**SENATUS ACADEMICUS**

**UNCONFIRMED MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF THE SENATUS
ACADEMICUS** held in the Informatics Forum, Wednesday 3 October 2018

Present:  The Principal, Professors C Abbott, M Aliotta, M Bailey, H Brannigan, J Cairns, S Cooper, H Critchley, J Danbolt, T Fawcett, L Felli, P Foster, C French, N Gentz, T Gillingwater, I Gordon, D Gray, K Hardwick, J Hardy, T Harrison, J Hillston, A Holloway, C Jeffery, A Murray, J Norman, W Loretto, L McKie, J Ravenscroft, S Rhind, C Richardson, C Sangwin, M Shipston, A Sorace, T Stratford, J Thomas, A Thompson, S Tudhope, R Williams, J Wyatt;  A Aydin-Aitchison, T Bak, S Benjamin, S Bennett, A Brisan, C Caquineau, A Convery, G Duursma, H Ellis, J Haycock-Stuart, M Highton, J Hoy, S Ivory, L Kendall, L Kirstein, J Koszela, W Kwon, P Larkman, H McQueen, A Maciocia, E Mahadeen, J Menzies, F Narumi-Munro, P Norris, M Novenson, F O'Hanlon, N Ogryzko, N Pak-Shiraz, G Palattiyil, C Phillips, C Reid, S Rodgers, S Rolle, R Sendelbeck, P Sheail, B Sila, E Stevenson, S Stock, P Taylor, G Thompson, U Tufail-Hanif, J Turner, P Walsh, S Warrington, A Zaunseder

Associate Members:  D Mukherji, S Davis-Williams, K O'Doherty, G Harris

In Attendance:  F Adam, M Anusas, S Ashford, J Ball, K Banas, R Bartlett, G Bell, K Bell, M Cao, M Carson, H Chalmers, A Constantin, P Corscadden, A Cross, A Dahl Sløk, M Daw, L Dritsas, A El-Rayis, K Farrow, A Finkel-Gates, P Jones,R Ghul, P Graham, S Green, A M Gregory, J Harden, E Hayes de Kalaf, E Harries-Pugh, M Hoeve, S Horrocks, A Hudson, J Johnston, E Kazakeou, M Khattar, V McCune, J McGregor, S Maciver, A Majothi, J Maybin, D Messina, J Murray, R Myers, M Nelson, J O'Donoghue, A Payne, S Perez-Espona, E Petcu, D Petrova, C Pirie, S Porter, C Price, A Ramsay, L Reilly, K Robertson, N Romano, E Rowan, L Schuler, J Scoles, E Serafin Esquivel, S Shan, T Sheppard, M Simmen, P Skehel, S Smith, P Spencer, ,M Stefan, H Szoor-McElhinney, D Tate, A Taylor, E Taylor, T Trodd, D Tse, Y Wang, T Ward, J Williams, E Wood, E Xu, B Young

**PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION**

**Teaching and Academic Careers**

*Introduction*
*Professor Charlie Jeffery, Senior Vice-Principal*
Professor Charlie Jeffery introduced the session by noting that a key component to enhancing the student experience would be the recognition and reward of good teaching.

A Task Group, with membership across the University, had been set up to review processes and incentives for the recognition, reward and support for teaching in academic careers alongside other parts of the academic role.

*Teaching and Academic Careers Project*
*Professor Jane Norman, Vice-Principal People and Culture and Professor Alan Murray, Assistant Principal Academic Support*
Professor Murray noted the remit and membership of the Task Group on Teaching and Academic Careers, further details of which are available on the Academic Services webpages: www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/projects/teaching-and-academic-careers/task-group

Professor Murray outlined the context in which the Task Group would conduct its work.  He highlighted the strong focus on research at the University, including the fact that research achievements were easier to measure and were a strong driver for institutional success, while career paths for posts specialising in teaching were not as clear.

