

SENATE

Minutes of the meeting held at 14:00 on 01 APRIL 2020, via Microsoft Teams.

Voting members: Prof Elizabeth Treasure, Vice-Chancellor; Prof Neil Glasser, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences); Dr Anwen Jones, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences); Prof Colin McInnes, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation); Prof Qiang Shen, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Faculty of Business and Physical Sciences); Mr Simon Banham; Dr Cathryn Charnell-White; Dr Hazel Davey; Mr Prysor Davies; Dr Sarah Davies; Prof Iain Donnison; Dr Rebecca Edwards; Dr Gwion Evans; Dr Patrick Finney; Mr Tomos Ifan, UMCA President; Dr Aloysius Igboekwu; Mr Chris Loftus; Dr Alex Mangold; Dr Louise Marshall; Prof Robert Meyrick; Mr John Morgan; Mr David Moyle; Prof Eleri Pryse; Mr Dhan Ramnatsing, AberSU President; Prof Phillipp Schofield; Dr Anoush Simon; Miss Chloe Wilkinson-Silk, AberSU Academic Affairs Officer; Dr Victoria Wright; Dr Sarah Wydall and Prof Reyer Zwiggelaar, Head of the Graduate School.

Non-voting members: Dr Guy Baron; Prof Simon Cox; Dr Andrew Davies; Prof Andrew Evans; Prof Nigel Holt; Dr Thomas Jansen; and Prof Andrew Thomas.

In attendance: Mrs Meinir Davies, Faculty Registrar, Faculty of Business and Physical Sciences; Mr Tim Davies, Director of Information Services; Mr Penri James, Chair-elect of AU Branch of the CCC; Mrs Jean Jones, Head of the Vice-Chancellor's Office; Mr Geraint Pugh, University Secretary; Mr Steve Thomas, Head of Communications and Public Affairs; and Ms Emma Williams, Academic Registrar.

Apologies for absence had been received from Dr Sarah Higgins; Dr Cerys Jones, Chair of AU Branch of the CCC; Dr Ffion Jones; and Professor Tim Woods, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience).

26. MATTERS RAISED BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

1. Welcome

The following were welcomed to the Senate meeting:

1. Penri James, Chair-elect of AU Branch of the CCC; and
2. Meinir Davies, who was attending as part of her induction to her new role as Faculty Registrar for the Faculty of Business and Physical Sciences.

2. Condolences

1. Sympathies were expressed following the deaths of:
 1. Abbi Andreou, a second year student at the Business School;
 2. Katie Evans, third year student at the Department of Law and Criminology;

3. Melanie Evans, former Music Assistant at the University Music Centre;
 4. Elizabeth Harrison, a third year student at the School of Art;
 5. Professor John Wyn Owen CB, Honorary Fellow of the University;
 6. Professor Maldwyn Mills, former member of staff in the then English Language and Literature department;
 7. Gwydion Morris, a second year student at the department of Computer Science; and
 8. Emeritus Professor Glanville Price, former Professor of Romances Languages in the then European Languages department.
2. Members also expressed their condolences to Prof Tim Woods and family following in their recent bereavement.

3. Briefing session

An informal briefing session on Student Recruitment had been held for Senate members in advance of the formal meeting. A copy of the presentation would be made available via SharePoint for the benefit of those members not able to attend that session (**ACTION:** University Secretary).

27. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

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

28. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RECEIVED

Minutes of the meetings held on 13 November 2019 (SEN1920-034).

RESOLVED

That the minutes be confirmed as a correct record, subject to minor amendments to the list of those present at the meeting (**ACTION:** University Secretary).

29. 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 (SEN1920-035).

NOTED

The updates provided in the decisions log.

30. DECISIONS TAKEN BETWEEN MEETINGS

RECEIVED

Report by the University Secretary (SEN1920-036).

NOTED

1. The report detailed the instances since the last Senate meeting when matters had been approved by members via correspondence.
2. The matter approved by members via correspondence was: a detailed report on academic quality assurance, which in turn would provide assurances and enable the Council to agree the annual Quality Assurance Statements for submission to HEFCW.

31. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence to report.

32. VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

RECEIVED

Report by the Vice-Chancellor (SEN1920-037).

