SENATE

Minutes of the meeting held at 14:15 on 21 JUNE 2023, in the Main Hall, International Politics Building.

Voting members:	Professor Elizabeth Treasure, <u>Vice-Chancellor</u>; Professor Anwen Jones, <u>Pro Vice-Chancellor</u> (Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences); Professor Colin McInnes, <u>Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation)</u>; Professor Qiang Shen, <u>Pro Vice-Chancellor (Faculty of Business and Physical Sciences)</u>; Professor Tim Woods, <u>Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience)</u>; Dr Otar Akanyeti; Mr Thomas Bates; Professor Hazel Davey; Dr Sarah Davies; Mr Jonathan Fry, <u>Chair of AU Branch of the CCC</u>; Dr Sarah Higgins; Professor Mererid Hopwood; Mr Dafi Jones, <u>UMCA President</u>; Dr Alex Mangold; Ms Elizabeth Manners, <u>Academic Affairs Officer, Students' Union</u>; Dr Alexander Pitchford; Dr Samuel Raybone; Professor Eleri Pryse; Dr Alistair Shepherd; Ms Aisleen Sturrock, <u>President of the Students' Union</u>; Dr Lucy Trotter; Professor Iain Donnison; and Professor Reyer Zwiggelaar, <u>Head of the Graduate School</u>.
<u>Non-voting members:</u>	Professor Iain Barber; Professor Simon Cox; and Dr Thomas Jansen.
In attendance:	Dr Gwawr Taylor, <u>University Secretary</u>; Mr Tim Davies, <u>Director of Information Services</u>; Mrs Jean Jones, <u>Head of the Vice-Chancellor's Office</u>; Dr Gethin Rhys, <u>Deputy Registrar</u>; Professor Simon Green, <u>Independent Member of Council</u>; and Mr Bayanda Vundamina, incoming President of the Students' Union.

Apologies for absence had been received from: Professor Phillipp Schofield; Dr Louise Marshall; Professor Andrew Evans; Professor Jamie Medhurst; Professor Neil Glasser, <u>Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor (Faculty of Life Sciences)</u>; Jen Phipps; Dr Heather Norris; Dr Andrew Davies; Dr Guy Baron; Ms Emma Williams, Academic Registrar; Dr Ffion Jones; Dr Aloysius Igboekwu; Dr Anoush Simon; Dr Cathryn Charnell-White; Ms Jackie Sayce; Professor Helen Roberts, <u>Director of Research Excellence and Impact</u>.

51. MATTERS RAISED BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

1. <u>Condolences</u>

   Sympathies were expressed following the death of:

   Janet Rowlands, Student Services

   Frank Bott, Department of Computer Science

2. <u>Welcome</u>

   The Vice-Chancellor was joining via MS Teams and welcomed Professor Simon Green, independent member of Council, as observer. The remainder of the meeting was chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience).

52. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

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

53.   MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RECEIVED

Minutes of the meeting held on 03 May 2023 (SEN2223-069).

RESOLVED

That the minutes be confirmed as a correct record.

54.   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 (SEN2223-070).

NOTED

The updates provided in the decisions log.

4.   IEC and language teaching: The International English Centre would continue to play a role in delivering targeted language help during term time, alongside summer courses for international students pre-arrival. The University would continue to review its provision of ongoing language support in both English and Welsh and would identify resources to put such support in place where necessary. The action was closed.

9.8   Academic Board: The Students' Union had undertaken a publicity campaign on collusion, and the action was recorded as closed. The Students' Union Advice Service would continue to highlight the risks of collusion and the use of AI by students.

9.8   Academic Board: Guidance on the dissemination of research and the sharing of assessed work would be included in the Academic Quality Handbook for 2023/24, and the action closed.

26.   Blackboard Ultra: Training for staff would continue over the summer, alongside a full day session at the forthcoming Learning and Teaching Conference. The action was closed.

47.7 Faculty of Arts and Social Science: Final proposals for the establishment of a School of Literatures and Languages would be presented to the July meeting of Council and circulated to Senate members for comment.

49.7 Research Grants: It was agreed that Senate would in future receive fuller data on research grant capture, along with a list of individuals to be congratulated on their success.

RESOLVED: To present full data on research grant capture to Senate in future [**Action:** Pro Vice-Chancellor Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation)]

55. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence to report.

56. VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT TO SENATE

RECEIVED

Report by the Vice-Chancellor (SEN2223-071).

