 May 2024 (Joint Meeting with the Court)
Thursday 13 June 2024

Heriot-Watt University

THE SENATE**Minutes: 30 November 2023**

In the Chair: Professor Mark Biggs, Vice-Principal and Provost

Present:	Dr Çakıl Agnew *	Professor Mercedes Maroto-Valer *
	Professor Mushtak Al-Atabi	Dr Alistair McConnell
	Dr Nasir Al Lagtah	Professor Martin McCoustra
	Dr Ross Alexander *	Dr Yvonne McLaren-Hankin
	Dr Yousef Al-Guamei	Professor Steve McLaughlin *
	Mr Scott Anderson *	Professor Basheer Muhammed
	Dr Florence Chiao Mei Choong	Professor Gillian Murray
	Mr Jose Condé *	Dr Katriona Myhill
	Professor Paul Dalgarno	Dr Hendrik Nahler
	Professor Dugald Duncan	Dr Yasemin Nielsen *
	Dr Neamat El Gayar	Ms Georgia Noble
	Dr David Ellis	Mr Larry O'Brien
	Dr Erkal Ersoy	Professor Joanne Porter *
	Dr Fadi Ghaith	Dr Lucy Robertson *
	Mr Connel Greenhorn	Dr Rabee Rustum
	Dr Amos Haniff	Dr Chris Rutherford *
	Professor Annie Hill	Dr Christian Saemann *
	Dr Kirin Hilliar *	Professor Mathini Sellathurai
	Professor Helinor Johnston	Ms Andrea Sneddon
	Dr Britta Kalkreuter	Dr Kathrin Stark
	Dr Craig Kennedy	Dr Katerina Strani
	Mr Ryan Koh	Dr Monica Tamariz
	Professor Angus Laing *	Dr Kathryn Waite
	Mr Andrew Lee *	Professor Fiona Waldron
	Dr Helen Lewis	Dr Marion Winters *
	Dr Min-Hsiu Liao	Dr Euan Winton
	Professor Sara Lombardo	Dr Tze Chuen Yap
	Dr Alex MacLaren *	Dr Humphrey Yiu *
	Dr Bill MacPherson	Professor Hind Zantout
	Professor Julian Malins	

In attendance:	Ms Carolyn Brock	Dr Maggie King
	Professor Martha Caddell	Mr David Langley
	Mr Richard Claughton	Mr Fraser Muir
	Ms Sue Collier	Professor Jemina Napier
	Mr Mark Hamid (Clerk)	Ms Kirsty Scanlan

Apologies:	Professor Lehel Banjai	Ms Samantha Kane
	Dr Anne Bernassau	Ms Jasmine Low
	Dr Linda Buchan	Ms Ruth Moir
	Professor Malcolm Chrisp	Dr Shameel Muhammed
	Professor Anna Fenge	Professor Richard Williams
	Professor Igor Guz	

* denotes partial attendance

MINUTE REF

ACTION BY

ACTION DATE

M23/71**CHAIR'S WELCOME & NOTE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The Vice-Principal and Provost welcomed all participants to the meeting. He noted that he was presiding over the meeting in the absence of the Principal and Vice-Chancellor, who was receiving His Majesty King Charles III at the University's Dubai campus, together with the University Secretary and other colleagues, as the King had graciously agreed to open the University's Dubai Campus

and visit the University's climate hub as part of his visit to the COP 28 conference. These and other apologies for absence were noted.

The Chair also welcomed Mr David Langley to the meeting in his capacity as an observer from AdvanceHE, the organisation conducting the independent five-year review of the effectiveness of the Court and the Senate.

M23/72 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 18 OCTOBER 2023

The Senate **received** and **approved** as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2023, subject to minor adjustments.

M23/73 MATTERS ARISING & ACTION LOG

There were no matters arising or outstanding actions to review. The Chair noted that the inputs from Senators at the first Senate meeting of the academic year have been used to inform the latest AP2.0 planning round work and that the input from Senators into that process was significant and appreciated.

M23/74 REPORT FROM THE PRINCIPAL & VICE-CHANCELLOR (SEN-23-41)

The Senate **received** a report from the Principal, presented by the Chair, providing a summary of the University's progress and achievements, according to key strategic themes, as well as details of other developments in the wider Higher Education sector.

The Chair highlighted the success which academic staff had achieved, including the number of recent fellowships which had been awarded by the Higher Education Academy. He also noted the King's visit to the Dubai campus, which was an appropriate recognition of the work the University is doing to promote sustainability.

The drop in misconduct cases was also highlighted and the Chair particularly noted and thanked colleagues in the Conduct team and others for the work that had been done to reduce the volume of cases which had increased following the pandemic.

The Chair noted the higher level of engagement which had been recorded for the staff survey and that an item would be brought to the Senate in due course for discussion under the Flourishing Communities theme. He noted that the University Executive had requested that the Global Director of Human Resources review the PDR functionality with ERP to address persistent issues with the platform.

It was also noted that international student recruitment remained key to the University's continued sustainability and that, while substantial increases had been achieved across the global campuses, the recruitment of rUK students remained challenging; in response to a question from a Senator about the impact of removing the '4 years for the price of 3' offer on rUK recruitment, the Chair highlighted the research that had been done prior to making the decision to this removal. This research included hearing from existing rUK students and applicants who did not take up their offer from us that this was not a factor in their decision. It is also noted that others in the Scottish sector have also abandoned this abatement. The issue at present is more about cost of living..

The Chair noted the Senate's thanks to Dr Amos Haniff for his six years of service as a Dean of the University and for his efforts as Chair of the University Discipline Committee.

The Senate **noted** the report.

Item 3.3 was taken at this time.

M23/75 REPORT ON ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS [Paper: SEN-23-45]

The Senate received a paper, presented by the Global Director of Human Resources, reporting recent academic appointments and promotions which had been made by the University.

Highlighting the report's key themes, the Chair highlighted the volume of posts which had been filled, and the work which had been done to ensure diversity among the appointees. He encouraged all staff, regardless of gender, to engage with initiatives to promote gender balance, particularly within the research space.

Commenting on the report, Senators made a number of observations about the data reporting formats and it was agreed that the recruitment team would address these for future iterations, which are required to be presented to the Senate twice a year. Concerns were also noted about casualisation, which the Chair affirmed that the University had long been working hard to reduce through the work of the Vacancy Management Group he chaired and other actions.

RC

June 2024

The Senate **noted** the paper.

M23/76 REF AND THE RESEARCH & INNOVATION CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

The Senate received a presentation by the Deputy Principal (Research & Impact) on REF and the Research and Innovation Culture and Environment; during the presentation Senators were asked to engage with the Mentimeter platform to provide feedback to inform the development of these themes.