NOTED

1. The report consisted of two key parts: a highlight report; and a planning and student enrolment report.
2. Colleagues were thanked for their contribution to the institution's response to the Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic. A number of critical decisions had been required in a very short period of time in order to enable the University's operations to continue. Attention was now turning to the medium- to longer-term implications of the crisis, and contributing to the sector-wide response.
3. The graduation ceremonies planned for July 2020 had been postponed. Alternative options for re-arranging these ceremonies were now being considered. The decision taken by Senate on 10 October 2018 to formally confer academic awards at Senate Exam Boards, meant that all students could still graduate as planned this summer, and then opt to attend a degree congregation at a later point to celebrate their achievements.

33. AMENDMENTS TO REGULATION AND ASSOCIATED MEASURES IN RESPONSE TO THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

RECEIVED

Report by the Academic Registrar (SEN1920-038).

NOTED

1. The University, in common with others in the sector, was attempting to mitigate the impact of the Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic, and associated restrictions on movement, on students and staff, while maintaining academic standards and academic integrity.
2. The report proposed means by which the University might take progression and award decisions where not all assessments and/or moderation processes had been completed.

In doing so, the University would balance the need to meet contractual obligations to students, and to ensure that students do not suffer significant detriment as a result of this unprecedented situation.

3. The provisions being proposed by the University had been developed with reference to the guidance published by the Quality Assurance Agency on 23 March 2020. These provisions as set out in the report were:
 1. Senate approval of the amendments proposed in the paper so that students could receive module results, progress in their study schemes, receive award results and, where qualified, attend graduation ceremonies in the future;
 2. All academic departments to grant two-week extensions for all final-year major dissertations (or equivalent projects) modules, excluding those relating to the Postgraduate Certificate of Education, with commensurate extension of marking deadlines;
 3. Senate approval of a two-week postponement of all Examination Boards, including the Senate Examination Boards, scheduled for June and July 2020 and subsequent results release, to allow adequate time for assessment, marking, moderation and external examining;
 4. August resit examinations to be replaced with online assessments only, and students given the choice of taking these online assessments at the time, or taking them at a later date should they wish to attempt a traditional examination under exam conditions; and
 5. Senate agreement to establish a working group to oversee the situation as it develops and advise further, drawing on staff from Faculties, the Academic Registry, Communications, and Information Services;
4. The Academic Registrar's report was considered in detail by Senate members. Members welcomed the clarity provided in the report. The student members also confirmed their full support of all proposals.
5. Alternative assessments would need to be arranged where an examination would have been worth more than 50 per cent of a module's result, or where required to meet the learning outcome of a degree scheme (were not tested through other modules). Any alternative assessments required would need to be undertaken when the examinations would traditionally have been held. The Academic Registry was working to develop guidance on what kind of alternative assessments would be appropriate, and would work with individual departments on specific programmes.
6. Concerns were expressed with respect to a potential increased workload for staff, although it was recognised that the alternative assessments proposed should be reviewed to ensure that they do not create an additional burden. Consideration should also be given to the technological facilities available to both staff and students to undertake and mark the alternative assessments remotely.
7. Given the significant increase in demand for consideration of Special Circumstances from students where it would not be possible for students to provide any supporting evidence, it had already been agreed executively that the usual Special Circumstances procedure be suspended temporarily. This meant that all students prevented from

attempting assessments or who fail assessments in semester two would be granted an uncapped resit at the next available opportunity.

8. Individuals departments could also take a pragmatic approach in instances where it would be appropriate to offer extensions to students for their coursework, rather than providing an opportunity to resit. Such an approach would be particularly appropriate for distance learning students.

RESOLVED

9. To approve the proposed amendments to Regulations as set out in the report, and summarised at minute 33.3 (above) (**ACTION:** Academic Registrar).

34. REPORT FROM THE ACADEMIC BOARD

RECEIVED

Report by Deputy Registrar Kim Bradick (SEN1920-039).

NOTED

1. The report summarised the main items discussed during the Academic Board meetings held on 20 November 2019 and 05 March 2020. The report was discussed in detail by Senate members.

2. TurnItIn

On 20 November 2020, the Academic Board had decided that the University would move to unlimited TurnItIn submissions from 2020–21. Students would also be permitted to see the related 'similarity reports' as soon as such reports are available.

