



SENATE

Minutes of the meeting held at 14:15 on 18 June 2025, in the Main Hall, International Politics Building.

Voting members: Professor Jon Timmis, Vice-Chancellor; Dr Otar Akanyeti; Mr Tom Bates; Dr Hanna Binks; Professor Hazel Davey; Professor Sarah Davies; Professor Iain Donnison; Dr Patrick Finney, Interim Pro Vice-Chancellor (Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences); Mr Jonathan Fry, Chair of AU Branch of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol; Professor Angela Hatton, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation); Professor Anwen Jones, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience); Dr Ffion Jones; Mr Will Parker, Undeb Aberystwyth Academic Affairs Officer; Ms Jen Phipps; Dr Alexander Pitchford; Professor Phillipp Schofield; Dr Alistair Shepherd; Professor Qiang Shen, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Faculty of Business and Physical Sciences); Dr Lucy Trotter.

Non-voting members: Professor Iain Barber; Mr Prysor Davies; Dr Gwion Evans; Dr Thomas Jansen; Dr Rhianedd Jewell; Dr Olaoluwa Olusanya; Dr Anoush Simon; Dr Steve Thompson.

In attendance: Mrs Kim Bradick, Deputy Registrar (Secretary); Mrs Sue Clarke, Planning Business Development Officer; Professor Jo Hamilton Associate Dean Learning and Teaching; Professor Matt Jarvis in lieu of Head of Graduate School; Mrs Jean Jones, Head of the Vice-Chancellor's Office; Ms Lliwen Jones, Translator; Ms Tiff McWilliams, Undeb Aberystwyth Student Opportunities Officer; Dr Helen Miles, in lieu of Director of Research Excellence and Impact; Ms Esperanza Monnier, Undeb Aberystwyth Academic Affairs Officer (Elect); Mr Ian Munton, Director of Student Services; Dr Gwawr Taylor, University Secretary and Director of Welsh Language; Dr Malte Urban, Associate Dean Learning and Teaching.

Apologies for absence had been received from: Prof Andy Evans; Professor Neil Glasser, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences); Professor John Gough; Ms Elain Gwynedd, UMCA President; Professor Mererid Hopwood; Dr Aloysius Igboekwu; Dr Kim Knowles; Dr Alex Mangold; Professor Louise Marshall; Dr Julie Mathias; Professor Charles Musselwhite; Dr Samuel Raybone; Professor Helen Roberts, Director of Research Excellence and Impact; Ms Jackie Sayce; Professor Catrin Webster; Professor Reyer Zwigelaar, Head of Graduate School.

42. WELCOME

A warm welcome was extended to those attending in lieu of specific role holders who had sent apologies, and the incoming Undeb Aberystwyth Academic Affairs Officer, and a number of colleagues who had been invited to facilitate the workshop.

43. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Dr Gwawr Taylor noted that in relation to item 49 she had been appointed to the OIA Board of Directors /Trustees. No other conflicts of interest were declared in relation to the business to be transacted during the meeting.

44. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RECEIVED

Minutes of the meeting held on 12/03/2025 (SEN2425-045).

RESOLVED

That the minutes be confirmed as a correct record.

45. 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 (SEN2425-046).

46. VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

RECEIVED

Vice-Chancellor's Report (SEN2425-047)

NOTED

The report consisted of two parts: a highlight report and an update on recruitment. The Vice-Chancellor gave an overview of the issues covered including the Immigration white paper, budget and recruitment issues, new appointments and the award of the Race Equality Charter. It was noted that the report had not been available in time for the Welsh translation to be published with the papers.

47. RESEARCH AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE

RECEIVED

Report from Research and Innovation Committee (SEN2425-048)

NOTED

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation) drew attention to the wide range of research activities across the institution. Procedures around grant submission were being refined and would shortly be published and feedback on ways to support and develop research was welcomed. Over the next few months workshops would be held to encourage and support developments around interdisciplinary research.

48. EDUCATION AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE MATTERS WORKSHOP

RECEIVED

Workshop (SEN2425-049)

NOTED

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) led a workshop to consider a variety of options to inform the working of the portfolio/curriculum project group. An overview was given of the principles which the working group had taken, namely, to improve the student experience, progression, outcomes and retention as well as reduce staff workload by addressing the administrative burden around the curriculum and assessment. Using a similar approach to that taken in developing the strategic plan a number of overarching graduate attributes had been identified: future ready, work ready, digitally capable, engaged citizens, innovative practitioners and skilled researchers. Workshops had been held with key stakeholders, including with groups of students and an overview of the feedback from the student group was given. The PVC was keen to gain feedback from Senate members on a variety of suggestions including removing the resit cap, the charging of resit fees, reducing and/or removing traditional in hall exams, the number of Joint Honours schemes, and reviewing the assessment extensions policy. Senate members were invited to discuss the suggestions and provide feedback on the preferences to inform discussions around what proposals should be taken forward in the coming months.

49. QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

RECEIVED

1. Report from Quality and Standards Committee (SEN2425-050)
2. OIA Annual Statement 2024 (SEN2425-051)
3. Undeb Aber Annual Report to Senate (SEN2425-052)

NOTED

4. The OIA's published statement for Aberystwyth University, with case numbers remaining below the average figures for the band, however 1 in every 2 students issued with a CoP took their case to the OIA in 2024 compared with 1 in every 2.8 students in other providers in the same band; this was a higher proportion than in previous years and the trend would be monitored going forward.