Commenting on the presentation, one Senator asked about the arrangements for external monitoring of the process; the Deputy Principal advised that, while there was no consensus regarding appropriate metrics, the REF was a more quantitative approach but there was also a space for qualitative assessment too as part of a "basket of measures" approach.

It was also noted that there was a diversity of cultures across Schools and the presenters agreed to engage with this going forward.

The Senate **noted** the report.

Item 2.1 was taken at this time.

M23/77 GLOBAL ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES & SCHOOL LEADERSHIP (SEN-23-42)

The Senate **received** a paper, presented by the Chair, seeking engagement on proposals to reform the Global Academic Management Structures and School Leadership arrangements. The Chair highlighted that an analysis had been undertaken of the

diversity of approaches within the Schools and a standardised approach had been prepared to be launched in the new year. A key focus was to offer a common leadership development approach.

The Head of Academic Quality, who had been supporting the project, noted that the University had been praised for its approach in previous QAA reviews and that the intention was to build on the existing arrangements.

Commenting on the report, Senators sought additional clarity in certain areas, notably on arrangements for line management and the availability of resource to recruit supporting staff. It was also noted that the size of some Schools would create challenges because of the limited pool of staff who could be appointed to fill all of the required roles and the proportionality higher cumulative workload; role-sharing could support this, but this will also highlight the importance of making course and programme portfolios more efficient. It was also noted that collaboration between campus leads was currently working effectively in some Schools so there could be merit in incorporating that model into the new approach.

The Senate **noted** the report.

M23/78 STUDENT EXPERIENCE ACTIONS

The Senate **received** and **noted** a presentation from the Head of Academic Quality on work to implement the twenty-three student experience improvement actions. It was agreed that this topic should be considered for further discussion at a subsequent Senate meeting.

Consideration of Item 3.1 was deferred for consideration until later in the meeting and Item 3.2 was withdrawn.

M23/79 APPOINTMENT OF DEANS OF THE UNIVERSITY (SEN-23-44)

The Senate **received** a paper proposing to appoint Dr Alistair McConnell as Dean of the University (Science & Engineering) and Dr Daniel Hale as Dean of the University (pan-University constituency).

Following a discussion in which several Senators raised concerns about the procedure used to break a tie in one of the elections and the eligibility of certain staff to participate in the polling process, the Chair withdrew the paper to allow the matter to be considered at a later date following appropriate investigation of the issues raised.

Item 5.1 was taken at this time.

M23/80 EDINBURGH GRADUATION CEREMONIES – DECEMBER 2023 (SEN-23-50)

The Senate **received** and **approved** a paper proposing to deputise Professor Mushtak Al-Atabi and Professor Steve McLaughlin to preside at forthcoming graduation ceremonies due to the unforeseen absence of the Vice-Principal and Provost from the University to meet the President of Kazakhstan in Aktobe, Kazakhstan.

Item 3.1 was taken at this time. Item 3.5 was deferred for consideration at the close of the meeting.

M23/81 UNIVERSITY DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT (SEN-23-43)

The Senate **received** and **noted** the report of the Committee's business in the preceding year.

M23/82 SENATE COMMITTEE FOR INTERIM BUSINESS & EFFECTIVENESS: REPORT OF MEETINGS HELD ON 13 NOVEMBER 2023 (SEN-23-46)

The Senate **received** and **noted** the report of business conducted by the Committee since its previous report to Senate.

M23/83 UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOR LEARNING & TEACHING: REPORT OF MEETINGS HELD ON 13 SEPTEMBER & 16 OCTOBER 2023 (SEN-23-47)

The Senate **received** and **noted** the report of business conducted by the Committee since its previous report to Senate.

M23/84 UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH & INNOVATION: REPORT OF MEETINGS HELD ON 11 SEPTEMBER & 06 NOVEMBER 2023 (SEN-23-48)

The Senate **received** and **noted** the report of business conducted by the Committee since its previous report to Senate.

M23/85 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Global Director of Governance & Legal Services was invited to give an update on the five-yearly external review of the effectiveness of the Court & Senate (Item 3.5) and encouraged all Senators to take part in the survey which was being conducted to support that process.

M23/86 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Thursday 08 February 2024
Wednesday 24 April 2024
Wednesday 08 May 2024 (Joint Meeting with the Court)
Thursday 13 June 2024

Heriot-Watt University

THE SENATE

Minutes: 08 February 2024

In the Chair: Professor Richard A Williams, Principal and Vice-Chancellor

Present:	<p>Dr Çakıl Agnew Professor Mushtak Al-Atabi * Dr Nasir Al Lagtah Professor Lehel Banjai Professor Basheer Muhammed Professor Mark Biggs Dr Linda Buchan Professor Malcolm Chrisp Mr Jose Condé * Dr Demitrios Cotsovovs Ms Josephine Jo * Ms Anaswara Pradeep Professor Paul Dalgarno Professor Dugald Duncan Dr Neamat El Gayar Dr David Ellis * Dr Erkal Ersoy Professor Anna Fenge Dr Fadi Ghaith * Professor Igor Guz Professor Annie Hill Dr Kirin Hilliar * Professor Helinor Johnston * Dr Britta Kalkreuter Dr Craig Kennedy Dr Helen Lewis * Professor Sara Lombardo Dr Alex MacLaren * Dr Bill MacPherson *</p>	<p>Professor Julian Malins Dr Alistair McConnell Professor Martin McCoustra Dr Richard McCracken Professor Dame Heather McGregor * Dr Ruaraidh Mcintosh Dr Yvonne McLaren-Hankin Professor Steve McLaughlin Professor Gillian Murray Dr Katriona Myhill * Dr Yasemin Nielsen Mr Larry O'Brien Mr Ryan Koh Dr Rabee Rustum Dr Christian Saemann Ms Devanshi Sharma * Mr Nader Shouly * Ms Andrea Sneddon Dr Kathrin Stark Dr Katerina Strani Mr Scott Anderson Ms Georgia Noble Mr Connel Greenhorn Dr Monica Tamariz Dr Kathryn Waite Professor Fiona Waldron Dr Marion Winters * Dr Humphrey Yiu</p>
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In attendance:	<p>Professor Martha Caddell Mr Zhi Kang Chua Professor Peter Cummings Mr Mark Hamid (Clerk) Professor Michel Kaiser Ms Samantha Kane Professor Maiwenn Kersaudy-Kerhoas Dr Maggie King</p>	<p>Professor Oliver Lemon Ms Ruth Moir Mr Fraser Muir Professor Edward Owens Professor Yvan Petillot Ms Kirsty Scanlan Professor Robert Thomson</p>
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Apologies:	<p>Dr Ross Alexander Dr Yousef Al-Guamei Dr Anne Bernassau Dr Timothy Johnson Professor Angus Laing Mr Andrew Lee Professor Mercedes Maroto-Valer Dr Shameel Muhammed</p>	<p>Dr Hendrik Nahler Professor Joanne Porter Dr Lucy Robertson Dr Chris Rutherford Dr Euan Winton Dr Tze Chuen Yap Professor Hind Zantout</p>
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* denotes partial attendance