NOTED

1. The report consisted of three key parts: a highlight report; a planning and student enrolment report; and a communications report.

2. A review of professional services' support for academic departments was underway. Its conclusions would be reported to the Vice-Chancellor at the end of the academic year.

3. The Complete University Guide had been published on 7 June, with Aberystwyth University ranked 2nd in the UK for Student Satisfaction and 3rd in the UK for Academic Services. Overall, the University had climbed 14 places to an overall position of 39 across the UK, and the 2nd ranked University in Wales.

4. The exhibition 'Refugees from National Socialism in Wales', curated by Dr Andrea Hammel and Dr Morris Brodie, had opened at the Palace of Westminster.

5. Renovations were well underway at the Old College, and the recent addition of the Cambria building would increase the accommodation capacity and help strengthen the project's ability to generate revenue.

6. The University continued to be on track to meet a forecasted budget of £0.3m surplus, thanks to efforts by staff to implement a series of mitigating actions, including a tightening of consumable spending for all departments and a closer scrutiny process for vacant positions.

7. Graduation ceremonies would be held over three days from Tuesday 18 to Thursday 20 July.

57. RESEARCH AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE

1. Report from the Research and Innovation Committee

    RECEIVED

    Report by the Research Impact Team (SEN2223-054).

    NOTED

    1. The 'Big R Day 4' had been postponed until early next session due to a lack of demand and to enable the new Pro Vice-Chancellor to lead the process.

2. The new inclusive format for research monitoring had been successful and was likely to be repeated on a biennial basis, with the traditional format retained on a biannual basis.

3. Rights retention was being adopted by a growing number of universities, and Information Services had established a group to establish feasibility for Aberystwyth University.

2. Research Expectations Tool

RECEIVED

Report by Colin McInnes, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation) (SEN2223-073).

NOTED

1. The paper outlined the rationale, principles and use of a new research expectations process, for use by departments to support staff at discipline level, informing conversations and development within a changing research environment.

2. Unions and academic staff had provided valuable feedback at the development stage. While remaining separate from the Effective Contribution Process, the Research Expectations Tool would inform discussions between staff and their line managers, including cases where research-active staff were heavily involved in other leadership roles within their departments and faculties. The University would also need to keep the process under review in light of expected changes to REF.

3. It was agreed that the review date for EDI should be brought forward to 12 months from its introduction.

   RESOLVED

4. To approve the Research Expectations Tool, subject to the minor amendment to the EDI review date. [**Action:** Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation)]

3. Research Leave Policy

RECEIVED

Report by Colin McInnes, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation)

NOTED

1. Colleagues from across the University had identified time constraints as the single most important limitation on research performance. Under the proposed revisions, a 'short research leave' would be introduced, along with a commitment to work towards an increased frequency of 1 in 6 semesters. Achieving this challenging goal would require a holistic approach to the academic mission, with

some departments currently engaged in a review of module and assessment efficiency within their overall teaching programme.

RESOLVED

2.   To approve the revised Research Leave Policy. [**Action:** Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation)]

58.   REPORT FROM THE ACADEMIC BOARD

1.   <u>Report from the Academic Board</u>

RECEIVED

Report by Deputy Registrar, Kim Bradick (SEN2223-075).

NOTED

1.   The report summarised the main items discussed during the Academic Board meetings held on 7 June 2023.

2.   The CMA had published updated sector guidance on consumer law. This set out minimum requirements, and the University would be conducting a review to ensure that any changes to practices, policies, rules and regulations remained compliant with the law.

3.   Academic Board had agreed to establish a Student Casework Steering Group with responsibility for monitoring policy and procedure. It would consider wider sector developments and make recommendations in the areas of Student Discipline, Student Complaints, Appeals, and Final Reviews. It would also receive regular reports on the number and types of cases being handled within the University. Representation would include the Students' Union and key professional services departments, and the terms of reference would be considered at the July meeting of Academic Board.

4.   Changes to the guidance on assessment load and volume had been approved, following recommendations from the Assessment, Feedback and Academic Integrity Working Group. To align with the sector average, the assessment volume for a 20-credit undergraduate Part 2 module would be reduced from 5,000 to be the equivalent of 4,000 words. There would be no change to the guidance at Part 1 and for undergraduate dissertations. It has also been agreed to that a 20 credit module at Part 2 should contain no more than two summative assessments (pro rata per 10 credit weighting). Faculty Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching) would consider any proposals to deviate from this requirement on the basis of PSRB expectations. The Assessment Group had also acknowledged the challenges of adapting ongoing assessment processes such as weekly worksheets, and discussions would continue in consultation with the Associate Deans.