5. Annual report from Undeb Aber would be taken forward by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) in discussion with the outgoing and incoming sabbatical officer over the summer and would provide a report back to Senate in the autumn.

49.1 DATES OF TERM 2027/28

RECEIVED

Dates of Term 2027/28 (SEN2425-053)

NOTED

The proposed dates of term for 2027/28 would follow the structure of previous years.

RESOLVED

To approve the Dates of Term for 2027/28. [**ACTION:** Deputy Registrar (Secretary to Senate) to publish]

49.2 ENGINEERING DEGREE REGULATIONS

RECEIVED

Engineering Degree Regulations (SEN2425-054)

NOTED

With the introduction of schemes eligible for accreditation by the IET, bespoke regulations were needed for Electrical and Electronic Engineering schemes to meet the parent PSRB Engineering Council requirement, which required all modules to be passed, including at from Part One, and provision for an element of compensation and condonement. Provision had been made in the Regulations for the Modular Initial Degrees and bespoke Examination Conventions: BEng/MEng degree schemes had been drafted based as closely as possible on standard AU conventions with separately named exit awards. Detailed discussions around how the regulations would operate and the management and oversight at exam boards would need to take place in the department overseen by the new Faculty.

RESOLVED

To approve the regulations. [**ACTION:** Deputy Registrar (Secretary to Senate) to publish]

49.3 SENIOR DOCTORAL DEGREE

RECEIVED

Proposal to withdraw the Regulations for Senior Doctoral Degrees (SEN2425-055)

NOTED

That the Regulations for Senior Doctoral Degrees had not been in use for some time and were significantly out of date. Work was needed to review the regulation, incorporate the

associated Standing Order 22, consider where it was most appropriate for the process to be administered and review the fee. This was a higher doctorate awarded where an individual had published work recognised as internationally significant and represent a substantial contribution to the advancement of knowledge. The process involves the candidate submitting their application to the Vice-Chancellor, convening a Senior Doctoral Degree Committee and an independent assessment being made by three external referees. Noting that Honorary Awards/Fellowships were available as a means of recognising significant achievements and following discussions with the VCO, Graduate School and at QSC, it was recommended to Senate that they needed to be withdrawn or comprehensively reviewed.

RESOLVED

To approve the withdrawal of the Senior Doctoral Degrees regulations. [**ACTION:** Deputy Registrar (Secretary to Senate)]

50. EDUCATION AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

RECEIVED

Report from Education and Student Experience Committee (SEN2425-038)

NOTED

GenAI guidance had been updated and developed via an ESEC working group and the Generative AI webpages had been updated. A general statement on the use of Generative AI had been published on the Regulations, Policies and Guidelines webpage: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/is/regulations/ai/> and information and guidance about the use of AI for students in their studies, and for staff in relation to teaching, research and administration was available at <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/is/help/ai/>

51. GOVERNANCE MATTERS

RECEIVED

Report from (SEN2425-057)

NOTED

1. In spring 2024, Good Governance Improvement (GGI) had been commissioned to undertake a governance effectiveness review. This included a review of Council and its sub-committees, the Executive, Senate and academic assurance. The following recommendations had been made and were being drawn to the attention of Senate:
 - i. The university should continue the work underway to reform the academic governance structure.
 - ii. Attention was needed to strengthen the connection between Council and Senate.

- iii. The Senate induction process needed improvement and to be consistently delivered to all new members, emphasising the first responsibility of members was to the university.
 - iv. Senate membership should be reviewed, with the aim of having a slimmer, appointed membership.
 - v. The Senate terms of reference should be revisited and developed.
2. In discussion with the Academic Registry and the University Executive, the recommendations had been accepted in principle and it had been agreed that these should be implemented in two phases. In phase 1 work was already underway in relation to recommendations i and ii and in relation to iii it was proposed that Senate members should be offered a similar session to Council's initial induction session, which would explore each individual role on Senate; and the role and responsibility of Senate; a formal induction programme would be introduced from 2025-26.
 3. Phase 2 would address recommendations iv and v and would be undertaken during the 2025-26 via a series of workshops and discussions, with final proposals submitted to Senate and Council in July 2026. Information from across the higher education sector in Wales and the UK would be gathered to understand the size and composition of Senates and Academic Boards, and how Aberystwyth compared to other similar-sized organisations.

52. ABERYSTWYTH UNIVERSITY BRANCH OF COLEG CYMRAEG CENEDLAETHOL

RECEIVED

A report from Mr Jonathan Fry, Chair of the Branch (SEN2425-058)

NOTED

The contents of the report.

53. REPORTS FROM SUB-COMMITTEES.

RECEIVED

Minutes from the following committees (SEN2425-059):

1. Research & Innovations Committee
2. Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions Committee
3. Quality and Standards Committee
4. Education and Student Experience Committee
5. Collaborative Provision Committee

6. Welsh Medium Studies Committee

NOTED

The reports received from the committees.

54. CONGRATUALIONS AND THANKS

The Senate thanked the outgoing Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellors – Professor Qiang Shen Professor Neil Glasser and also extended its congratulations to Professor Jon Timmis, Vice-Chancellor along with Professor Huw Jones, Dr Changjing Shang and Dr Arwyn Edwards who had recently been elected as Fellows of the Learned Society of Wales in recognition of academic excellence.

003 Minutes of Senate 2025-06-18 en

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