

# SENATE BUSINESS COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Senate Business Committee will be held at **3.30 p.m. on Wednesday 11 September 2019** in **Court Room, University Office**.

Rachael Bernard  
Acting Academic Registrar  
([r.bernard@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:r.bernard@abdn.ac.uk))

## AGENDA

### FOR DISCUSSION

1. **Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2019** **SBC19-20:01**
2. **Remit and Membership** **SBC19-20:02**
3. **Draft Agenda for the meeting of the Senate on 9 October 2019** **SBC19-20:03**

4. **Review of the Operation of the Senate in 2018/19**

The Committee is asked to reflect on the operation of the Senate in 2018/19 and to consider whether there may be any ways to further enhance the effectiveness of the Senate.

5. **Major Topics for Discussion in 2019/20** **SBC19-20:04**

6. **Honorary Degrees Committee Membership**

Following the responses received to the communications regarding the Senate vacancy on the Honorary Degrees Committee (HDC), the Committee is asked to approve that Kate Gillies (HSRU) is nominated to serve on the on HDC for a period of four years:

7. **Senate Minutes**

The Committee are asked to consider a change in practice regarding the format of Senate minutes. It is suggested that the lengthy written minute is replaced by a clear action log to be viewed alongside an indexed recording of the meeting. The current written minute is, in effect, a straight transcription of the recording. The published recording is removed from the website once the formal minute has been approved at the subsequent meeting. Under this change, recordings would be maintained on the website indefinitely.

### FOR INFORMATION

8. **Senate Elections**

The Committee is invited to note the outcome of the Senate elections conducted at the end of last academic year as detailed below:

The following have been elected to serve on the Senatus Academicus from 01 October 2019 to 30 September 2022 (except where indicated otherwise):

**Business School**

Dr A Sim

**School of Divinity, History & Philosophy**

Dr A Cecolin

**School of Language, Literature, Music & Visual Culture**

Dr F Jürgensen  
Dr SJ Kim

**School of Law**

Dr RB Taylor  
Mr S Styles

**School of Social Science**

Dr I Xypolia

**School of Biological Sciences**

Dr M Barker (until 30 September 2020)  
Professor P Hallet  
Dr G Norton  
Dr S Woodin

**School of Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition**

Professor G Brown  
Professor C de Bari  
Professor M Delibegovic  
Professor L Erskine  
Professor A Lee  
Professor I McEwan  
Dr S Miller (until 30 September 2020)  
Dr F Murray  
Dr J Pettit  
Dr J Rochford  
Dr D Scott (until 30 September 2020)  
Dr D Skåtun  
Dr D Watts (until 30 September 2020)

**School of Engineering**

Professor D Pokrajac (until 30 September 2020)  
Dr Y Tanino  
Professor M Wiercigroch

**School of Geosciences**

Dr C North  
Dr M Spagnolo

**School of Natural & Computing Sciences**

Dr M da Silva Baptista  
Dr P Henderson  
Dr R Hepworth

**9. Dates of meetings in 2019/20**

The Committee is invited to note the dates of the meetings to be held in 2019/20:

Wednesday 6 November 2019 at 11.00 a.m. in Committee Room 2  
Thursday 19 December 2019 at 10.00 a.m. in Committee Room 2  
Thursday 20 February 2020 at 10.00 a.m. in Committee Room 2  
Tuesday 14 April 2020 at 2.00 p.m. in Committee Room 2

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**SENATE BUSINESS COMMITTEE****Minutes of the meeting of 24 April 2019**

*Present:* Professor K Leydecker (Convener), Mrs D Dyker, Mrs D Connolly, Professor P McGeorge, Professor A Jenkinson, Professor E Pavlovskaia, Professor G Nixon, Professor D Lusseau, Dr H Martin, Mr S Styles, Mrs L Tibbetts, Professor N Vargesson, Dr D Maccallum, Professor J Schaper, Professor M Delibegovic, Dr R Shanks and Dr R Bernard (Clerk)

*Apologies for absence were received from:* Mrs C Inglis, Mr L Ogubie, Professor K Shennan, Professor M Campbell, Dr D Watts

**441. Minutes**

441.1 The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2019.

441.2 The Committee noted that at the meeting of Senate 20 February there had been a commitment given to circulate further information regarding the King's campus redevelopment plans. It was confirmed that details would be circulated to Senate following the meeting.