Professor Norman noted that the group had developed a set of draft principles, and that a consultation on them was underway.  In Semester 2, the Task Group would consider how to translate the agreed principles into staffing policy and procedures, and would plan to make changes in time for 2019/20.

*Academic development for teaching: current position and possible futures*
*Dr Jon Turner, Director, Institute for Academic Development*
Dr Turner noted that provision would be needed for academic development in support of teaching at all stages and in the full range of teaching roles.

Dr Turner highlighted the University's existing CPD framework for learning and teaching.  As a result of the framework, take-up of accredited CPD is growing and has had a positive reaction.  The University may wish to consider setting targets for take-up in future, to boost the numbers of staff with a teaching qualification, although there is a benefit to a scheme in which participants are intrinsically motivated.

Dr Turner listed the different modes of academic development, noting that informal methods were as important as formal CPD.

A number of conceptual frameworks are in existence already which will be useful to the University as it explores alternative approaches to academic development for teaching, for example the Royal Academy of Engineers framework and Universitas 21, which cover teaching practice, the concept of collegiality and leadership in teaching, scholarly teaching and national/global leadership.  These frameworks can be mapped against different types and levels of academic careers, and they can be useful in guiding promotion and academic development support.

*Issues for teaching-focused staff*
*Dr Kasia Banas, PPLS*
Dr Banas reflected on her experience in a teaching-focused role, having progressed from part-time Teaching Fellow in Psychology to full-time Teaching Coordinator and then Senior Teaching Coordinator within four years.

Dr Banas highlighted some challenges to staff members in teaching focused roles, such as the lack of clear progression routes and role models.

A teaching focused career path would address several issues which Dr Banas had perceived: data from the National Student Survey had suggested that some students felt excluded by the research focus on the University.  The career track for teachers would provide flexible opportunities for staff who wanted to focus on teaching, would increase student satisfaction, and would introduce consistency across Schools and Colleges.

Discussion
In discussion, the following points and questions were raised:

- Concern was expressed that the introduction of a teaching career track would result in the University losing its valuable link between research and teaching, noting in particular the fact that the curriculum was often based on the research conducted at the University. The view was expressed that the University could be doing more to support researchers to provide excellent teaching.
- A teaching career track could prompt a two-tier system of researchers and teachers; it was noted that a culture change within the University would be needed, involving a change in the language used, which would allow teaching to be viewed more positively.
- There were fewer incentives for academics to build a career based on teaching. The University would therefore need to focus on providing constructive ways for Schools to recognise good teaching and to enable promotion opportunities on the basis of teaching as well as research. Furthermore, there were far fewer internal grants available for teaching, and that the University should seek opportunities in this area, for example, by providing access to funding to attend conferences.
- Requests were made for a greater number of opportunities for teachers to share good practice.
- The University would need to support Heads of School and managers in addressing any conduct issues in teaching.
- Various comments were made in relation to how the University might support teachers to engage in continuing professional development; it was noted that practical support in relation to specific areas of teaching was helpful, and that there was scope for the Edinburgh Teaching Award to provide opportunities for development at various different levels.
- The request was made for Workload Allocation Models to provide an appropriate amount of time for staff to prepare for teaching.
- The teaching roles provided by tutors and demonstrators were noted; under the proposed initiative, it was suggested that consideration be given to educating PhD students in teaching practice as part of the curriculum, bearing in mind that some PG tutors/demonstrators already had significant experience in this area.
- A number of teaching staff members were currently employed on guaranteed hours contracts, and it was noted that the University was undertaking a programme of work in collaboration with the UCU to address the issue of staff on guaranteed hours contracts.
- The request was made for similar pathways for contract researchers to be considered as part of the proposals, since there was no clear career track and promotion opportunities for this group of staff members.

The Principal thanked attendees for their contributions. He noted that the idea of developing a teaching career track would not reduce Edinburgh's status as a research-intensive University, nor divert resources away from research, but would seek to attain the same excellence in teaching alongside this.

