

## SENATE

**Minutes of the meeting held at 14:00 on 12 JUNE 2019, at the Main Hall, International Politics building.**

Voting members: Prof Elizabeth Treasure, Vice-Chancellor; Professor Neil Glasser, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences); Dr Anwen Jones, 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); Professor Tim Woods, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience); Dr Gordon Allison; Dr Hazel Davey; Dr Gwion Evans; Dr Sarah Higgins; Ms Anna Wyn Jones, UMCA President; Dr Cerys Jones, Chair of the AU Branch of the CCC; Dr Ffion Jones; Mr John Morgan; Dr Ola Olusanya; Dr Maria Plotnikova; Prof Eleri Pryse; Prof Phillip Schofield; Prof Malcolm Thomas; Dr Victoria Wright; Mr Bruce Wight, AberSU President; and Prof Reyer Zwiggelaar, Head of the Graduate School.

Non-voting members: Prof Simon Cox; Dr Sarah Davies; Prof Nigel Holt (from minute 53); and Dr Thomas Jansen.

In attendance: Mrs Jean Jones, Head of the Vice-Chancellor's Office; Mr Geraint Pugh, University Secretary; Ms Emma Williams, Academic Registrar; and Dr Rhodri Llwyd Morgan, Director of Welsh Language and External Engagement (until minute 56).

Apologies for absence had been received from Dr Guy Baron; Professor Richard Beardsworth; Mr Tim Davies; Prof Andrew Evans; Mr Nigel Hardy; Ms Megan Hatfield, AberSU Academic Affairs Officer; Ms Louise Jagger; Dr Louise Marshall; and Dr Anoush Simon; and Dr Cathryn Charnell-White.

### 46. MATTERS RAISED BY THE CHAIR

#### 1. Condolences

Sympathies were expressed following the deaths of:

1. Patrick Bolster, a second-year student at IBERS;
2. Prof Neville Greaves, Research Professor at the Department of Physics;
3. Emeritus Lecturer Dr Eric G Hall, formerly of the School of Education;
4. Professor Noel Lloyd, former Vice-Chancellor; and
5. Phoebe Williams, a second-year student at the School of Art.

#### 2. Senior Staff

1. Earlier in the week, Prof Chris Thomas had formally notified the Vice-Chancellor of his resignation as the University's Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation. This followed his appointment as a Distinguished Research Professor at the University of Lincoln, a post which he would assume in early October 2019. A process to appoint his successor would soon commence.

2. Esther Prytherch would be stepping down as Head of Communications and Public Affairs at the end of the month, and would assume a new, part-time role promoting research activity within the institution. Interim arrangements were in place pending the appointment of a new Head for the communications team.

#### **47. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

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

#### **48. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

RECEIVED

Minutes of the meetings held on 27 March, and 20 May 2019 (SEN1819-064).

**RESOLVED**

That the minutes be confirmed as correct records.

#### **49. 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 (SEN1819-065).

NOTED

1. Research Strategy (minute 71, meeting of 14 June 2017)

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation) was working to prepare the next iteration of the draft Research Strategy for the Vice-Chancellor prior to the Pro Vice-Chancellor departure from the University. This new iteration would be based on a version previously seen by Senate. However, the final draft would come forward for approval during the autumn cycle of meetings, once the new Pro Vice-Chancellor with responsibility for research had commenced in post and had reviewed the proposed Strategy.

2. REF 2021: Code of Practice (minute 45.6)

A further call had been issued for individuals to serve on the Expert Advisory Group, although the response rate had again been low. The composition of this Advisory Group had since been agreed with the Vice-Chancellor.

3. The other updates provided in the decisions log.

#### **50. DECISIONS TAKEN BETWEEN MEETINGS**

RECEIVED

Report by the University Secretary (SEN1819-066).

NOTED

In accordance with Standing Orders, one matter had been approved by the Vice-Chancellor as Chair on behalf of Senate, namely: to formally uphold an appeal received by a student against a suspension following the submission of new evidence.

## 51. CORRESPONDENCE

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

## 52. VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

RECEIVED

Report by the Vice-Chancellor (SEN1819-067).

NOTED

1. The report consisted of three key parts: a highlight report; a planning and student recruitment report; and a communications report.
2. Members were assured that the business plan currently being consulted upon in relation to IBERS would not have implications for the proposals to offer a veterinary medicine programme in collaboration with the Royal Veterinary College (RVC). The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience) would be formally writing to the RVC to advise accordingly.