*Action: Clerk*

**442. Draft Agenda for the meeting of the Senate on 15 May 2019**

442.1 The Committee agreed that the items for approval should be taken ahead of the discussion items in order to ensure that sufficient time would be available to conclude the degree classification discussions.

*Action: Clerk*

442.1 It was agreed that the motions received should be considered under items for discussion and approval.

*Action: Clerk*

442.3 In discussing inclusion of the motion received regarding University estates on the Senate agenda, the Committee noted that the Senior Vice-Principal (SVP) was intending to establish a new committee framework to consider learning and teaching spaces. The new mechanism would report into the Capital Programme Management Committee (CPMC). The new structure would include representation for all schools. It was suggested that in view of this change, and the existing wider governance structures, it may not be appropriate for the motion in its original form to be debated at Senate.

442.4 Following discussion it was agreed that it would be useful to have a general discussion of the issues raised in the motion at Senate. It was therefore agreed that the original motion would be withdrawn and that a holding motion would be drafted by Mr Styles and the SVP to form the basis for discussions at Senate.

*Action: SVP, SS*

442.5 The Committee discussed the inclusion of the motion submitted regarding teaching committee composition. During discussions it was noted that:

- It was not clear from the motion what issue was being addressed
- Senate already confirms the composition of its subcommittees
- The teaching committees across the university already have a majority of academic members
- There is possibly a perception in some places that the time of teaching committees is being spent on matters other than the core concerns of learning and teaching

442.6 The Committee voted against (seven to four) inclusion of the motion on the Senate agenda.

442.7 In view of the discussions and vote, it was agreed that the motion should not be included in its current format. The proposer should be encouraged to meet with the SVP to discuss the issues which had motivated its submission, and be provided with feedback from the Committee.

*Action SVP, Clerk*

442.8 With regard to the motion regarding career development, there was considerable support for the sentiments expressed in the motion and it was noted that it may be helpful from an external perspective to have been seen to have had these discussions at Senate. It was, however, agreed that the issues raised in the motion should, at least in the first instance, be discussed by the Partnership and Negotiating Consultative Committee (PNCC). It was agreed that the motion should not be included on the agenda for Senate.

442.9 The Committee discussed the inclusion of the motion regarding the development of the Strategic Plan. It was noted that the Plan would go to Senate and the omission of Senate from the diagram on the website was an oversight which would be corrected. The Committee agreed that the motion should be included for consideration at Senate.

442.10 The Committee agreed that the paper regarding the Revised Dean Structure should be moved from the items for information to the items for routine approval.

*Action: Clerk*

#### **443 Effectiveness Review Update**

443.1 The Committee noted that an external facilitator was being identified to take forward the Effectiveness Review during the next academic year.

443.2 The Committee agreed that an election should be held to identify the elected members of Senate to be on the group. It was further agreed that this should take place following the current round of elections for Senate members for the new academic year.

*Action: Clerk*

#### **444. John Reid Trust**

444.1 The Committee approved that Professor Ed Welch and Dr Heather Morgan replace Professor John Morrison and Professor Grant Macaskill as trustees of the John Reid Trust Scheme. The Trust exists to assist distinguished Aberdeen University graduates, preferably with Honours, and preferably in Arts, continue their studies in Arts or in any other branches of higher learning at any institution outside Scotland.

**445. Students' Progress Committee Convenor**

445.1 On the recommendation of the Convenor of the Quality Assurance Committee, the Committee approved Dr Alexey Sevastyanov as Convenor for the Student Progress Committee for Arts & Social Sciences.

**446. Dates of meetings in 2019/20**

446.1 The Committee noted that the meetings in 2019/20 had been scheduled for:

- Thursday 12 September 2019 at 10.00 a.m.
- Wednesday 6 November 2019 at 10.00 a.m.
- Thursday 19 December 2019 at 10.00 a.m.
- Thursday 20 February 2020 at 10.00 a.m.
- Tuesday 14 April 2020 at 10.00 a.m.

## UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

Senate Business Committee  
(11 September 2019)

**SENATE BUSINESS COMMITTEE**  
(*Sub-Committee of Senate*)**1. COMMITTEE TITLE**

SENATE BUSINESS COMMITTEE

**2. DATE OF ESTABLISHMENT**

October 2006

**3. CONVENER AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT AREA**

Convener: Senior Vice-Principal  
Clerk: Academic Affairs (Registry)

**4. PURPOSE**

The Senate Business Committee has a primary role to agree Senate agendas. In order to engage Senate in open debate, the Senate Business Committee also identifies for each meeting of Senate at least one major strategic topic for discussion.

The Committee has delegated responsibility from the Senate to approve the appointment of Senate members or representatives to University Committees and the schedule for Senate elections.

**5. REMIT: (*To be reviewed annually at first meeting of committee cycle*)**

The primary role of the Senate Business Committee is to agree Senate agendas.

In order to engage Senate in open debate and to inform future policy and development by sub-committees for subsequent approval by the Senate, it has been agreed that the Senate Business Committee should identify at least one topic for discussion of a major strategic issue at each Senate meeting. This would not preclude such topics being included on the agenda *ad hoc* in response to, in particular, national consultations and major issues that emerged during the course of an academic year that the University should address.

The Senate Business Committee, in drafting Senate agendas, should also decide, as deemed appropriate whether an external speaker (e.g. from the Scottish Funding Council, the Scottish Executive, Universities Scotland, the Higher Education Academy) should be invited to address the Senate on a topic of current interest or debate within the HE sector.

The Senate Business Committee is also asked to determine the timing of consideration, by the Senate, of annual reports from the Senior Vice-Principal, the central Vice-Principals and the University Secretary.

**6. COMPOSITION AND QUORUM:**

- The Senior Vice-Principal (Chair)
- University Secretary
- The Senate Assessor on the Operating Board

- The Chairs of the following Committees:  
University Committee on Teaching & Learning  
Quality Assurance Sub-Committee of UCTL  
Undergraduate Sub-Committee of UCTL  
Postgraduate (Taught) Sub-Committee of UCTL  
Research Policy Committee
- Dean of the Graduate School
- President of the Students' Association
- Eight elected members of Senate elected for a two year term of office
- AUSA Rep (nominated by Student President)

Quorum: 50%

**ACCOUNT TO BE TAKEN OF EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IN MEMBERSHIP**

**7. MEMBERSHIP**

Karl Leydecker  
Caroline Inglis  
Mirela Delibegovic  
Peter McGeorge  
Kath Shennan  
Alison Jenkinson  
Ekaterina Pavlovskia  
Marion Campbell  
Graeme Nixon  
Cecelia Wallbeck  
Alfred Akisanya (until September 2021)  
Iain McEwan (until September 2021)  
Michelle Pinard (until September 2021)  
Amy Bryzgel (until September 2021)  
Scott Styles (until September 2021)  
Allan Sim (until September 2021)  
Neil Vargesson (until September 2020)  
Helen Martin (until September 2020)  
Dariya Koleva  
Clerk: Rachael Bernard

**8. REPORTING LINE/PARENT COMMITTEE AND INTERFACE WITH OTHER COMMITTEES**

Formal reporting line: Senate  
Interface with other committees: Undergraduate Committee, Postgraduate (Taught) Committee, Quality Assurance Committee, UCTL, Research Policy Committee

**9. FREQUENCY AND TIMING OF MEETINGS**

The Committee will meet at least five times per year (September, October, January, March/April and May)  
Meetings between 10am – 4pm in accordance with University Policy.

**10. PUBLICATION OF PAPERS**

Cognisance will be taken of the University's Publication Scheme and Agenda papers will be made available on web pages/StaffNet where possible.

**11. DATE ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEE APPROVED/RECORDED BY UMG: tbc**

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UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

**SENATUS ACADEMICUS**  
**Wednesday 9 October 2019**

The next meeting of the Senate will be held on **Wednesday 9 October 2019** at **1.00 p.m.** in the **King's Conference Centre**.

