



SENATE

Minutes of the meeting held at 14:00 on 23 MARCH 2022, via Zoom.

Voting members: Prof Elizabeth Treasure, Vice-Chancellor; Prof Neil Glasser, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences); Prof Colin McInnes, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research, Knowledge Exchange, and Innovation); Prof Qiang Shen, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Faculty of Business and Physical Sciences); Professor Tim Woods, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience); Prof Hazel Davey; Mr Prysor Davies; Prof Sarah Davies; Prof Iain Donnison; Ms Mared Edwards, UMCA President; Dr Rebecca Edwards; Dr Gwion Evans; Dr Patrick Finney; Dr Gabor Gelleri, Dr Sarah Higgins; Dr Aloysius Igboekwu; Mr Penri James, Chair of AU Branch of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol; Dr Thomas Jansen; Dr Alex Mangold; Ms Elizabeth Manners, AberSU Academic Affairs Officer; Dr Louise Marshall; Prof Robert Meyrick; Mr John Morgan; Mr David Moyle; Dr Heather Norris; Prof Eleri Pryse; Prof Phillipp Schofield; Dr Sarah Wydall and Prof Reyer Zwiggelaar.

Non-voting members: Prof Simon Banham; Prof Simon Cox; Prof Andrew Evans; Prof Nigel Holt; Prof Emyr Lewis; Prof Helen Roberts; Dr Anoush Simon; and Prof Andrew Thomas.

In attendance: Ms Meri Huws, Deputy Chair of Council; Mrs Jean Jones, Head of the Vice-Chancellor's Office; Ms Emma Williams, Academic Registrar and Ms Kath Williams, Interim University Secretary.

Apologies for absence had been received from Prof Anwen Jones, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences); Dr Cathryn Charnell-White; Ms Rachael Davey; Dr Andrew Davies; Mr Tim Davies, Director of Information Services; and Ms Sabina O'Donoghue, AberSU President.

28. MATTERS RAISED BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

1. Welcome

Ms Meri Huws, Deputy Chair of Council who was attending as an observer.

2. Condolences

Sympathies were expressed following the deaths of:

1. Dr David Falla – former warden of Padarn Hall and lecturer in the Department of Physics.
2. Joe Frances, a 3rd year student in the department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies.
3. Emeritus Professor Chris Harding, Department of Law and Criminology and former head of department.
4. Emeritus Professor John Roland Haynes, Aberystwyth Geology graduate and former member of the department of Geography and Earth Sciences.
5. Adrian Mironas, former student at IBERS, and member of the International Office Team.

29. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

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

30. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RECEIVED

Minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2021 and 12 January 2022 (SEN2122-042).

RESOLVED

That the minutes be confirmed as a correct record.

31. 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 (SEN2122-043).

NOTED

1. The updates provided in the decisions log.
2. It was noted that the confirmed minutes of the meeting dated 22 September 2021 needed to be updated as follows (minute 7.7 as listed on the Actions Log): to refer in the opening clause to 'the provision of **academic skills**' rather than 'the provision of **language skills**'; to refer in the final clause to '**Information Services** or elsewhere' rather than '**LTEU** or elsewhere'.

RESOLVED:

3. To add a note to the minutes of the current meeting as well and the action log [**ACTION:** Interim University Secretary].

32. CORRESPONDENCE

1. Ceredigion County Council had requested assistance from the University in identifying speakers of Russian, Ukrainian and Polish. 97 members of the University had come forward in response.
2. Universities UK (UUK) had been contacted by rectors of Ukrainian Universities seeking support for Ukrainian university students to complete their degree studies in the Summer, and to explore possibilities for on-going relationships with UK institutions. The Director of Planning would be attending a working party on behalf of AU to take forward those discussions.

33. VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

RECEIVED

Report by the Vice-Chancellor (SEN2122-044).

