

SENATE

Minutes of the meeting held at 13:30 on 10 OCTOBER 2018, at Main Hall, International Politics.

Voting members: Prof Elizabeth Treasure, Vice-Chancellor (Chair); Professor Neil Glasser, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences); Dr Anwen Jones, Acting Pro Vice-Chancellor (Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences); Professor Qiang Shen, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Faculty of Business and Physical Sciences); Prof Chris Thomas, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation); Prof Tim Woods, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience); Dr Gordon Allison; Prof Richard Beardsworth; Prof Paul Brewer; Dr Hazel Davey; Mr Tim Davies; Dr Gwion Evans; Dr Chris Finlayson; Prof John Goddard; Dr Hywel Griffiths, Deputy Chair of the AU Branch of the CCC; Mr Nigel Hardy; Ms Meg Hatfield, AberSU Academic Affairs Officer; Dr Sarah Higgins; Ms Louise Jagger; Dr Alex Mangold; Dr Louise Marshall; Dr Jamie Medhurst; Prof Robert Meyrick; Mr John Morgan; Dr Ola Olusanya; Dr Maria Plotnikova; Dr Simon Rodway; Professor Phillipp Schofield; Prof Malcolm Thomas; Dr Victoria Wright; and Prof Reyer Zwigelaar, Head of the Graduate School.

Non-voting members: Prof Simon Cox; Prof Iain Donnison; Prof Andrew Evans; Dr Eurig Salisbury; and Dr Anoush Simon.

In attendance: Mrs Jean Jones, Head of the Vice-Chancellor's Office; Mr Geraint Pugh, University Secretary; and Ms Emma Williams, Academic Registrar.

Apologies for absence had been received from Dr Guy Baron; Ms Anna Wyn Jones, AberSU Welsh Culture Officer & UMCA President; Dr Elin Royles, Chair of the AU Branch of the CCC; Prof Bernard Tiddeman; and Mr Bruce Wight, AberSU Union President.

1. MATTERS RAISED BY THE CHAIR

1. Welcome

1. The following members were attending their first meeting as members of Senate:
 1. Dr Sarah Higgins, iMLA;
 2. Meg Hatfield, Aberystwyth University Students Union (AberSU) Academic Affairs Officer;
 3. Dr Alex Mangold, alternate member from Modern Languages
 4. Dr Jamie Medhurst, alternate member from Theatre, Film and Television Studies;
 5. John Morgan, International English Centre;
 6. Professor Phillipp Schofield, History and Welsh History; and
 7. Dr Victoria Wright, Psychology.

2. All academic Heads of Department were also now invited to attend Senate as non-voting members, where they had not been elected to represent their departments.

2. Condolences

Sympathies were expressed following the deaths of:

1. William Wolfgang Dieneman, former Librarian at the University;
2. Professor Ian Fletcher, former Chair in the department of Law;
3. Dr David Green, former Senior Lecturer in the department of Agricultural Economics and Marketing;
4. Emeritus Professor Ieuan Gwynedd Jones, former Chair in the department of Welsh History;
5. Gareth Price; Honorary Fellow of the University; and
6. Professor Meic Stephens, author and scholar, and Honorary Fellow of the University.

3. Away Day

Senate had held an away day that morning immediately before the formal meeting. The away day had focused on developments at the University and the wider higher education context, as well as work to develop the Learning and Teaching, and the Research sub-strategies. Copies of all presentations would be made available on SharePoint for future reference (**ACTION:** University Secretary).

2. **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

No conflicts of interest were declared in relation to the business to be transacted during the meeting.

3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

RECEIVED

Minutes of the meetings held on 20 June 2018 (SEN1819-003).

RESOLVED

That the minutes be confirmed as a correct record.

4. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

RECEIVED

A log setting out the progress made in taking forward decisions and actions agreed at the most recent Senate meeting, and outstanding actions from previous meetings (SEN1819-004).

NOTED

1. Translation of marks from other institutions (minute 70.6)

1. Some academics who were already in discussions with students on studying at another institution as part of an exchange during 2019–20 enquired whether the revisions approved at the last Senate meeting had now come into force.
2. Modelling work was now underway to evaluate the effect of the agreed changes on the cascade system, and the outcome would be communicated to members in due course (**ACTION:** Academic Registrar).

RESOLVED

3. That input is sought from the Mathematics and Planning departments as appropriate as part of modelling the effect of the changes on the cascade system, with a report presented to the Academic Board as required (**ACTION:** Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience)).
2. The update provided in the decisions log.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

The University Secretary had not received any correspondence which had not already been drawn to the attention of members.

6. VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

RECEIVED

Report by the Vice-Chancellor (SEN1819-005).

NOTED

1. The report consisted of two key parts: a highlight report; and a communications report.
2. On 04 October 2018, the Governance and Compliance Committee had agreed to procure the services of an external body to undertake a governance effectiveness review by the end of the current academic year, as per the requirements of the Committee of University Chairs Higher Education Code of Governance. The review would include both the University Executive and the academic governance function, and Senate members would be invited to contribute to the process in due course.
3. The Vice-Chancellor intended to establish a sub-group of staff, student and Council members to develop proposals to mark the University's 150th anniversary in 2022. Members were invited to contact the Vice-Chancellor should they be interested in serving on the sub-group. A separate sub-group was also being established at the University to co-ordinate the institution's contribution to the arrangements for the 2020 National Eisteddfod.
4. The restructure of the Academic Registry was nearing completion. Those appointed to management posts had already assumed those positions on 01 October 2018, with transition to the remaining elements of the structure commencing on 15 October. Discussions were now underway with academic Heads of Departments to ensure a smooth transition.

7. NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY

RECEIVED

Report by the Interim Head of Planning (SEN1819-006).

NOTED

The report summarised the University's National Student Survey 2018 results, and had been considered in detail by the Academic Board on 12 September 2018. During that meeting, members had focused on the actions which need to be prioritised at a University level during 2018–19.

8. MAGNA CHARTA UNIVERSITATUM

RECEIVED

Report by the University Secretary (SEN1819-007).

NOTED

1. During May 2018, the Vice-Chancellor had been approached by the Magna Charta Observatory, which had encouraged the University to join the *Magna Charta Universitatum*.
2. The *Magna Charta Universitatum* – first signed by 388 rectors and heads of universities from all over Europe and beyond on 18 September 1988 – contains principles of academic freedom and institutional autonomy as a guideline for good governance and self-understanding of universities in the future.

RESOLVED

3. To recommend to Council that the University joins the *Magna Charta Universitatum* (**ACTION:** University Secretary).

9. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE ACADEMIC BOARD:

1. Academic Sub-committee Structure

RECEIVED

Report by the Deputy Registrar (Assurance and Enhancement) (SEN1819-008).

NOTED

1. On 20 June 2018, Senate had agreed in principle a restructure of the University's academic committees. The current report set out how the revised committee structure had been further developed over the summer, and proposed terms of reference for each committee. The resulting committee structure now since been considered by the Academic Board and the University Executive, with the proposals refined accordingly.
2. Members discussed the proposed membership of the new and revised academic committees – particularly in relation to representation from the new Faculties, and whether both the Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor and the relevant Associate Deans should be members of some committees.
3. The duties of the Head of Department would also need to be reviewed in light of the new Faculty structure. In this respect, Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellors would be asked to discuss their expectations with respect to committee membership with the relevant Heads of Departments, with the intention of maintaining consistency of practice across the institution.
4. Members acknowledged that the academic committee structure would evolve over time, and that it would be appropriate for each committee to review its terms of reference after a couple of meetings to ensure their efficient operation.

RESOLVED

5. To approve the proposed restructure of the academic committees and the draft terms of reference, subject to (**ACTION:** Deputy Registrar (Assurance and Enhancement)):
 1. Including the Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellors and each Faculty's Associate Dean of Learning and Teaching as members of the Academic Board for the period to 07 March 2019; and
 2. Including the Chair or the Deputy Chair of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol as members of the Welsh-medium Studies Committee.
6. That the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience) convene a group following the February / March 2019 cycle of academic committee meetings to review committee effectiveness, and bring forward a summary of any recommendations to Senate on 27 March 2019 (**ACTION:** Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience)).

2. The Wheel

RECEIVED

Report by Quality Officer, Collaborative Provision (SEN1819-009)

NOTED

1. A proposal to deliver a BA Acting degree from September 2019 via a franchise between The Wheel Training Company in Plymouth and Aberystwyth University (AU) had been developed. The report included a copy of the proposed Memorandum of Agreement with The Wheel, and provided confirmation that The Wheel had obtained charitable status to enable the proposed franchise to proceed.
2. Once the Memorandum of Agreement has been agreed by Senate, AU could add the franchise to the 2019–20 Fee and Access Plan, via an addendum which would require approval by HEFCW.

RESOLVED

3. To approve the proposed Memorandum of Agreement between AU and The Wheel Training Company to deliver a BA Acting degree from September 2019 (**ACTION:** Deputy Registrar (Academic Partnerships)).

3. Awarding of Degrees

RECEIVED

Report by the Academic Registry (SEN1819-010)

NOTED

1. The report proposed a change to the University's current approach to awarding degrees, whereby awards would be formally conferred at Senate Exam Boards rather than at the traditional degree ceremonies. Such a change would be in keeping with the sector, with other universities already having transitioned to similar arrangements.

2. Formally conferring awards at Senate Exam Boards would be particularly advantageous for those students who currently graduate at non-standard times in the academic year. Such students are currently required to wait until the next degree congregation to be conferred with their award, or alternatively elect to graduate *in absentia* in order to obtain their award immediately. The new arrangements would mean that all graduands could elect to attend a degree congregation should they so wish.
3. It was also proposed that the University's degree congregations be expanded to cover all higher education awards of the institution, including those who qualify for certificates and diplomas. This was particularly welcomed by members.

RESOLVED

4. To agree proposals to formally confer academic awards at Senate Exam Boards, and to expand degree congregations to celebrate the achievement of all students gaining higher education awards of the University (**ACTION:** Academic Registrar).

10. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

RECEIVED

Members received reports on the following for information:

1. Report by the Superintendent of Examinations (SEN1819-011);
2. Report from the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol (SEN1819-012);
3. Research Grants (SEN1819-012);
4. Academic Prizes awarded during 2017–18 (SEN1819-014); and
4. Summary Corporate Risk Register (SEN1819-015).

NOTED

5. The contents of the reports presented for information.

11. REPORTS FROM SUB-COMMITTEES

RECEIVED

A report comprising the following (SEN1819-016):

1. Academic Board (12 September 2018);

NOTED

2. The report received from the committee.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1. Black History Month Talk

In honour of Black History Month, a public talk had been arranged with Prof Kehinde Andrews at the Arts Centre Cinema immediately after the Senate meeting. All Senate members were encouraged to attend.