**A sandwich lunch will be available in the James McKay Hall from 12.30 p.m.**

Staff and student members of the University are welcome to attend meetings of the Senate as observers. Those wishing to do so are asked to respect the formal nature of the proceedings and the understanding that no intervention or lobbying will be permitted from non-members who may be invited to leave when items of confidential business are to be considered.

**Agenda**

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Approval of Minutes of 15 May 2019
3. Update from Principal
4. Report from the University Court
5. Update on Estates Groups *presentation from Professor Leydecker*

**Items for Discussion & Approval**

6. Strategy 2040
7. Community Planning Aberdeen – Michelle Cochlan to attend (*tbc*)

**Items for Discussion to Provide an Academic View**

8.

**Any Other Items for Discussion**

9. Opportunity for Senate members to raise any other items of academic interest for discussion.

## **Items for Routine Approval or Information**

### **10. Items for Routine Approval**

- 10.1 Report from the University Committee on Teaching & Learning
- 10.2 Senate Assessor Terms of Office on Court

### **11. Items for Information**

- 11.1 Report from the University Committee on Teaching & Learning
- 11.2 Senate Election Outcome
- 11.3 Senate Assessors
- 11.4 Senate membership of Honorary Degrees Committee
- 11.5 Senate membership of Senate Business Committee
- 11.6 Senate Effectiveness Review

Notes

### **Formal Business and Questions for the Principal**

*Any member of Senate wishing an item for routine approval or for information to be brought forward for discussion or to propose an amendment to the Minutes of the last meeting or to put a question to the Principal on general matters is asked to email the Acting Academic Registrar no later than by 5.00 p.m. on Monday 7 October 2019, indicating the reasons for their request.*

## UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

Senate Business Committee  
(11 September 2019)

## TOPICS OF MAJOR STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE 2018/19

## Background

1. Recommendation 2 of the 2006 Senate Effectiveness Review Working Group relates to topics of major strategic importance, as under:

*“That, in order to engage Senate in open debate and to inform future policy development by sub-committees for subsequent approval by the Senate, at least one topic should be identified (possibly at the start of each academic year) for discussion of a major strategic issue at each Senate meeting. This would not preclude such topics being included on the agenda ad hoc in response to, in particular, national consultations and major issues that emerged during the course of an academic year that the University should address. [Topics would be suggested by the Senate Business Committee, which would also decide, as deemed appropriate, whether an external speaker (e.g. from the Scottish Funding Council, the Scottish Executive, Universities Scotland, the Higher Education Academy) should be invited to address the Senate on a topic of current interest or debate within the HE Sector].”*

2. Recommendations 12 and 13 of the 2015 Senate Effectiveness Review further proposed:

*“Consideration should be given to introducing a “horizon-scanning” report to Senate with the purpose of informing Senators of emerging issues in the wider context in which academic business is being conducted, soliciting the view of Senate on these issues and commissioning further detailed scrutiny of policy implications by appropriate committees or other bodies.”*

*And*

*“Opportunity for information sharing as part of the Senate agenda should be introduced including where possible a presentation on key topics of sector-wide interest (e.g. Teaching Excellence Framework).”*

3. The following topics have already been identified as being of importance for 2019/20:

<b>Senate Meeting</b>	<b>Main items for discussion</b>
October	Strategy 2040 Michelle Cochlan, Community Planning Aberdeen
December	Policy on the Deadlines for the Submission of Assessment Student Experience Paper (UG) Examiners' Meetings Policy
February	Joint Degrees Report from UCTL Working Group on Exams Student Experience Paper (PG) ELIR Recommendations and Follow Up Report
March	Joint Degrees Report from UCTL Working Group on Exams
May	

### **Action Required**

4. The Committee is asked to discuss further possible topics for inclusion on the agendas for the five Senate meetings for 2019/20.

### **Further Information**

5. Further information is available from Dr Rachael Bernard, Acting Academic Registrar, on ext. 3388 or [r.bernard@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:r.bernard@abdn.ac.uk)