5.   Academic Board had recommended a new requirement that the latest submission deadline for one-year full-time Master's dissertations would be no later than two weeks before the Friday of the Welcome Weekend of the following session. This followed consultation with Faculties and academic departments, and while some strong objections had been noted, the Board had agreed that the proposal should

be introduced. The duration of registration for one-year programmes would remain unchanged, and the change would also enable departments to manage short two-week extensions within the registration period, avoiding issues with the loss of access to Information Services.

6.   The University guidance on the Industrial Year would be clarified to explain that there would be no resit opportunity for students who failed the year abroad where the assessment deadline came after the semester two examination boards. Students who failed the year abroad would be transferred onto the equivalent non-year abroad version of the scheme for their final year. It had been agreed however that in the small number of cases where there were genuine special circumstances, these would be considered through the special circumstances process at examination boards.

7.   BSC Accreditation: 7: The Department of Computer Science would no longer pursue higher level BCS accreditation for the Integrated Master's MEng/MComp awards which would have set a requirement of no more than 30 failed credits across the entire scheme (including Part 1). The Department would therefore revert to original Integrated Master's regulations which had been in place prior to September 2022. It had also been clarified that these schemes would retain accreditation under the Chartered IT Professional (CITP) register.

RESOLVED

8.   To reinstate the original regulation for current MEng and MComp students by removing paragraph 22a of the Regulations for Modular Initial Degrees. [**Action:** Academic Registry to publish the amended regulations, and the Department of Computer Science to explain the changes to all students who had registered on the schemes in September 2022.]

9.   To approve changes to the Master's submission deadlines. From 2023/24, the latest submission deadline for one-year full-time Master's dissertation would be no later than two weeks before the Friday of the Welcome Weekend of the following session. [**Action:** Academic Registry to publish the new requirements online and inform all academic departments.]

2.   Amendments to Regulations and Examination Conventions: FDSc Veterinary Nursing.

RECEIVED

Report by Kim Bradick, Deputy Registrar (SEN2223-076).

NOTED

1.   Specific regulations had been considered by Academic Board 'subject to accreditation'. These would deviate from standard regulations in that students would be required to pass all components of all modules, while also being required to complete an integrated placement during semester 2 of Year 2 and semester 1 of Year 3.

RESOLVED

2.   To approve specific regulations for FDSc Veterinary Nursing for September 2024 entry. [**Action:** Academic Registry to publish the regulations online.]

3.   OIA Update – Annual Reports for 2022.

RECEIVED

Report by Kim Bradick, Deputy Registrar (SEN2223-077)

NOTED

The final and officially published statement for the year ending 31 December 2022 indicated that Aberystwyth University numbers remained below the average figures for the band, suggesting that the University's processes, and the operation of them remained fit for purpose.

4.   Dates of Term 2025/26

RECEIVED

Report by Kim Bradick, Deputy Registrar (SEN2223-078)

NOTED

1.   The change from a Saturday to a Friday end of term date, and the addition of a standardised induction week in semester two for January starters. Semester S dates were proposed in principle only, pending confirmation of January intake dates.

RESOLVED

2.   To approve the dates of term for 2025/26. [**Action:** Academic Registry to publish once January intake dates had been confirmed.]

5.   Regulations for the degree of PhD

RECEIVED

Report by Dr Alan Macmillan, Faculty Registrar (Faculty of Business and Physical Sciences) (SEN2223-079)

NOTED

1.   Members welcomed a proposal to increase the minimum part-time period to six years, bringing the University into line with sector norms and ensuring an equal pro rata timeline for all PhD candidates.

RESOLVED

2.   To approve the revised PhD regulations [**Action:** Academic Registry]

6.   Regulations for the award of the degree of PhD by Published Works

RECEIVED

Report by Dr Alan Macmillan, Faculty Registrar (Faculty of Business and Physical Sciences) (SEN2223-080)

NOTED

1. It was proposed that awards should be restricted to Aberystwyth Staff candidates, and to change the requirement for creative works to allow for a longer critical analysis.

RESOLVED

2. To approve the revisions to the Regulation for the award of degree of PhD by Published Works. [**Action:** Academic Registry]

7. Aberystwyth Students' Union Annual Submission 2022/23

RECEIVED

Annual Submission 2022/23 (SEN2223-075b)

NOTED

The formal recommendations of the submission in relation to wellbeing services and accommodation, and the commentary on a number of other issues including industrial action, diversifying the curriculum, and the support and guidance in relation to international students. The University's formal response would be considered at the July meeting of Academic Board.

