

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

SENATUS ACADEMICUS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 APRIL 2023

Present: Rasha Abu Eid, Adetayo Adeyemi, Waheed Afzal, Kaitlin Agius, Akosua Akwaboaa Akyem-Pepira, Julia Allan, Scott Allan, Joanne Anderson, Sumeet Aphale, Euan Bain, Simon Bains, Martin Barker, William Barlow, William Barras, John Barrow, Nigel Beacham, Daniel Berg, Siladitya Bhattacharya, Thomas Bodey, George Boyne, Alex Brasier, Isla Callander, Marion Campbell, Alessandra Cecolin, Delma Childers, Chris Collins, Matthew Collinson, David Cornwell, Irene Couzigou, Rebecca Crozier, Mirela Delibegovic, Chantal den Daas, Andrew Dilley, Pete Edwards, Marie-Luise Ehrenschwendtner, Karin Friedrich, Kate Gillies, Greg Gordon, Isla Graham, Ian Greener, Aravinda Meera Guntupall, Malcolm Harvey, Peter Henderson, Richard Hepworth-Young, Jonathan Hicks, Alison Jenkinson, Gareth Jones, Dragan Jovcic, Kirsty Kiezebrink, Lesley Lancaster, Karl Leydecker, Colin Lumsden, Catriona MacDonald, Alasdair MacKenzie, Michelle MacLeod, Andrew Alan MacPherson, Laura McCann, David McGloin, Nicola McIlraith, Andrew McKinnon, David McLernon, Pietro Marini, Sam Martin, Javier Martin-Torres, David Mercieca, Samantha Miller, Heather Morgan, David Muirhead, Thomas Muinzer, Mintu Nath, Graeme Nixon, Adelaja Israel Osofero, Graeme Paton, Ekaterina Pavlovskaja, Shantini Paranjothy, Bettina Platt, Amudha Poobalan, Tavis Potts, Tom Rist, Justin Rochford, Joost Rommers, Miles Rothoerl, Arash Sahraie, Thereza Raquel Sales de Aguiar, Karen Scott, Diane Skåtun, Benjamin Liviu Stefan, Mary Stephen, Fiona Stoddard, Ruth Taylor, Dawn Thompson, Steve Tucker, Neil Vargesson, Jennifer Walklate, Ilia Xypolia

Apologies: Lesley Anderson, Harminder Battu, Jason Bohan, Amanda Lee, Beth Lord, Gary MacFarlane, Nir Oren, Brice Rea, Charlaine Simpson, Alan Speight, Valerie Speirs, Lorna Stewart, Bert Timmermans, Adelyn Wilson, Ursula Witte, Haina Zhang

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- 75.1 The Principal opened the meeting, welcoming members of Senate to the meeting being held at Foresterhill.
- 75.2 The Secretary reminded members of procedures: there were no planned fire alarms; the meeting would be recorded; members present in the room would be provided with a handheld microphone if they indicated that they wished to speak; members were asked to state their name before contributing to discussion. Members joining by Teams were asked to use the chat function to state when they wished to ask a question. Members were reminded that the chat itself does not form part of the formal minute, and to remain muted when not speaking. Any voting would take place either in the room or using Forms within the chat for those on Teams.
- 75.3 The Principal advised Senate that the presentation on the Digital Strategy (agenda item 9) would be deferred until the June meeting. He advised Senate that he would be leaving the meeting following the break and that Ruth Taylor, Vice-Principal (Education) would chair the meeting for the workload discussions on his behalf.
- 75.4 Ilya Xypolia, Senate Assessor, requested that item ten on the agenda (Decision Time Rollout the Senate) be raised from Routine Business to be for Discussion as there were concerns over laptop

access and voting processes. The Secretary withdrew the paper from the agenda for consideration at a future meeting.

- 75.5 Tom Rist, School of Language, Literature, Music & Visual Culture noted that the room did not provide facilities to plug in computers and asked that this is taken into consideration for selection of future venues.
- 75.5 Subject to the amendments noted, members of the Senate approved the agenda and the meeting proceeded.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 76.1 Members of the Senate approved the minutes of 8 February 2022