MINUTE REF	ACTION BY	ACTION DATE
M24/01		
CHAIR'S WELCOME & NOTE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE		
<p>The Principal and Vice-Chancellor welcomed all participants to the meeting, especially those new members of the Senate who were attending for the first time, or in a new capacity.</p> <p>The apologies for absence were noted.</p>		
M24/02		
MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 30 NOVEMBER 2024		
<p>The Senate received and approved as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2024.</p>		
M24/03		
MATTERS ARISING & ACTION LOG		
<p>There were no matters arising from the minutes or actions outstanding to comprise an action log.</p>		
M24/04		
BUSINESS CONDUCTED BY CORRESPONDENCE (PAPER: SEN-24-01)		
<p>The Senate noted the appointment of Dr Alistair McConnell as Dean of the University (Science & Engineering) which had been approved by the Senate by correspondence in December 2023, and that Dr McConnell's term of office would be from 01 January 2024 to 31 December 2026.</p>		
M24/05		
REPORT FROM THE PRINCIPAL & VICE-CHANCELLOR (SEN-24-02)		
<p>The Senate received a report from the Principal providing a summary of the University's progress and achievements, according to key strategic themes, as well as details of other developments in the wider Higher Education sector.</p> <p>The Principal particularly highlighted colleagues' recent successes in securing nine doctoral training sessions across the University, which would provide an excellent environment for future PhD students, and the AdvanceHE recognition and grants and awards which had been achieved.</p> <p>The University Secretary noted that the external review of the effectiveness of Court and Senate was reaching its conclusion and would be reported to the Senate at its next meeting; she also encouraged Senators to engage with the joint meeting with the Court which would take place on 08 May 2024.</p> <p>The Senate noted the report.</p>		
M24/06		
GLOBAL RESEARCH INSTITUTES		
<p>Prof. Steve McLaughlin (Deputy Principal (Research & Impact)) and Prof. Gill Murray (Deputy Principal (Business & Enterprise)) jointly introduced an information session for Senators on the work of the University's Graduate Research Institutes (GRIs). Senators were offered the opportunity to participate in one of four breakout sessions about different GRIs: the Lyell Centre, Health and Care, INetZ+ and the National Robotarium.</p>		

Following the sessions, the presenters were invited to summarise the key themes from the discussions which had taken place. It was noted that improved understanding across the University was key to realising the potential of the GRIs, which could act as catalysts for research and teaching both within the UK and internationally. The importance of engaging researchers in non-STEM subjects to support their work was highlighted. Engagement of students together with staff was also emphasised as a focus, as well as large pharmaceutical interests within the context of Health and Care. AI, in addition to physical robots, was affirmed to be an element of the work of the National Robotarium which should be highlighted and developed.

Summarising the remarks, Prof. McLaughlin encouraged all Senators to promote engagement with the GRIs to their colleagues and students, which would serve as an important driver to support the communications efforts which would be initiated over the coming months. The Principal underscored their remarks and commended the GRIs to the Senate as excellent global opportunities to build research networks, new academic programmes, and deliver change.

M24/07 STUDENT EXPERIENCE ACTION PLAN AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN ACADEMIC REPRESENTATION

The Senate received an update on the Student Experience Action Plan presented by Professor Malcolm Chrisp, Deputy Principal (Education & Student Life). He noted that the action plan comprised twenty-three actions which had been produced to address four key themes which were intended to address issues around staff and student mood and morale and to enhance the student experience.

The Deputy Principal then introduced an update which was delivered in conjunction with the student members of the Senate and addressed plans to enhance student engagement in academic representation. The Senate noted [a presentation](#) which highlighted the four key challenges which had been identified. It was noted that, while the challenges faced across campuses varied depending on particular circumstances, there was a strong commitment to a global approach.

Commenting on the report, Senators noted the aspiration for further full-time sabbatical officers in Dubai and Malaysia; furthermore it was suggested that the creation of a postgraduate sabbatical officer could resolve issues around recruitment of postgraduate representatives outside of the Student Union's normal May cycle of elections and also foster academic leadership at the early-career stage. Senators also noted that the representation of non-traditional students could be expanded, and that best practice could be examined in other institutions to benchmark the current arrangements at Heriot Watt.

The Senate **noted** the updates.

M24/08 APPOINTMENT OF THE DEAN OF THE UNIVERSITY (PAN-UNIVERSITY CONSTITUENCY) (SEN-24-05)

The University Secretary presented a paper to the Senate proposing a resolution to the appointment of the Dean of the University (pan-University constituency), which had been withdrawn from consideration at the preceding meeting of the Senate.

The University Secretary offered an apology to the Senate for the issues which had been highlighted with the election, and indicated

that, following the endorsement of the SCIBE, it was proposed that the poll of academic staff should be repeated between the two original candidates who had tied in the previous election. She advised Senators that both candidates had agreed to stand again and thanked them for their forbearance as work had been undertaken to agree a resolution.

It was noted that the proposed course of action sought to address the two material issues which had affected the original result, namely that certain staff at global campuses had been disenfranchised due to contractual reasons, and that an electronic drawing of lots had been used to resolve a tie.

It was explained that the Court had amended Ordinance C1 (which stipulates the constituency to be used for the election conducted under Ordinance L1) and that it was proposed that, should a tie occur in the new poll, a digital drawing of lots conducted by the external election provider would be used to break it. The Senate retrospectively endorsed the amendments to Ordinance C1; it was noted that the Ordinances and Regulations Committee would take forward work to consider revisions to the Ordinances in respect of tied votes and these would be presented to the Senate and Court in due course.

The Senate thereafter **approved** the proposal for a new poll to be conducted in February 2024 in the terms set out in the paper.

M24/09 APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIR OF THE UNIVERSITY DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE (SEN-24-06)

The Senate **received** and **approved** a paper appointing Professor Mehdi Nazarinia as Chair of the University Discipline Committee from 01 January 2024 to 31 December 2026.