## 53. LEARNING AND TEACHING STRATEGY

RECEIVED

Report by Deputy Registrar Kim Bradick, incorporating a draft Learning and Teaching Strategy (SEN1819-068)

NOTED

1. The draft Strategy included aims and actions that could be closely managed, focussing on the current needs of the institution through a period of considerable transformation. Aspects of the proposed Strategy would also guide the development of the institution's other enabling Strategies, including those relating to estates development.
2. Members discussed the contents of the draft Strategy and accompanying Action Plan in detail – particularly the intention to enhance 'active learning' and how this could be achieved in practice. It was emphasised that while the draft Strategy had been designed to cover a three-year period, the implementation period required would mean that the Strategy's impact would be felt over a longer timescale.
3. In welcoming the proposed Strategy and Action Plan, members underlined the need to ensure that existing processes for monitoring departmental performance and student progression should be reviewed to ensure that they remain relevant and in keeping with the new Learning and Teaching Strategy.

**RESOLVED**

4. To recommend that Council approves the proposed Learning and Teaching Strategy, subject to final consultation with academic colleagues at workshops on 21 June 2019, and receipt of feedback from the University's external examiners (**ACTION:** Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience)).

## 54. WELSH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE STRATEGY

RECEIVED

Report by Director of Welsh Language and External Engagement, incorporating a draft Welsh Language and Culture Strategy (SEN1819-069).

NOTED

1. The draft sub-Strategy would complement the overall institutional Strategy for 2018–23, and drew together the objectives outlined in the institution's Welsh Medium Academic Plan, the Integrated Strategic Plan for the Welsh Language and the Bilingual Skills Strategy.
2. This new sub-Strategy would enable the University to present a cohesive plan that could take the University forward in fulfilling its bilingual mission, and in compliance with the relevant Welsh Language Standards which apply to the institution.

**RESOLVED**

3. To recommend that Council approves the Welsh Language and Culture Strategy (**ACTION:** University Secretary).

## **55. POLICY ON THE INTERNAL USE OF WELSH**

RECEIVED

Report by the Director of Welsh Language and External Engagement, incorporating a draft Internal use of Welsh Policy (SEN1819-073).

NOTED

1. Under the terms of Welsh Language Standard 105, the University was required to adopt a Policy on the Internal use of Welsh. The draft Policy therefore drew on commitments already in place based on the other Welsh Language Standards, and provisions which featured in the University's previous Welsh Language Scheme.
2. A number of internal bodies had already been consulted as part of the development of this draft Policy, including the Welsh Language Operational Group, the Aberystwyth University (AU) Branch of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol (CCC), and the trade unions.

**RESOLVED**

3. To recommend that Council approves the draft Policy, subject to minor revisions to ensure consistency in the use of committee names (**ACTION:** University Secretary).

## **56. ABERSU ANNUAL REPORT AND STUDENT CHARTER**

Report by Deputy Registrar Kim Bradick, incorporating the Aberystwyth University Students' Union (AberSU) Annual Submission for 2018–19 and proposed revisions to the Student Charter (SEN1819-070).

NOTED

1. On 22 May 2019, the Academic Board had received AberSU's Annual Submission for 2018–19, which had been drafted by the AberSU Academic Affairs Officer. A copy was presented to Senate for information.
2. HEFCW had published revised guidance on Student Charters on 04 June 2019, with the expectation that the new requirements be reflected in the Student Charters agreed for 2019–20. The new requirements included additional commitments on the part of the University with respect to health and wellbeing, equality and diversity, and legal obligations to students. Appropriate revisions were therefore being proposed to the Student Charter.

3. Members questioned HEFCW's rationale for removing the requirement to review Student Charters on an annual basis, and to consult with students in doing so. Despite the revised guidelines, the University would continue to involve student representatives in any future reviews.

#### **RESOLVED**

4. To approve the proposed revisions to the Student Charter, to take effect for the new academic year (**ACTION:** University Secretary).

### **57. EXCHANGE CREDITS FOR INTEGRATED MASTERS**

#### RECEIVED

Report by Deputy Registrar Kim Bradick (SEN1819-071).