NOTED

1. The report consisted of three key parts: a highlight report; a planning and student enrolment report; and a communications report.
2. Colleagues were being encouraged to return to Campus for at least part of the working week.
3. Undergraduate recruitment had improved on the previous year with over 9000 applicants to date, and acceptances at a higher level. Whilst the University was experiencing steady growth the budget-setting for 2022-2023 remained challenging, although the University was currently on target to achieve a modest surplus for the current financial year.
4. With regard to graduation: 16 ceremonies were proposed over a 7-day period and colleagues were thanked for their efforts in drawing together the programme for the week. Further information and requests for relevant details would be issued in due course along with guidelines for hosting hospitality events.
5. Developments regarding Unesco City of Literature were queried and it was agreed that the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation would contact representatives from the Department of Information Studies to update on any developments with the bid.

RESOLVED

6. To include representatives from the Department of Information Studies in future correspondence regarding the bid for Unesco City of Literature status [**ACTION:** Pro-Vice Chancellor Research and Innovation].

34. FUTURE SUB-STRUCTURE OF IBERS WITHIN THE FACULTY OF EARTH AND LIFE SCIENCES

RECEIVED

Report by Professor Neil Glasser, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences) and Professor Iain Donnison, Head of IBERS (SEN2122-045)

NOTED

1. Under Ordinance 21 for the organisation of academic units as recognised by Council, Senate was required to receive for discussion and recommendation for approval, any proposals to change the constitution of academic units.
2. Following extensive consultation with the University Executive, Faculty Executive, IBERS staff and the student body: it was proposed that from 1 August 2022, IBERS would be reorganised as two separate academic units, under two leadership teams within the Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences. The proposed *Department of Life Sciences* would include staff involved in teaching & scholarship and teaching & research; and a separate research institute would be constituted (which was intended to retain the title 'IBERS'), and would include staff involved in research with potentially some teaching, generally at postgraduate level. The remodelling did not include proposals for placing roles at risk of redundancy.

3. Given the proposed structure, the membership of Senate would need to be considered to ensure the appropriate representation for the two proposed academic units.

RESOLVED

4. To approve in principle the reorganisation of the existing arrangement for IBERS into two separate academic departments as outlined, and to seek formal approval from Council for the change [**ACTION:** Interim University Secretary].
5. To proceed with the constitution of a Task and Finish Group to finalise the arrangements as outlined [**ACTION:** Pro-Vice-Chancellor for the Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences].
6. Subject to final ratification at Council, to confirm the arrangements for ensuring appropriate representation at Senate following the 1 August 2022 start date for the new departments [**ACTION:** Interim University Secretary].

35. RESEARCH AND INNOVATION STRATEGY MID-TERM PROGRESS REVIEW

RECEIVED

Report by Professor Colin McInnes, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation) (SEN2122-046)

NOTED

1. The University's Research and Innovation Strategy had been approved by Council at the end of 2019 and that strategy was presented for review along with a summary of progress against actions noted as well as additional actions.
2. The revised strategy included a response to the Covid-19 pandemic and further amendments had also been made in view of the University's adoption of two new concordats: one on Research Development and the second for Knowledge Exchange.
3. Major HEFCW investments had also been made in the form of the Research Wales Innovation Fund (RWIF) which had been incorporated into the strategic developments for the remaining period.
4. The Executive Group was currently discussing investment in and development of initiatives to boost research as follows: firstly, improving the effectiveness of support for colleagues in receipt of research grants which would be taken forward through a Task and Finish group led by Professor Iain Donnison. Secondly, investment in a number of Anniversary Chairs both as a means of celebration and to raise the profile of developing areas of research. Thirdly, the introduction of a competitive process for awarding research leave, in addition to the existing system in place across the three Faculties.
5. Research expectations were discussed, and members invited to consider effective means of providing the appropriate balance of support to enable research alongside processes for measuring progress against research objectives and possible outcomes of those processes.