3. Component Marks Transfer

The Academic Board had decided on 05 March 2020 that all marks, including exam marks, should be recorded in Blackboard from September 2020 across the University.

4. External Examiner Reports for 2018–19

RECEIVED

Report by Deputy Registrar Kim Bradick (SEN1920-040).

NOTED

The report has been prepared at the request of Council that a specific report be made to Senate on the annual external examiner reports. The report had been considered by the Academic Board on 20 November 2019, and would be presented to Council on 27 April 2020.

5. BVSc Veterinary Science

RECEIVED

Report by Deputy Registrar Kim Bradick, incorporating draft regulations for the BVSc Veterinary Science joint degree (SEN1920-041).

NOTED

1. On 20 November 2019, the Academic Board had considered and endorsed draft regulations which had been considered by the joint Aberystwyth University (AU) and Royal Veterinary College (RVC) Scheme Approval Panel at its meeting on 29 October 2019.
2. As a joint degree, it was necessary for both institutions to reach agreement on a set of bespoke regulations. This was different to the collaborative arrangements previously entered into by AU whereby the University's own regulations would apply to programmes delivered elsewhere, or dual degrees where the student is subject to the regulations of the host institution while studying there.
3. Discussions were still ongoing to determine mutually agreeable solutions to managing the different approaches taken by both institutions in a number of areas. However, the nature of the outstanding discussions did not prevent both institutions from seeking approval for the Regulations from their respective academic governing bodies.

RESOLVED

4. To approve the proposed regulations (**ACTION:** Deputy Registrar Kim Bradick).
6. Senate Exam Board Terms of Reference

RECEIVED

Report by Deputy Registrar Kim Bradick (SEN1920-042).

NOTED

1. It had been proposed that the terms of reference for the Senate Exam Board be amended to allow the Chair 'to be delegated to another senior member of staff with appropriate experience'.
2. This revision had been considered and endorsed by the Academic Board on 05 March 2020.

RESOLVED

3. To approve the proposed revision to the Senate Exam Board's Terms of Reference (**ACTION:** Deputy Registrar Kim Bradick).
7. Annual Report on Complaints, Appeals and Final Reviews

RECEIVED

Composite report incorporating reports on: student complaints; a review of procedures appeal / complaint against the outcome of a postgraduate research ethics case; academic appeals; final reviews; and the Office of the Independent Adjudicator's Statement for 2019 (SEN1920-043).

NOTED

The reports had been considered in detail by the Academic Board on 20 November 2019, and would be presented to Council on 27 April 2020 for information.

8. Unacceptable Academic Practice 2018–19

RECEIVED

Report by Quality Assurance & Enhancement Manager Anna Cole (SEN1920-044).

NOTED

The report had been considered in detail by the Academic Board on 20 November 2019, and would be presented to Council on 27 April 2020 for information.

9. Degree Regulations and Conventions

RECEIVED

Report by Deputy Registrar Kim Bradick (SEN1920-045).

NOTED

1. It had been proposed that 'Early Childhood Studies' (without Early Years Practitioner Status) be added as an exit scheme title only. This would require scheme-specific amendments to the Regulation for Initial Modular Degrees, as set out in the report.
2. An addendum to the Modular Taught Postgraduate Regulations was required to extend the time limit for completion of the PGCert Menter a Busnes Change Leadership scheme to three years (from the standard two years). The rationale and the proposed wording of the addendum were set out in the report.
3. Both proposals to amend Regulations had been considered and endorsed by the Academic Board at its meeting on 05 March 2020.

RESOLVED

4. To approve the proposed additions to the Initial Modular Degree Regulations and the Modular Taught Postgraduate Regulations (**ACTION:** Deputy Registrar Kim Bradick).

35. REPORT FROM THE COLLABORATIVE PROVISION BOARD

RECEIVED

Report by Deputy Registrar Judith Shepherd (SEN1920-046).

NOTED

The report summarised the main items discussed during the Collaborative Provision Board meeting held on 09 March 2020. The report was discussed by Senate members.

36. REPORT FROM THE RECRUITMENT AND MARKETING BOARD

RECEIVED

Report by Deputy Registrar Sarah Whitehead (SEN1920-047).