#### NOTED

1. On 22 May 2019, the Academic Board had considered the progression regulations for Integrated Masters' students on exchanges, which needed to be clarified as a result of an earlier decision taken by Senate with respect to the translation of marks from other institutions.
2. Having considered options, Academic Board members had recommended to Senate that, where marks were available from one semester at AU, progression would be determined based on that semester. However, where the whole year had been taken on exchange, progression would be determined by performance from the previous year, considering the transcript of marks from the host institution.
3. Members considered the proposed clarification, and queried the support which would need to be available to those students who may not have performed well enough to progress. It was also confirmed that all decisions with respect to progression would be taken by the relevant departmental Examination Board, which would enable students to appeal any decisions via the usual process.

#### **RESOLVED**

4. To approve the proposed clarification to the regulations on progression for Integrated Masters' students on exchanges (**ACTION:** Deputy Registrar Kim Bradick).
5. That the revised regulations are reviewed within a year to ensure that they operate as intended (**ACTION:** Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience)).

### **58. MID-TERM REVIEW OF ACADEMIC SUB-COMMITTEES**

#### RECEIVED

Report by Deputy Registrar Kim Bradick (SEN1819-072).

#### NOTED

1. A small group had been convened by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience) to review the operation of the new academic sub-committee structure during 2018–19. While it was generally felt that the new sub-committee structure was working, a series of recommendations were made in the report.
2. Members discussed the report and were advised that several recommendations were already being addressed. However, further consideration was required with respect to

the possibility of a joint away day for Senate and Academic Board members, and this would be discussed further by the chairs of both bodies over the summer months (**ACTION:** Vice-Chancellor; and Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience)).

## **59. CODE OF PRACTICE ON FREEDOM OF SPEECH**

RECEIVED

Report by the University Secretary, incorporating draft revisions to the Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech (SEN1819-074).

NOTED

1. The University's current Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech had been last revised in May 2016, and had been due for review during 2018. However, due to the University-wide restructure, a review of the Code of Practice had been put on hold.
2. Drawing on recent sector debates and newly issued guidance, revisions were now being proposed to the University's Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech. A number of individuals had already been invited to provide feedback on the proposed revisions, and feedback would be sought from the Trade Unions.
3. Related to the Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech, the University would be rolling out training for staff on complying with the Prevent Duty. This mandatory training would be made available as an eLearning course on the Blackboard platform, with the University Executive reviewing completion rates in the autumn.

**RESOLVED**

4. To recommend that Council approves the revised Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech (**ACTION:** University Secretary).

## **60. REVISIONS TO AN ORDINANCE**

RECEIVED

Report by the University Secretary, incorporating proposed revisions to Ordinance 21 (SEN1819-075).

NOTED

1. The Head of Information Management, Libraries and Archives (iMLA), and the Director of Marketing and Student Recruitment, had proposed that iMLA in future becomes known by its previous name, Information Studies. In order to bring this to effect, a minor revision would be required to Ordinance 21.

**RESOLVED**

2. To recommend that Council approves the proposed revisions to Ordinance 21 (**ACTION:** University Secretary).

## **61. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

RECEIVED

Members received reports on the following for information:

1. Annual report on Collaborative Partnerships (SEN1819-076);

2. OIA Annual Report (SEN1819-077);
3. Annual Report of the University Research Ethics Committee (SEN1819-078);
4. Outcome of the elections to Senate (SEN1819-079);
5. Report from the AU Branch of the CCC (SEN1819-80);
6. Research Grants (SEN1819-081); and
7. Summary Corporate Risk Register (SEN1819-082)

NOTED

8. The contents of the reports presented for information.

## **62. REPORTS FROM SUB-COMMITTEES**

RECEIVED

A report comprising the following (SEN1819-083):

1. Academic Board (22 May 2019);
2. Recruitment and Marketing Board (21 May 2019);
3. Collaborative Provision Board (23 May 2019);
4. Research Board (20 May 2019);
5. University Research Ethics Committee (22 May 2019) and;
6. Council (12 April 2019).

NOTED

7. The reports received from the committees.

## **63. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **1. Farewell**

1. This had been the final Senate meeting for a number of Senate members and attendees, namely: Dr Gordon Allison; Prof Richard Beardsworth; Prof Paul Brewer; Tim Davies; Louise Jagger; Nigel Hardy; Megan Hatfield; Anna Wyn Jones; Dr Ola Olusanya; Dr Maria Plotnikova; Dr Simon Rodway; Prof Chris Thomas; and Bruce Wight.
2. All were thanked for their contributions to discussions at Senate over recent years.