RESOLVED

6. To receive and note the content of the report.

36. WORKLOAD ALLOCATION AND MANAGEMENT MODEL (WAMM) – UPDATE

RECEIVED

Report by Professor Neil Glasser, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences); Nick Rogers, Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development and Steve Walsh, Head of Planning (SEN2122-047)

NOTED

1. A review of the WAMM was presented to Senate in 2021 at which point it was agreed that further discussion was required regarding a number of issues. These were taken forward through meetings with heads of academic departments and Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellors. The proposals received were also based on the outcomes of a survey circulated to the heads seeking responses to a range of questions and broad agreement on the appropriate allocation of tariffs for non-teaching and assessment duties.
2. The document attached listed a reduced number of tariffs thus responding to the concern regarding the excessive granularity of the previous system. The new system had also been refined to take account of tasks that required a similar level of effort regardless of department size. This was balanced with tasks that were scaled according to the size of a department, its complexity or student numbers. It was also recognised that the revised system needed to be manageable from the point of data entry and its relationship with existing platforms such as timetabling.
3. Members noted that a scholarship allowance needed to be included for Teaching and Research staff who were, as a matter of course, required to teach on areas outside their research specialisms.
4. There was some discussion regarding the Associate Dean roles and their relative tariff allocation which did not signal a difference of status between Learning and Teaching and Research but rather a different volume of tasks and duties. In addition, Impact and Knowledge Exchange leadership roles needed to be recognised as distinct from the responsibilities of Associate Deans for Research with separate tariffs allocated accordingly.
5. A range of duties and responsibilities were embedded within the tariffs listed. For example: tariffs for Good Citizen, Recruitment or Widening Participation. Guidelines would be drafted and would include an indication of areas of work incorporated within the various headings listed.

RESOLVED

6. To accept the report and proposed revisions to the WAMM as outlined subject to developing an implementation plan and guidance for the application and purpose of the system, including an outline process for requesting additional tariffs [**ACTION:** Faculty Pro-Vice Chancellor, Earth and Life Sciences]

37. RESEARCH COMMITTEE

1. Report from Research Committee

RECEIVED

Report by the Research Impact Team (SEN2122-048)

NOTED

1. A letter had been received from HEFCW confirming an uplift of approximately £1m in QR funding in year (for spending before 31 July 2022), and with conditions relating to its use, based on Welsh Government priorities for Research and Innovation. Associate Deans for Research had been invited to canvass project proposals in their Faculties; and Farms and the Vet Hub had also been invited to present ideas. It was noted that a long-list of ideas would be presented to the Executive Group on 29 March 2022.
 2. Members were advised regarding the effects of the current situation in the Ukraine on AU research projects noting there were a range of funded research links, in particular with Belarus and Russia regarding which the University would observe Government and key funders' guidance. Unfunded research links were considered on a case-by-case basis and judgements made accordingly regarding on-going collaborations.
2. Ethics Annual Report

RECEIVED

Report by Lisa Fisher, Research Ethics and Integrity Officer (SEN2122-049)

NOTED

1. That the Annual Report was the first of two related items considered by Governance and Compliance Committee. The report considered both the processes governing research integrity and ethics as well as data for submissions to the ethical process.
2. Research projects were also being audited in order to confirm compliance with the agreed ethical frameworks. One project had already been subject to audit with a further two pending.

RESOLVED

3. To accept the Annual Report on Research Ethics as noted.

3. Annual Integrity Statement

RECEIVED

Report by Lisa Fisher, Research Ethics and Integrity Officer (SEN2122-50)

NOTED

1. That the second report was a publicly available report in which the University was required to confirm how the processes in place for ensuring the research conducted was ethical, along with assurances regarding training provision around these processes. The report also included a statement of the number of investigations into research misconduct which was returned as 'nil' for 2020-2021.

RESOLVED

2. To accept the Annual Report on Research Integrity as noted.

38. ACADEMIC BOARD

1. Report from the Academic Board

RECEIVED

Report by Kim Bradick, Deputy Registrar (Assurance and Enhancement), in relation to the Academic Board meeting held 9 March 2022 (SEN2122-051).