M24/10 SENATE COMMITTEE FOR INTERIM BUSINESS & EFFECTIVENESS: REPORT OF MEETING ON 24 JANUARY 2024 (SEN-24-07)

The Senate **received** and **noted** the report of business conducted by the Committee since its previous report to Senate.

M24/11 ORDINANCES & REGULATIONS COMMITTEE: REPORT OF MEETING ON 28 NOVEMBER 2023 (SEN-24-08)

The Senate **received** the report of business conducted by the Committee since its previous report to Senate and **approved** the proposed amendments to Regulation A6 set out therein.

One Senator sought clarity on the financial implications which would arise from a student being required to repeat a year. It was recognised that the implications would vary from campus to campus.. This would need to be discussed with the individual students concerned and support would be provided to personal tutors to allow them to address this issue in conversations with students.

It was additionally clarified that it was within the discretion of the examination board to award the outcome at either the first or the second diet if deemed to be the appropriate course of action.

**M24/12 UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOR LEARNING & TEACHING:
REPORT FOLLOWING MEETING HELD ON 17 JANUARY 2024
(SEN-24-09)**

The Senate **received** and **approved** the Annual Complaints Summary Reports for the years 2021-22 and 2022-23.

The Senate **noted** the new Policy for the Use of Recordings for Learning and Teaching Purposes, together with a short presentation about its content and implementation from the Deputy Principal (Education & Student Life). It was noted that the new policy provided clarity for students, academics and course teams and that it had been approved by the Committee following broad consultation with stakeholders across the University.

The Senate **noted** the minutes of the most recent meeting of the Committee.

**M24/13 UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOR QUALITY & STANDARDS:
REPORT FOLLOWING MEETING HELD ON 22 JANUARY 2024
(SEN-24-10)**

The Senate **received** and **noted** the report of business conducted by the Committee since its previous report to Senate. It was noted that the report comprised a summary of the outputs from the meeting and was being presented to ensure compliance with the QESR process as the minutes could not have been produced in time for the Senate meeting; this was due to the sequencing of the meetings of the Committee and the Senate, with the full minutes expected to be presented to the Senate at its next meeting.

**M24/14 UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH & INNOVATION:
MINUTES OF MEETINGS ON 24 AUGUST AND 19 OCTOBER 2023
(SEN-24-11)**

The Senate **received** and **noted** the report of business conducted by the Committee since its previous report to Senate, presented by the Deputy Principal (Research & Impact), who encouraged Senators to review the new REF arrangements which were being implemented.

One Senator raised a question around the workload principles and suggested that these should be augmented to more appropriately reflect the volume of admin tasks which staff were required to undertake. The Principal encouraged all Senators to engage with the working group which had produced the principles in order to allow any further proposals to be appropriately considered.

M24/15 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of other business.

M24/16 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 24 April 2024
Wednesday 08 May 2024: Joint Meeting of Court & Senate
Thursday 13 June 2024

Heriot-Watt University

THE SENATE

Minutes: 24 April 2024

In the Chair: Professor Richard A Williams, Principal and Vice-Chancellor *¹

Present:	<p>Dr Nasir Al Lagtah Professor Mushtak Al-Atabi Dr Yousef Al-Guamei Mr Scott Anderson Professor Lehel Banjai Dr Linda Buchan Professor Malcolm Chrisp Mr Jose Condé Dr Demitrios Cotsovos * Professor Paul Dalgarno Professor Dugald Duncan Dr Neamat El Gayar Dr David Ellis Professor Anna Fenge Dr Fadi Ghaith Dr Ian Grant * Professor Igor Guz Dr Daniel Hale * Professor Annie Hill Dr Kirin Hilliar Dr Britta Kalkreuter Dr Craig Kennedy Mr Ryan Koh * Professor Angus Laing Mr Andrew Lee Dr Helen Lewis Dr Min-Hsiu Liao Professor Sara Lombardo Ms Jasmine Low Dr Alex MacLaren * Dr Bill MacPherson Professor Julian Malins</p>	<p>Professor Mercedes Maroto-Valer Professor Martin McCoustra Dr Richard McCracken Dr Ruaraidh Mcintosh Dr Yvonne McLaren-Hankin Professor Steve McLaughlin Mr Lee Miles * Professor Basheer Muhammed Professor Gillian Murray Dr Katriona Myhill Dr Hendrik Nahler Professor Mehdi Nazarinia Dr Yasemin Nielsen Ms Georgia Noble * Mr Larry O'Brien Professor Joanne Porter Ms Anaswara Pradeep Dr Rabee Rustum Dr Chris Rutherford * Dr Christian Saemann Ms Devanshi Sharma Ms Andrea Sneddon Dr Katerina Strani Dr Monica Tamariz Dr George Vasdravellis * Dr Kathryn Waite * Professor Fiona Waldron Dr Marion Winters Dr Euan Winton Dr Tze Chuen Yap Dr Humphrey Yiu Professor Hind Zantout</p>
In attendance:	<p>Professor Martha Caddell Ms Helen Crosby-Knox Mr Mark Hamid (Clerk) Ms Samantha Kane</p>	<p>Dr Maggie King Ms Ruth Moir Dr John Rushforth</p>
Apologies:	<p>Dr Çakıl Agnew Dr Ross Alexander Dr Anne Bernassau Mr Connel Greenhorn Professor Helinor Johnston Professor Reza Kouhy</p>	<p>Dr Alistair McConnell Mr Fraser Muir Professor Dame Heather McGregor Dr Lucy Robertson Ms Kirsty Scanlan Dr Kathrin Stark</p>