NOTED

1. The report summarised the main items discussed during the Recruitment and Marketing Board meetings held on 18 November 2019 and 03 March 2020. The report was discussed by Senate members.
2. Recruitment and Marketing Board Terms of Reference

NOTED

1. During the Recruitment and Marketing Board's meeting on 18 November 2019, members had recommended that Senate amend the Board's terms of reference to reflect the restructure of the Marketing and Student Recruitment function in the membership, and to include oversight of partnership activity on the Reaching Wider Strategy.

RESOLVED

2. To approve the proposed revisions to the Recruitment and Marketing Board's terms of reference (**ACTION:** Deputy Registrar Sarah Whitehead).

37. REPORT FROM THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE

RECEIVED

Report by the Research Impact Team (SEN1920-048).

NOTED

1. The report summarised the main items discussed during the Research Committee meetings held on 19 December 2019 and 14 January 2020. The report was discussed by Senate members.
2. Statement on the responsible use of Research Metrics

RECEIVED

Report by the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation), incorporating a draft Statement on the responsible use of Research Metrics (SEN1920-057).

NOTED

1. Metrics were being increasingly used across the sector to assess the quality of research. This was raising concerns over their misuse, especially given gendered and subject biases. Funders were therefore increasingly requiring universities to have in place a Statement on how metrics would be used responsibly in assessing research.
2. The draft Statement would address what the University may choose to use metrics for, how it would use them and what limitations would need to be recognised when doing so. The draft Statement had been considered and

endorsed by the Research Committee and the University Executive on 14 January and 04 February 2020 respectively.

RESOLVED

3. To approve the proposed Statement on the responsible use of Research Metrics (**ACTION:** Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation)).

38. REPORT FROM THE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

RECEIVED

Report by the Research Ethics and Integrity Officer (SEN1920-049).

NOTED

1. The report summarised the main items discussed during the University Research Ethics Committee meeting held on 05 February 2020. The report was discussed by Senate members.
2. Annual Research Integrity Statement for 2018–19

RECEIVED

Report by the Research Development Manager, incorporating a draft Annual Research Integrity Statement for 2018–19 (SEN1920-050).

NOTED

1. To comply with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity, the University was required to produce a short Annual Research Integrity Statement and seek its approval from the academic governing body prior to its publication on the institution's website.
2. The Annual Statement outlined the actions and activities undertaken, and framework in place in support of fostering a culture of research integrity. It also provided a summary of investigations of research misconduct that had been undertaken by the University.

RESOLVED

3. To approve the draft Annual Research Integrity Statement for 2018–19 for publication (**ACTION:** Research Development Manager).

39. VACANCIES FOR SENATE MEMBERS TO SERVE ON COUNCIL

RECEIVED

Report by the University Secretary (SEN1920-051).

NOTED

1. The current Senate Members on Council would reach the end of their current terms on 31 July 2020. The report proposed a process for the election of new Senate Members to Council.

RESOLVED

2. To approve the timetable for the election of new Senate members to serve on Council, as set out in the report (**ACTION:** University Secretary).

40. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

RECEIVED

Members received reports on the following for information:

1. Report from the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol (SEN1920-052);
2. Research Grants (SEN1920-053); and
3. Summary Corporate Risk Register (SEN1920-054).

NOTED

4. The contents of the reports presented for information.

41. COMMITTEE MINUTES

RECEIVED

A report comprising the following (SEN1920-055):

1. Academic Board (20 November 2010; and 05 March 2020);
2. Collaborative Provision Board (28 November 2019; and 09 March 2020);
3. Recruitment and Marketing Board (18 November 2019; and 03 March 2020);
4. Research Committee (19 December 2019; and 14 January 2020);
5. University Research Ethics Committee (05 February 2020); and
6. Council (25 November 2019; and 14 February 2020).

NOTED

7. The reports received from the committees.

42. ANY OTHER BUSINESS, MEETING REVIEW, AND FUTURE BUSINESS

1. Preparations for Clearing 2020

The current uncertainty as a result of the Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic meant that the University was scoping out the practicalities of conducting its annual Clearing campaign remotely. Academic staff would be advised as appropriate as preparations develop.