**The Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy**

*Introduction*
*Paddy Corscadden, Director, Student Disability Service*
*Eileen Xu, Students' Association Disabled Students' Officer*

Mr Corscadden introduced and officially relaunched the Policy.

The Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy was introduced in 2013 to increase the accessibility and inclusivity of learning and teaching for all students by mainstreaming a small number of adjustments.

Disabled students regard the Policy as a positive development, promoting an inclusive environment while also making them feel less conspicuous. Awareness of and engagement with the Policy across the University remain limited and inconsistent, however, with some students reporting that their adjustments (covered by the Policy) have not been implemented. Students have reported the main issues as follows: lecturers not always using microphones in lectures; lecture outlines or slides not available at least 24 hours in advance; recording not being permitted in class.

The University has a legal obligation to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the needs of disabled students. This obligation is anticipatory and the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy helps the University fulfil this legal obligation.

Ms Xu provided a personal perspective on the importance of the Policy to students with disabilities, in particular the availability of materials online.

**Enhancing the Student Experience – Approach and Action Plan (S 18/19 1 A)**

*Introduction*
*Professor Charlie Jeffery, Senior Vice-Principal*

Professor Jeffery noted the University's disappointing results in the National Student Survey 2018; the results conclude that student satisfaction at the University is nowhere near high enough, and that students have much too inconsistent an experience, both across and within Schools.

The apparent intractability of the student experience challenge, and its impacts on reputation and morale, require a change of approach. Senior colleagues across the University are concluding that the poor NSS results are symptomatic of deeply-engrained assumptions and patterns of behaviour that have an impact on how we deal with students, and how we value teaching relative to research. Changes must no longer just tackle 'symptoms' revealed by NSS, but their deeper causes.

Professor Jeffery introduced Paper S 18/19 1 A, which set out an approach for addressing these issues. The paper stated that all staff would work to meet the following expectations:

- That we need in all of our roles to cherish our students and work to ensure they have an outstanding experience
- That we need to achieve standards of performance in teaching equivalent to those in research

Professor Jeffery summarised a series of measures (set out in more detail the draft Student Experience Action Plan in the paper) designed to give effect to these expectations. Among the key actions were the following:

- The establishment of a Teaching and Academic Careers Working Group to ensure we have the right incentives and procedures in place to recognise teaching excellence in academic careers
- A Review of the Delivery of Advice and Support to Students which will explore changes to the Personal Tutor system alongside the changes to professional services for student support under development in the Service Excellence Programme

- A focus on enhancing Staff Experience in recognition of the interdependencies of quality of staff experience and quality of student experience
- A focus on ensuring an effective Student Voice through an enhanced and responsive representative system
- The appointment of a new Vice-Principal for Students to work alongside Heads of College and Support Group in delivering a high quality student experience and to take forward work on curriculum reform.

In discussion, the following points were made:

- The request was made for the Student Experience Action Plan to focus on areas which would release the administrative burden on academic staff, such as support for use of EUCLID, to allow greater focus on teaching development
- Issues around pre-honours years were highlighted, particularly in relation to class sizes, which are sometimes very large; it was noted that the University had grown its student numbers without having consciously adjusted teaching methods to accommodate this
- It was suggested that the University review the distribution of income associated with teaching  by the resource allocation model
- It was noted that the University should find ways to ensure that the new student representation system would meet the needs of programmes with small numbers of students.
- It was noted that the Student Experience Action Plan should take into account the needs of the student body as a whole, and encompass provision for PGR students
- Plans for curriculum reform were enthusiastically supported, while noting that the reform project should include consideration of the logistical issues, such as administration of students' timetables, room bookings and allocation of tutors
- The work of Service Excellence in developing online systems to support improved services was welcomed, while emphasis was placed on the importance of having direct staff contact in student-facing roles.

The Principal thanked attendants for their constructive comments.

**Refreshing the University's Strategic Plan**

*Introduction*
*Pauline Jones, Head of Strategic Performance and Research Policy*

Pauline Jones noted that the Strategic Plan would be refreshed in the forthcoming year.