* denotes partial attendance

¹ See Minute M24/29

MINUTE REF		ACTION BY	ACTION DATE
M24/17	CHAIR'S WELCOME & NOTE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE		
	<p>The Principal and Vice-Chancellor welcomed all participants to the meeting, especially those new members of the Senate who were attending for the first time, or in a new capacity.</p> <p>The apologies for absence were noted.</p>		
M24/18	MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 08 FEBRUARY 2024		
	<p>The Senate received and approved as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 08 February 2024.</p>		
M24/19	MATTERS ARISING		
	<p>There were no matters arising from the minutes.</p>		
M24/20	BUSINESS CONDUCTED BY CORRESPONDENCE (PAPER: SEN-24-14)		
	<p>The Senate noted the appointment of Dr Daniel Hale as Dean of the University (pan-University constituency) which had been approved by the Senate by correspondence in March 2024, and that Dr Hale's term of office would be from 01 April 2024 to 31 March 2027.</p>		
M24/21	REPORT FROM THE PRINCIPAL & VICE-CHANCELLOR (SEN-24-15)		
	<p>The Senate received a report from the Principal providing a summary of the University's progress and achievements, according to key strategic themes, as well as details of other developments in the wider Higher Education sector.</p>		
	<p>The report noted that volatility in the recruitment market was affecting the whole sector, and that there had been a drop in international recruitment, in part due to changes to visa restrictions; in spite of this there had been significant growth in recruitment for the Dubai campus. The Principal also noted that over £1million was likely to be stripped out of the funding to be received from the Scottish Funding Council, but that he was nevertheless optimistic if the University community embraced these challenges together. The University's expansion of premises in Dubai was noted, which would support growth at that campus, particularly for the Global College. A significant Campaign donation for the Maths Gym had been received.</p>		
	<p>Commenting on the report, Senators sought further clarification on work to develop the Connected Hybrid Working arrangements, in order to cement improvements which on-campus learning had made to the student experience. The Principal encouraged Executive Deans to reinforce messaging in this space to staff in their Schools. It was also noted that good student attendance was important to deliver high quality education, and that guidance would be helpful to address deficiencies in some sectors of the University; it was emphasised that attendance is compulsory in the Global College and for students in Malaysia, and that there was scope to learn lessons about the various approaches before making any decisions which would be implemented more widely. The Deputy Principal (Education & Student Life) noted that work was being undertaken to study other universities' approaches and that the matter would be</p>		

reviewed by the University Committee for Learning & Teaching. The Executive Dean of the Global College noted the improvements which had been achieved by emphasising the benefits of good attendance to students. The Principal, in summarising, emphasised the importance of this work as fundamental to institutional quality.

The Senate **noted** the report.

M24/22 UPDATE FROM STUDENT SENATORS

The Senate **received** a report from the President of the Student Union providing a summary of the student updates and perspectives for the awareness of Senators, focussing on the implementation of their four global priorities across the University's five campuses.

The Senate **noted** the update.

M24/23 STUDENT EXPERIENCE ACTION PLAN: ASSESSMENT & FEEDBACK (SEN-24-16)

Prof. Malcolm Chrisp (Deputy Principal (Education & Student Life)) and Prof. Martha Caddell (Director, Learning & Teaching Academy) jointly introduced a paper addressing the Student Experience Action Plan with a focus on assessment and feedback which had been progressed by the Schools and academic leadership over the course of the academic session. It was noted that the approach aimed to recognise the importance of appropriate assessment design and alignment. The Senate was provided with particular examples of the approaches being taken in the University's Schools through presentations from their respective Directors of Learning & Teaching.

Commenting on the paper, Senators noted their appreciation for the perspectives provided from the School and affirmed the value of learning from the experiences in other disciplines. The importance of good feedback was also highlighted, together with the need to progress work which would improve the management of this important element of assessment. It was suggested that engagement with Information Services would have the potential to delivery improvements across the University.

One Senator raised concerns about a perceived encouragement to move to single assessments, which were felt to increase stress for students and result in negative wellbeing outcomes. It was also highlighted that the use of adjunct staff for marking can result in student dissatisfaction where markers are unaware of the course material which has been taught before assessment.

The Senate **noted** the update.

M24/24 ENGAGEMENT IN QUALITY PROCESSES (SEN-24-17)

The Senate received an update on engagement in quality processes presented by the Chair of the University Committee for Quality and Standards, Prof. Fiona Waldron, and the Deputy Principal (Education and Student Life), who presented the Senate with a series of proposed actions for approval.

Commenting on the proposals, Senator's affirmed the importance of quality to ensure the reputation of the University and its competitive advantage, as well as highlighting the importance of cross-disciplinary collaboration. It was noted that it was important to ensure the messaging was understood across the institution.

The Senate **noted** the report and **approved** the actions.

M24/25 UPDATE ON EXTERNAL REVIEW AND NEW APPROACHES TO QUALITY (SEN-24-18)

The Senate **received** and **noted** an update on the External Review and New Approaches to Academic Quality presented by the Head of Academic Quality, Dr Maggie King, who noted that parameters of the view, which would either deliver a determination of having confidence, or not having confidence, in the University's quality processes. Dr King advised that the process had almost been concluded, and that a further update would be presented to the Senate in due course.

M24/26 SCHOOL RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE STRATEGIES

At the direction of the Chair, consideration of a series of presentation on the Schools' Research & Enterprise strategies was deferred for full consideration at the next Senate meeting.

Items 3.2 and 3.3 were taken at this time

M24/27 ELECTION OF A DEAN TO THE UNIVERSITY COURT

The University Secretary presented an update on the process for the election of a Dean to the University Court, to fill a vacancy which had arisen in January 2024. The Senate noted that its approval of the appointment would be sought by correspondence, following the close of nominations from the Deans of the University, who would be required to have the support of two Senators, and a subsequent poll if more than one candidate should seek appointment.

M24/28 REVIEW OF ORDINANCE L1: DEANS OF THE UNIVERSITY & ASSOCIATE DEANS (SEN-24-21)

The Senate **received** and **approved** a paper, presented by Prof. Fiona Waldron, seeking to establish a short-life working group to consider and report on Ordinance L1 and the role of the Deans and Associate Deans. The proposal had been considered by the Senate Committee for Interim Business and Effectiveness and had received that Committee's endorsement.

The Senate **approved** the proposal.

M24/29 FINAL REPORT OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEW OF COURT & SENATE EFFECTIVENESS (SEN-24-19)

The Senate **received** a presentation of the final report on the review of the effectiveness of Court and Senate given by John Rushforth of AdvanceHE, who had led the review. He noted that conclusions that the governance arrangements were ultimately sound and that the report had been positioned within the context of consider how arrangements could be improved.

It was highlighted that there were strengths in the induction process for the Senate and the inclusivity of all of the University's campuses. Approaches to support constructive debate and challenge were discussed, as well as the possibility of an away day to explore the Senate's purpose and how to deliver best value.

The Senate was also encouraged to give consideration to how it presented itself to outside stakeholders. In summarising Dr Rushforth noted his thanks to the steering group which had been formed to support the review.

The Senate **endorsed** the report, which would be discussed further at the Joint Meeting with the Court on 08 May.

At this juncture the Principal, requiring to vacate the Chair due to a conflicting commitment and the office of Vice-Principal being vacant, nominated the Deputy Principal (Education & Student Life) as the interim Chair for the remainder of the meeting. Prof. Chrisp therefore assumed the Chair, with no Senator dissenting.