NOTED

1. The report summarised the main items discussed during the Academic Board meeting held on 9 March 2022.
2. Preparations for the Quality Enhancement Review were highlighted, which had been discussed at the Special Meeting of Senate on 12 January 2022. The final document was available on SharePoint.
4. Members were advised of the arrangements for the meetings during the review visit, which would be a series of virtual meetings.
5. There had been a discussion regarding academic progress and attendance monitoring following which the PVC for Learning and Teaching had met with academic Heads who had reported a fall in attendance. It had been agreed that this issue should be further addressed during the September induction events.
6. As a result of changes to OIA guidance, it was proposed that the processing of special circumstances would be conducted as an administrative function in order to allow for separation between process and any subsequent input or comment required from academic staff, in particular Personal Tutors.
7. There had been an increasing number of Unacceptable Academic Practice cases which were associated with the increasing number of Assessments in Lieu of Examinations. It was proposed that academic integrity training be further embedded into induction processes.
8. A series of annual reports had been received. Members were advised that there had been an increase number of disciplinary cases alongside an increased number of complex 'fitness to attend' cases.
9. Portfolio Planning Committee Terms of Reference had been reviewed and would incorporate additional powers to withdraw low-recruiting schemes, although the expectation that Faculties led on portfolio rationalisation remained.
10. The migration to Blackboard Ultra would be introduced in September 2023 and the scheduled blank-course copy update postponed accordingly.

RESOLVED

11. To accept the report and recommendations as outlined.
2. Student Submission to QAA Quality Enhancement Review

RECEIVED

Report by Kim Bradick, Deputy Registrar (Assurance and Enhancement) (SEN2122-052).

1. To accept the Student Submission to the QAA Quality Enhancement Review as noted.
3. Quality Enhancement Review – Action Plan

RECEIVED

Report by Kim Bradick, Deputy Registrar (Assurance and Enhancement) (SEN2122-053).

1. To accept the action plan as noted.

39. RECRUITMENT AND MARKETING BOARD

1. Report from the Recruitment and Marketing Board

RECEIVED

Report by Sarah Whitehead, Deputy Registrar (Admissions) (SEN2122-054).

NOTED

1. The report summarised the main items discussed during the Recruitment and Marketing Board meeting held on 9 February 2022. The report was discussed by Senate members.
2. An amendment to the Terms of Reference was recommended following the relocation of the IEC from an academic faculty to a service department which would, under the current terms, mean the unit was not represented on the RMB.
3. Members were advised of the recommendation that AU graduates applying for places on PGT courses would in future be able to do so without supplying additional references. There was concern regarding this recommendation, in particular regarding Information Studies applicants to conversion courses who were required to demonstrate prior experience and other requirements prior to acceptance for postgraduate study.
4. In line with other academic institutions, it was recommended that deposits for overseas students should be increased to £5000 for students from 'high-risk countries' and £2000 for students from 'low-risk countries'. It was noted that this was in line with guidance issued by the Home Office as well as practice in other institutions. The deposit was off-set against the final tuition fee and so did not represent an increase in the total fee payable.

RESOLVED

5. To revisit the recommendation regarding the entry requirements for Information Studies and other vocational provision. [**ACTION:** Pro-Vice-Chancellor Learning, Teaching and Student Experience].
2. Terms of Reference

RECEIVED

Report by Sarah Whitehead, Deputy Registrar (Admissions) (SEN2122-055).

RESOLVED

1. To accept the recommendation to add the Director of the IEC to the constitution of the Recruitment and Marketing Board.

40. COLLABORATIVE PROVISION BOARD

1. Report from Collaborative Provision Board

RECEIVED

Report by Sarah Jones, Assistant Registrar – Academic Partnerships (SEN2122-055)

NOTED

1. The franchise contract with Coleg Cambria had been renewed and discussions were underway with Coleg Gwent regarding the development of further provision.

RESOLVED

2. To accept the report as noted.

41. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

RECEIVED

Members received reports on the following for information:

1. Report from the *Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol* (SEN2122-057);
2. Research Grants (SEN2122-058);
3. Summary Corporate Risk Register (SEN2122-059) and
4. Academic Prizes 2020-2021 (SEN2122-060)

NOTED

5. The contents of the other reports presented for information.

42. COMMITTEE MINUTES

RECEIVED

1. A report comprising the following minutes (SEN2122-061):
 1. Research Committee (08 March 2022);
 2. Academic Board (09 March 2022);
 3. Recruitment and Marketing Board (09 February 2022);

4. Collaborative Provision Board (10 November 2021 and 2 March 2022); and
5. Council (26 November 2021 and 4 February 2022);

NOTED

2. The reports received from the committees.

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

NOTED

1. The Chair thanked the Deputy Chair of Council for attending the meeting as an observer.