As part of the work to refresh the 2016 plan, the University would review its values, single out the 'big things' which would be specifically achieved, and identify the key disruptors which would change the approach; these disruptors include the implications of Brexit, Generation Z, the City Deal, and the Post-18 review.

The review would be conducted as follows:
- Undertaking a SWOT analysis
- Articulating strengths
- Identifying opportunities arising because of, and in spite of, the disruptors,
- Identifying priorities based on values.

In discussion, it was noted that the University should clarify its position in relation to the city, and the importance of robust financial planning was highlighted.

**PRESIDENT'S COMMUNICATIONS**

The Principal announced the appointment of the University's new Finance Director: Lee Hamill, currently Deputy Director of Finance, will succeed Phil McNaull on 1 January 2019.

Among his communications, the Principal noted the following: the external review of Senate and its committees, undertaken by Jennifer Barnes of Saxton Bampfylde, would take place in 2018/19; the City Deal had been signed over the summer; the University's research income had continued to increase; and a joint expert panel constructed of nominees from UCU and UUK had produced a report in the middle of September with recommendations around maintaining current levels of benefit for USS pensions.

The Principal proposed that Senate discontinue the practice of conducting a Moment of Reflection at the beginning of its meetings. This was **agreed** by Senate members.

**FORMAL BUSINESS**

1. **Report of E-Business conducted 11 – 19 September 2018 (S 18/19 1 B)**

   The report of e-business conducted between 11 and 19 September 2018 was approved.

2. **Student Partnership Agreement Update (S 18/19 1 C)**

   Professor Jeffery provided an overview of activity during 2017/18 to implement the Student Partnership Agreement and the themes for 2018/19, for which a fund of £7,000 had been allocated.

   Senate noted that a showcase event would be held on 9 October 2018 to present outcomes from a number of projects carried out during 2017/18.

3. **Special Minutes (S 18/19 1 D)**

   Senate adopted the Special Minutes for Professors V Cree, A Griffiths and J Ross.

   **COMMUNICATIONS**

4. **Edinburgh University Students' Association Priorities for 2018/19 (S 18/19 1 E)**

   Senate noted the Students' Association Vice-President Education's priorities for the 2018/19. These included the following:
   - Promoting a diverse curriculum
   - Creating inclusive teaching environments
   - Developing alternative approaches to learning.

5. **Draft Ordinance – Composition of Court (S 18/19 1 F)**

   Court presented to Senate the draft Ordinance to effect changes to the composition of the University Court to comply with the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016.

   Senate noted that the draft Ordinance was open for comment during an 8 week statutory consultation period, which would conclude on Monday 26 November 2018.

## 6. Resolutions (S 18/19 1 G)

Court presented to Senate draft Resolutions in accordance with procedures for the creation of new chairs, renaming of existing chairs, and the process for personal chairs. Senate, having considered the draft Resolutions below, offered no observations.

<u>Alteration of Title of Chairs</u>

Draft Resolution No. 57/2018: Alteration of the title of the Chair of Melanoma Genetics and Drug Discovery
Draft Resolution No. 58/2018: Alteration of the title of the Chair of Machine Learning
Draft Resolution No. 59/2018: Alteration of the title of the Chair of Preclinical Ultrasound
Draft Resolution No. 60/2018: Alteration of the title of the Chair of Paediatric Medicine

<u>Establishment of Personal Chairs</u>

Draft Resolution No. 61/2018: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Politics of the Muslim World
Draft Resolution No. 62/2018: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Politics of Anthropology and the Humanities
Draft Resolution No. 63/2018: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Politics of Particle Physics
Draft Resolution No. 64/2018: Foundation of a David Hume Chair of Economics

## 7. Membership of Senate

Senate noted and welcomed its new members.

**CLOSED**

## 8. Honorary Degrees/Posthumous Awards (S 18/19 1 H)

Senate **approved** the recommendations for the award of an Honorary Degree and the award of posthumous honorary degrees.