M24/30 SENATE COMMITTEE FOR INTERIM BUSINESS & EFFECTIVENESS: REPORT OF RECENT BUSINESS (SEN-24-22)

The Senate **received** and **noted** the report of business conducted by the Committee since its previous report to Senate. It was noted that, in addition to the business noted to have been conducted by correspondence noted in the relevant report, the Committee had also approved the composition of the Joint Committee of Court and Senate which would consider the appointment of the new Vice-Principal of the University. The University Secretary advised the Senate that the views which had been collected from Senators on the appointment process would be fed into the Joint Committee's deliberations, and that the nominee it identified would be advised to the Senate for further comment.

M24/31 UNIVERSITY DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE: SEMESTER 2 UPDATE (SEN-24-26)

The Senate **received** and **noted** an update on the business of the University Discipline Committee presented by its Chair, Prof. Mehdi Nazarinia. He noted that the number of active cases continued to fall following the COVID-19 peak and that the Committee was moving to have a number of formal and strategic meetings, seeking also to work with other groups and stakeholders within the University.

An automatic workflow had been introduced. Redacted minutes of the Committees meetings were exhibited to the Senate.

M24/32 UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOR QUALITY & STANDARDS: REPORT FOLLOWING MEETING HELD ON 22 JANUARY 2024 (SEN-24-23)

The Senate **received** and **noted** the report of the Committee's business which had been transacted at its meeting on 22 January.

M24/33 UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH & INNOVATION: MINUTES OF MEETINGS ON 18 JANUARY AND 27 MARCH 2024 (SEN-24-24)

The Senate **received** and **noted** the report of business conducted by the Committee since its previous report to Senate, presented by the Deputy Principal (Research & Impact).

M24/34 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of other business.

M24/35 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 08 May 2024: Joint Meeting of Court & Senate
Thursday 13 June 2024

Heriot-Watt University

THE SENATE

Minutes: 13 June 2024

In the Chair: Professor Richard A Williams, Principal and Vice-Chancellor

Present:	Dr Çakil Agnew *	Dr Alex MacLaren
	Dr Nasir Al Lagtah	Dr Bill MacPherson
	Professor Mushtak Al-Atabi	Professor Julian Malins
	Dr Ross Alexander *	Professor Mercedes Maroto-Valer
	Dr Yousef Al-Guamei	Dr Alistair McConnell
	Professor Lehel Banjai	Professor Martin McCoustra
	Mr Cameron Fields	Dr Richard McCracken *
	Dr Florence Chiao Mei Choong *	Dr Ruaraidh Mcintosh
	Professor Malcolm Chrisp	Dr Yvonne McLaren-Hankin
	Mr Jose Condé	Professor Steve McLaughlin
	Dr Demitrios Cotsovos	Professor Basheer Muhammed
	Professor Paul Dalgarno	Dr Shameel Muhammed
	Professor Dugald Duncan	Professor Gillian Murray *
	Dr Neamat El Gayar	Dr Katriona Myhill
	Dr David Ellis	Dr Hendrik Nahler *
	Dr Erkal Ersoy *	Professor Mehdi Nazarinia
	Professor Anna Fenge	Dr Yasemin Nielsen
	Dr Fadi Ghaith *	Ms Rachel Poole
	Dr Ian Grant	Dr Rabee Rustum
	Dr Daniel Hale	Dr Chris Rutherford
	Professor Annie Hill	Dr Harpreet Seth *
	Dr Kirin Hilliar *	Ms Devanshi Sharma *
	Ms Holly McAdams	Mr Nader Shouly
	Dr Britta Kalkreuter *	Dr Kathrin Stark
	Dr Craig Kennedy	Dr Katerina Strani
	Professor Angus Laing	Dr Monica Tamariz
	Mr Andrew Lee	Dr George Vasdravellis *
	Dr Helen Lewis *	Dr Kathryn Waite
	Professor Sara Lombardo *	Professor Fiona Waldron
	Ms Jasmine Low *	Dr Tze Chuen Yap

In attendance:	Professor Martha Caddell	Ms Vanessa Northway *
	Ms Samantha Kane	Mr Marc Quinn (Clerk)
	Dr Maggie King	Professor Gill Thomson *
	Mr Fraser Muir	Ms Ruth Moir

Apologies:	Dr Anne Bernassau	Mr Larry O'Brien
	Professor Igor Guz	Dr Lucy Robertson
	Mr Mark Hamid	Dr Christian Saemann
	Professor Helinor Johnston	Ms Kirsty Scanlan
	Professor Reza Kouhy	Ms Andrea Sneddon
	Dr Min-Hsiu Liao	Professor Hind Zantout
	Professor Heather McGregor	

MINUTE REF

ACTION BY ACTION DATE

M24/36

CHAIR'S WELCOME & NOTE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed all participants to the meeting, especially those new members of the Senate who were attending for the first time, or in a new capacity including the new Student Union President (Cameron Fields) and the two Student Union Vice Principals (Rachel Poole and Holly McAdams).

The apologies for absence were noted.

M24/37 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 08 FEBRUARY 2024

The Senate **received** and **approved** as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2024.

M24/38 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

M24/39 BUSINESS CONDUCTED BY CORRESPONDENCE (PAPER: SEN-24-30)

The Senate **noted** the appointments of (1) Professor Steve McLaughlin as Vice-Principal of the University; (2) Datuk Nicol Ann David as Pro-Chancellor (Malaysia), who would be inducted at the graduations; and, (3) Dr McLaren-Hankin to the Court.

M24/40 REPORT FROM THE PRINCIPAL & VICE-CHANCELLOR (SEN-24-31)

40.01 The Senate **received** and **noted** the report from the Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Richard Williams, providing a summary of the University's progress and achievements, according to key strategic themes, as well as details of other developments in the wider Higher Education sector.

40.02 The Principal noted his appreciation to all members who had joined the Joint Meeting of the Senate and Court (date), which had discussed a number of key topics (see later in agenda). The Principal reported on the recent Staff Executive Briefing (SEB) and Annual Stakeholders (ASM) meetings. At SEB, it was reported that the University would not be exceeding its financial deficit agreed limit (£10.4m), and that this would result in a pause on staffing recruitment into November 2024, until student income numbers were confirmed. The criteria for recruitment would be discussed and communicated with Executive Deans in the first instance. However, critical staff appointments would continue to proceed.

