

SENATE BUSINESS COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Senate Business Committee will be held at **3.30 p.m.** on **Wednesday 29 April 2020** via **Microsoft Teams**.

Rachael Bernard
Academic Registrar
(r.bernard@abdn.ac.uk)

AGENDA

FOR DISCUSSION

1. **Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2020** **SBC19:20-12**
2. **Draft Agenda for the meeting of the Senate on 13 May 2020** **SBC19:20-13**

FOR INFORMATION

3. **Suspended Motion for an Emergency Meeting of Senate**

The Committee is asked to note a motion received on 22 April requesting an emergency meeting of Senate. Following discussions with the originators of the Motion, it was decided that the meeting of Senate scheduled for 13 May should be reinstated as a full meeting and that steps would be taken to revert to normal Senate operation. As a result it was agreed that the Motion would be suspended.

SBC19:20-14

3. **Dates of meetings in 2020/21**

The Committee is invited to note the date of the meetings to be held in 2020/21 as follows:

- Thursday 17 September 2020 at 10.00 a.m.
- Tuesday 3 November 2020 at 3.00 p.m.
- Monday 14 December 2020 at 10.00 a.m.
- Thursday 18 February 2020 at 10.00 a.m.
- Tuesday 13 April 2020 at 10.00 a.m.

SENATE BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of 19 February 2020

Present: Karl Leydecker (Convener), Steve Cannon, Ondrej Kucerak, Ruth Taylor, Kath Shennan, Marion Campbell, Kirsty Kiezebrink, Graeme Nixon, Alfred Akisanya, Helen Martin, Scott Styles, Neil Vargesson and Rachael Bernard (Clerk)

Apologies for absence were received from: Cecilia Wallback, Abbe Brown Amy Bryzgel, Allan Sim, Iain McEwan, Michelle Pinard

464. Minutes

464.1 The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2020.

465. Draft Agenda for the meeting of the Senate on 18 March 2020

465.1 The Committee agreed that the draft motion from Scott Styles regarding the National Anthem at graduation should be included on the agenda following discussion of the Penalties for Late Submission.

465.2 It was noted that the presentation from the Vice-Principal (Education) would also include input from the teaching Deans.

465.3 It was agreed that the update from the Principal should include an update on progress with the King's development. It was noted that the establishment of an effective mechanism for keeping Senate and the wider community informed of progress during the project would be important.

466. Annual Senate Survey

466.1 The Committee noted the outcomes of the Annual Senate survey

466.2 In agreeing that the survey outcome should be included for information at Senate the Committee agreed that the main consideration of the outcomes should be undertaken by the Senate Effectiveness Review Group.

467. Date of the Next Meeting

467.1 The Committee noted that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 14 April 2020 at 10.00 a.m. in Committee Room 2.

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

**SENATUS ACADEMICUS
Wednesday 13 May 2020**

The next meeting of the Senate will be held on **Wednesday 13 May 2020** at **2.00 p.m.** via **Microsoft Teams**

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 5 February 2020
3. Update from Principal

Items for Discussion

4. COVID-19 Briefing paper
5. Planning for the Future:
 - 5.1 Blended Learning Implementation Group
 - 5.2 COVID-19 Campus Planning Group

Item for Discussion & Approval

6. Operation of Senate during off-campus activities

Any Other Items for Discussion

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

Items for Routine Approval or Information

8. **Items for Routine Approval**
 - 8.1 Report from the University Committee on Teaching & Learning

9. Items for Information

- 9.1 Report from the University Committee on Teaching & Learning
- 9.2 REF Update
- 9.3 Actions taken under devolved approval powers
- 9.4 Session and Programme Commencement Group

Notes

Formal Business and Questions for the Principal

Any member of Senate wishing to: raise an item for discussion under agenda item 10; or to raise 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 Academic Registrar no later than by 5.00 p.m. on Monday 11 May 2020, indicating the reasons for their request.

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
SENATE BUSINESS COMMITTEE
(29 April 2020)

Draft 4 21/04/2020

Under Senate Standing Order #2 we the proposer and seconders call an emergency meeting of Senate for the week of 27 April to debate and vote on the following resolution:

Senate recognizes and acknowledges the tense situation surrounding the Covid19 Pandemic, and in particular, the quick and understandable decision to close the campus. Senate also recognizes and appreciates the work of those still maintaining and securing the campus, and those conducting laboratory research which could not be interrupted.

Acknowledging that Senate voted (by 45 of 133 votes) to temporarily devolve its authority to the office of the VP Education, we have noted the following:

- It is understandable that quick decisions had to be made, but it has now become clear that this is not a temporary situation – and therefore we will have to return to a normal model of oversight.
- The decisions now being circulated involve multi-year changes to how teaching is delivered, and how degrees are calculated, and so lies outwith the remit of the original devolution of authority;
- That the recent proposal to shift all teaching online for HS1 (2020-21) has not been buttressed with guarantees to intellectual property, appropriate workload, or access to “business critical” teaching materials locked up on campus
- That consultation has been confined to the Senate Business Committee SBC, Senate Assessors, and/or ex officio Heads of School (and in an ad hoc way across Schools);
- The Senior Management Team have overturned a Senate decision on the rounding of grades;

We therefore resolve that:

- 1) We revoke the emergency powers devolved to the VP Education with immediate effect;
- 2) We request striking a formal Covid19 Emergency Committee to design a new forum for Senate to meet and vote, and to coordinate communication between Senate, SMT, and constituents;
- 3) We request that the proposed Emergency Committee have representation of elected senators from all schools, and that any proposals it makes are subject to mandatory consultation with academic staff.
- 4) We call on the VP Education to report back to the next full meeting of senate on all decisions taken on Senate’s behalf;
- 5) We suggest that Senate will need to meet more often than is presently anticipated in the Standing Orders to shape the form of the next academic year;
- 6) We ask that the Principal report to the next Senate an outline for the phased or partial reopening of campus

Proposer:

Prof. David G. Anderson

Social Sciences (Anthropology)

Seconders

Dr. Helen Martin

Education

Dr. Rachel Shanks

Education

Dr. David Watts

MMSN (Rowett)

Dr. Diane Skatun

MMSN (Health Economics)

Dr. Ben Marsden

Divinity, History and Philosophy (History)

Dr. Alessandra Cecolin

Divinity, History and Philosophy (History)

Prof. Joachim Schaper

Divinity, History and Philosophy (Divinity)

Dr. Ilia Xypolia

Social Sciences (PIR)

Mr. Scott Styles

Law

Dr. Murilo da Silva Baptisia

Natural and Computing Sciences (Physics)

Dr. Brice Rea

Geosciences (Geography & Environment)

Dr. Colin North

Geosciences (Geology and Geophysics)

Dr. Jeff Oliver

Geosciences (Archaeology)

Dr. Matteo Spagnolo

Geosciences (Geography & Environment)

Dr. Frauke Jürgensen

LLMVC (Music)

Ms. Lindsay Tibbetts

Business (Accountancy)

Dr. Alexandros Zangelidis

Business (Economics)