59. **REPORT FROM THE RECRUITMENT AND MARKETING BOARD**

RECEIVED

Report by Kylie Evans, Head of Admissions Operations (SEN2223-081).

NOTED

1. The report summarised the main items discussed during the Marketing and Recruitment Board held on 2 June 2023.

2. The 5.8% reduction in applications, in comparison to a 5% reduction among competitors, and 2% across the sector. While this was a cause for concern, the conversion position indicated a 3% increase on the same position in 2022.

3. Uniquest was visiting the University on 21 June 2023 to deliver a workshop on Postgraduate Taught market trends and developments, for Home and International students.

4. The Admissions Team would be arranging an Admissions Conference for AU staff on Wednesday, 6 December 2023, with a programme to include a number of external speakers.

6. Members would welcome more extensive discussion of Marketing and Recruitment at meetings of Senate, and it was agreed that this should be taken into consideration in conjunction with the outcome of the committee effectiveness survey.

RESOLVED:

7. To consider Senate discussions of Recruitment and Marketing as part of the annual review of committee effectiveness. [**Action:** Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Student Experience)]

60. GOVERNANCE MATTERS

1. Outcome of Governance Documents and Charter and Statutes.

   RECEIVED

   Report by Dr Gwawr Taylor, University Secretary (SEN2223-082).

   NOTED

   1. The proposed revisions to Ordinance 03 – the Vice-Chancellor, and Ordinance 21 – Academic Units.

   RECOMMENDED:

   2. To Council that the proposed revisions to Ordinances 03 and 21 should be approved. [**Action:** University Secretary]

2. Outcome of committee effectiveness surveys.

   RECEIVED

   Report by Dr Gwawr Taylor, University Secretary (SEN2223-083)

   NOTED

   1. Members had been invited to complete a questionnaire on the academic governing body's operation during the current academic year. Their feedback would inform Senate's approaches to its work during 2023/24, to ensure its business was discharged effectively.

   2. The need to complete the committee coversheet in full, including the relationship between each report and the institutional strategy.

61. RENAMING THE WOODROW WILSON CHAIR IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS, IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

RECEIVED

Report by Dr Alistair Shepherd, Acting Head of International Politics Department (SEN2223-084).

NOTED

1. The discussions which had led to the renaming of the Woodrow Wilson Chair, and the suitability of the proposed new name, which would reflect the significant contribution of Aberystwyth to the discipline of International Politics.

RESOLVED

2.   To approve the new name of 'The Aberystwyth Chair in International Politics'. [**Action:** Head of Department, International Politics]

62.   ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

RECEIVED

Members received reports on the following for information:

1.   Report from the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol (SEN2223-085) and;

2.   Summary Corporate Risk Register (SEN2223-086);

NOTED

3.   The contents of the reports presented for information.

63.   COMMITTEE MINUTES

RECEIVED

A report comprising the following (SEN2223-087):

1.   Research and Innovation Committee (31 May 2023);

2.   Academic Board (07 June 2023);

3.   Recruitment and Marketing Board (2 June 2023);

NOTED

4.   The reports received from the committees.

64.   ANY OTHER BUSINESS

NOTED

Members noted their thanks and best wishes to the following:

1.   Outgoing Student Sabbatical Officers: Ms Aisleen Sturrock; Elizabeth Manners; Dafi Jones.

2.   Professor Eleri Pryse, retiring as a member of the Senate and from the University.

3.   Professor Colin McInnes, attending his final meeting of Senate as Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation).

4.   Professors Jamie Medhurst (Theatre, Film and Television Studies) and Phillipp Schofield (History and Welsh History), standing down as Heads of Departments.

5.   Professor Robert Meyrick, retiring as Head of the School of Art and from the University after over forty years of service.

6.   Mr Steve Walsh, retiring as Director of Planning.

7.   Ms Michelle Carwardine-Palmer, departing from her role as interim Director of the Arts Centre.

Members also welcomed the following to their new roles:

8.   Professor Catrin Webster, Head of the School of Art.

9.   Dr Kim Knowles, Head of the Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies.

10.   Dr Steven Thompson, Head of the Department of History and Welsh History.

11.   Mr David Wilson, Director of the Arts Centre.

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