The Principal further reported that, prior to the meeting, he had received a question from a Senator regarding staff recruitment, including the impact on Staff Student Ratios (SSRs) and the need to utilise staffing resources across all the academic community. The Senate were informed that c.100 FTE academic appointments had been made across the University in the last year, which had improved the SSR figures. SSR, calculated in line with HESA requirements that applied to all higher education institutions, was only one metric used by the University when considering staffing level, and the University would seek to ensure that student experience levels, across all campuses, were enhanced and maintained. It was noted that the SSR dashboard had been further developed and would be made available to Senators. Additionally, the pause, which would apply to all business units across the University, would allow the University to take a long term strategic review of all activities, and to determine whether to stop activities that were not sustainable. The Principal also reported that the Resource Management Group, which was transitioning from the previous Vacancy Management Group, had been established and had its first meeting that week. The Principal also confirmed that the Executive were open to having a discussion on these matters and to address any concerns Senators had, to ensure student experience across the campuses are maintained.

KScanlan June 2024

40.03 Following the above discussions, the Senate **noted** the report.

M24/41 UPDATE FROM STUDENT SENATORS

41.01 The Senate **received** and **noted** a presentation from the President of the Student Union, on behalf of the Student Representative Bodies (SRB).

41.02 The Senate noted the summary presentation, focussing on the implementation of the Student Unions/Councils' global priorities across the University's five campuses. The SRB had collectively established the three global priorities for the year, the key issues and themes identified by students across the University campuses.

41.03 In discussions, the Senate praised the culmination of the presentation from all campuses and the SRBs commitment to the Student Partnership Agreement (SPA), which the Senate (and the academic community) would seek to do more to support. The Senate also noted the recommendation that academics should "put yourself in the shoes of the students" when making decision, and seek to understand and the situations that students were experiencing. Additionally, the Senate considered what more that could be done to further support students (e.g. more student friendly timetabling). Finally, it was noted that a number of well-being concerns (e.g. nonworking lifts) had resulted in new procedures being introduced. These had begun well, but had tailed off, and needed to be maintained.

41.04 Following discussions, the Senate **noted** the update.

M24/42 JOINT MEETING (SENATE/COURT) REPORT (SEN-24-32)

42.01 The Senate **received** and **noted** a report and minutes from the University Secretary and Professor Fiona Waldron (Chair of the UCQS) of the recent Joint Meeting of the Court and the Senate.

42.02 The Senate noted the report from the Joint Meeting, which had been set in the context of Effective Review outcomes recommending more efficient and effective ways of operating across the University, and flagged areas of improvements. At the meeting, academics had reflected on how often they were repeating things (i.e. reporting the same matter to three-four, or more, committees), and that if the University had effective governance, it could have effective workings. It was agreed that regular report summaries to each committee, and staff generally, would continue to follow after each Court and Senate meeting. A number of other enhancements were also noted, including the introduction of a standing Student Representative Bodies agenda item on all Court and Senate meetings, which would be upfront on the agendas.

Also, it was noted that there was a need simplify policy and procedures, to make governance more streamlined and become an enabler rather than a blocker, and not over prescribing matters. This would require trusting and relying on Committees fulfilling their remits and to empower the Sub-Committees to undertake the detailed work and making informed recommendation, and where applicable, decisions. There would be review of the policies that supported governance (noting that some policies were actually processes, procedures or guidelines), seeking to make all processes easier to utilise, across all schools and operational areas. The processes would seek to avoid repeat business going through multiple committees/routes and ensure that outcomes and

decisions were communicated to the appropriate University community. This review was currently being mapped out, and a detailed action plan developed, which Court members and Senators would be asked to input to.

M24/43

SCHOOL RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE STRATEGIES (SEN-24-32)

43.01

The Senate **received** and **noted** a series of presentations on the Schools' Research & Enterprise strategies, presented by the Vice-Principal and Provost of the University.

43.02

The Senate noted that following previous reports to Senate, the University had sought for the Schools to refresh their research and enterprise strategies, focussed on four key areas. The framing and development of the strategies, had taken place between January and March, via the University Committee for Research and Impact (UCRI) noting that it was not just creating School strategies, but the University wide research strategy.

43.03

In discussions, it was noted that Schools had been encouraged to engage with the Research Engagement Directorate (RED) in regards to the EU Horizon programme framework, which the UK were re-admitted into. The Business Enterprise directorate would also provide support for Knowledge Exchange initiatives. The processes to generate, develop and support the strategies were seen to be positive, challenging and constructive. It had given Schools the impetus to encourage contributions and collaborations across the wider School community in matters (rather than specific research areas) and developed an enhanced research culture within Schools.

43.04

The Senate sought clarification on the overlap and interaction between the School strategies and those of the GRIs. The Vice-Principal reported that they were inter-linked and GRIs were a route to focus research into large societal areas, and support the University delivering its research impact. Staff were appointed in the Schools, School strategies were developed in consultation with the Heads of the GRIs, and the GRIs were embedded in the Schools strategies. Additionally, the GRIs have Boards, which the Executive Deans sit on, and it would be the Schools who brought forward proposals for initiatives and staffing. This process had evolved over the last five years and would continue, in partnership, to bring alignment between GRIs, research and education activities. The developments would continue to expand, where relevant, to the local community, at the Dubai and Malaysia Campuses, creating the Global Talent pathways for students and partners (e.g. developing industry relevant PGT and UG programmes and courses). Additionally, the University would continue to develop research partnerships with other institutions (e.g. the recent MoU with the University of Houston) and continue to do other research outside the GRIs, which had a societal impact. Finally, it was noted that there was a regular Research Newsletter produced, and this would be made available to Senators.

SML/Clerk June

M24/44

STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND SATISFACTION

44.01

The Senate **received** and **noted** a presentation from the Deputy Principal (Education and Student Life), Associate Principal (Access & Inclusion), and, Deputy Vice Principal (L&T and Student Experience) on the fourth of the Student Experience themes: Community.

44.02 The presentation highlighted the specific priority action plans in relation to the Community theme, maintained by the Student Satisfaction Group (SSG). The Senate noted that the new social events and societies created; student officers had been appointed (UG and PGT) to the Dubai Council from schools to support such activities; a new a new PGT coordinator post (Dubai) had been created; a new SBC Engagement Manger had been appointed; regular and continuous student communications had been undertaken throughout the year; and, the Student Success Advisor (SSA) posts, piloted in SoSS, would now be rolled our across all schools and campuses.

44.03 In discussion, the Senate noted that the key area that required to focus on was the retention of students, and the need to reach out and support all students, to enhance student engagement with the SSAs. It was also noted that the University would continue to invest and fund student societies, within Schools, and were looking for teams to come together to drive the community perspective forward.

M24/45 QUALITY ENHANCEMENT & STANDARDS REVIEW (QESR): OUTCOMES (SEN-23-35)

45.01 The Senate **received** a report from the Deputy Principal (Education and Student Life) and the Head of Academic Quality on the outcomes of the recent Quality Enhancement and Standards Review (QESR).

45.02 The Senate noted that the positive outcome of the review, and the importance of the QAA approval (and that the MQA and CAA would also seek to ensure that the University achieved such QAA approvals). Two key recommendations were made: (1) Availability of External Examiners Reports, which needed to be discussed with the QAA, as it impacted all institutions, and, (2) Ownership and Risk Management of collaborative partnership provision. The actions that would be taken, prior to the next global external review, were noted. The next stages included social media reporting and the development of the action plan, which has been drafted and would be circulated further after the report has been received. The Senate thanked all who were involved in the preparation for, and inclusion in, the QESR process, and the Court would be given assurances from the University, on behalf of Senate, regarding the academic quality outcomes and the matters raised in the report.

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Once final report released

45.03 Following discussions, the Senate **approved** the QESR outcome recommendations in the report.

M24/46 TRANSFORMING ASSESSMENT/STRUCTURES OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR: AUGUST DIET DURATION (SEN-23-36)

46.01 The Senate **received** a report from the Deputy Principal (Education and Student Life), and the Global Director of Student Experience and Academic Registrar, on the considerations to move the August assessment diet to a two weeks period.

46.02 The report noted that the December and April diet in 2024/25 would remain as previously agreed (i.e. remain at two weeks). However, the original plan for the August diet, to move to a one week diet, was identified to not be feasible. Therefore, the recommendation was to maintain each examination diet as a standard two week period.

- 46.03 Commenting on the proposal, Senators questioned the impact on HW online students and whether the third (Summer) semester should retain the consolidation week. The Deputy Principal (Education and Student Life) agreed to undertake further consideration of the consolidation week across all semesters.
- 46.04 Following discussions, the Senate **approved**:
- From 2024/25, that the planned move to a 1-week August Diet would not come into effect; rather, a 2-week diet (as at present) would be implemented from 2024/25;
 - The two-week diet would be formalised as commencing in the week after Teaching Week 12 of the May semester;
 - Consideration of the two-week August Diet being brought forward into the Teaching Week 12 if there was an early September start to the next academic year that provided sufficient time for completion of all academic processes, as per Senate's original requirements (as at June 2022) regarding revised structure of the academic year;
 - The [academic calendar](#) would continue to be published at least four years in advance, highlighting the duration of teaching and assessment periods, including the start of the August Diet; and,
 - Timely communications would continue to be provided for students and staff regarding the academic calendar, including the start of the August Diet.

M24/47 APPROVAL OF ACADEMIC REGULATIONS 2024/25 (SEN-24-37)

- 47.01 The Senate **received** a report from the Chair of the Ordinance and Regulations Committee, recommending amendments to three regulations.
- 47.02 The report noted that two changes to Regulation A7 (Award Requirements) were necessary to make the requirements between the awards of *Masters with Distinction* and *Masters with Merit* consistent, including that all courses were required to be passed at the first attempt. For Regulation A12 (Student Academic Appeals) and Regulation A13 (Student Discipline) it was noted that the changes sought were to the links in the regulations, so that they referred to the applicable websites and information, rather than the specific policies only.
- 47.03 Following discussions, the Senate **approved** the proposed amendments to:
- (i) Regulation A7 *Awards*;
 - (ii) Regulation A12 *Student Academic Appeals*; and
 - (iii) Regulation A13 *Student Discipline*.

M24/48 UPDATE ON SENATE ELECTIONS

- 48.01 The Senate **received** a short update from the University Secretary on the recent Senate Elections, and informed the Senate that a more detailed report would be circulated post the meeting.

- M24/49 REPORTS FROM THE UNIVERSITY DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE (SEN-24-38)**
- 49.01 The Senate **received** and **noted** an update on the business of the University Discipline Committee (UDC) presented by its Chair, Professor Mehdi Nazarinia.
- 49.02 The Senate noted the proposed amendments to (1) the Terms of Reference and (2) the Student Academic Misconduct Policy, for 2024/25. It was raised and agreed that the purpose of the policy required minor amendment to remove those areas which did not clearly fall under academic misconduct matters. Additionally, the policy should refer and link to the non-academic policy.
- The Senate noted the report from Chair of UDC who provided an update on the academic misconduct dashboard and current statistics for the year to day (for both academic and non-academic cases). The Senate noted the actions taken across the University that had resulted in a significant reduction in academic misconduct case (from c.900 to c.600), which was a further year on year decrease. However, it was noted there had been an increase in the misuse of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) tools, and that work was being undertaken to combat this becoming an area of concern and to educate students on how to use AI effectively and appropriately in their studies.
- 49.03 Following discussions, the Senate **approved**:
- (i) the updated Student Academic Misconduct Policy for 2024/2025, subject to the above amendments, and,
- (ii) the changes to the Committee's Terms of Reference.
- M24/50 REPORT OF EXTERNAL APPOINTMENTS AND INTERNAL PROMOTIONS (SEN-24-39))**
- 50.01 The Senate **received** the annual report of External Appointments and Internal Promotions.
- 50.02 The Senate agreed that the reports should accurately refer to staff as either Teaching & Research (T&R) or Teaching and Scholarship (T&S), and not simply T (Teaching). It was also agreed that all gender data would, in future, be summarised per Schools.
- 50.03 Following discussions, the Senate **noted** the report, subject to the above amendments.
- M24/51 UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOR LEARNING & TEACHING TERMS OF REFERENCE REVIEW (SEN-24-41)**
- 51.01 The Senate **received** and **approved** the recommended amendments to the Committee's Terms of Reference, presented by the Chair of that Committee, Professor Malcolm Chrisp.
- M24/52 SENATE COMMITTEE FOR INTERIM BUSINESS & EFFECTIVENESS: REPORT OF MEETING OF 30 MAY 2024 (SEN-24-40)**
- 52.01 The Senate **received** and **noted** the report of business conducted by the Committee since its previous report to Senate.

**M24/53 UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOR LEARNING & TEACHING:
REPORT FOLLOWING MEETING HELD ON 03 JUNE 2024
(SEN-24-41)**

53.01 The Senate **received** and **noted** the report of business conducted by the Committee since its previous report to Senate.

**M24/54 UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOR QUALITY & STANDARDS:
REPORT FOLLOWING MEETING HELD ON 09 APRIL (SEN-24-
42)**

54.01 The Senate **received** and **noted** the report of business conducted by the Committee since its previous report to Senate.

M24/55 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

55.01 The Chair thanked Senators for their work over the preceding year, and to all those involved in Celebration Week. There were no items of other business

M24/56 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Thursday 29 August 2024