ORAL REPORT FROM THE PRINCIPAL AND UPDATE ON THE SECTOR/UNIVERSITY DEVELOPMENTS

- 77.1 in addition to matters detailed in his written report on developments within the sector, the Principal highlighted specifically, the current promising position with international PGT acceptances for September 2023 which were approximately 30% ahead of the equivalent position in 2022. He further highlighted that, notwithstanding this positive situation, the combined effects of the cost of living increases and the reduction in SFC funding arising from the REF results, would leave the University with an expected £12 Million gap to fill with extra revenue for the new academic year. He noted that the general funding situation was not unique to Aberdeen and was common across the sector. The Principal commented that the recent change in First Minister might result in a more favourable approach to higher education funding than previously, and certainly provided for the opportunity to seek a change in approach. He also confirmed that extra University investment in research, previously outlined to Senate, was locked into next year's budget and this would not change.
- 77.2 Karin Friedrich, School of Divinity, History, Philosophy & Art History queried, in relation to section 5.2, whether the notion of 'Returnerships' offered a possible source of income from opening-up individual courses to make them available to the general public. Some courses would provide opportunities for skills development. Ruth Taylor, Vice Principal (Education) confirmed that she expected there to be opportunities, and that work around skills development was already underway.

REPORT FROM THE UNIVERSITY COURT

- 78.1 Diane Skatun, on behalf of the Senate Assessors, provided an update on the March 2023 meeting of the University Court. In addition to the written report included in the Senate papers, Diane recorded her thanks to the AUSA members of Senate for their presentation to Court. She also noted the appreciation of Foresterhill based staff for the opportunity to host a meeting of Senate. She highlighted that Court were continuing to take a particular interest in the issues which had surrounded student recruitment previously, and the need to support financial planning. She noted that Court continued to be supportive of supporting staff to ensure academic workloads permitted staff to undertake high quality teaching and research. She highlighted that there had been discussion at Court around the Decolonising the Curriculum

project and its impact on workloads, and Senate's support of the initiative had been confirmed to Court.

STRUCTURE OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2024 AND BEYOND

- 79.1 Ruth Taylor, Vice-Principal (Education) gave a brief presentation (slides available from the [website](#)) of the main discussions and conclusions contained in the report looking at options for restructuring the academic year. Ruth highlighted, that in view of feedback received to date, that the three-term principle had been adjusted to have the teaching periods named Term One, Term Two and The Summer Teaching Period for areas where teaching and assessment take place. She noted the proposal offered four options and that the intention of the discussion at Senate was to seek feedback and to return to the next meeting of Senate, via all the various committees, with a single proposal. Ruth highlighted that, of the four options detailed in the paper options one and two were preferred to options three and four: Option one aligns with all desired principles underlying the academic year, as well as permitting a later start date, in contrast to option two, which does not allow for optimal recruitment.
- 79.2 A wide ranging discussion followed with contributions from across the University, the main tenets of which included:
- By focusing on the start date for the academic year, there was a risk that students would be disadvantaged, in terms of employment opportunities, by the consequent later end date;
 - Clarification was sought and provided on the impact on employment for international students subject to visa constraints;
 - Concern about the three-term structure was noted from the humanities and social sciences due to conflicts with the research agenda, and it was agreed that the paper would be considered by the Research Committee;
 - It was clarified that the adjustments made to the structure, during discussions since the paper was made available to Senate, referred to the name of Term Three being changed to Summer Teaching Period and that the intention was to produce some consistency in this teaching period for programmes making use of it for in-person teaching;
 - There was discussion of various naming conventions with Term, Semester and Trimester being suggested as possibilities;
 - The need for a break between cohorts was highlighted with teaching through the summer there needed to be some sort of break before the new cohort starts;
 - Overwhelming support from the student body for exams remaining prior to the Winter break was noted;
- 79.3 In drawing discussions to a conclusion, the Principal noted it had not been possible to hear from everyone who wished to contribute and confirmed that contributions should be emailed to Ruth following the meeting.
- 79.4 The Principal guaranteed that the paper would be considered by the Research Committee and that workload issues would be addressed in the next phase of the paper's consideration and reflected in the minutes. Karin Friedrich accepted this formal guarantee and agreed that bringing the submitted motion forward would not be required.

[Clerk's Note: this minute summarises the discussion, pending reflection from contributors on specific comments]

ITEMS FROM THE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH COMMITTEE

RESEARCH CULTURE

- 80.1 Andrew Dilley, Dean for Academic Partnerships & Research Governance, gave a brief presentation (slides available from the [website](#)) updating Senate on work being undertaken around Research Culture, much of which is threaded through a number of other activities. In particular, he highlighted to Senate that the University was one of several institutions which had been invited to bid for up to £1M from the Wellcome Trust for proposals for projects that address research culture. In terms of Aberdeen, this is about developing something distinctive to the University which also offers something distinctive back to the sector. The University had established a cross university working group to develop a bid around advancing inclusive, interdisciplinary research. He asked Senate for their input to help identify some of the barriers to developing interdisciplinary research.
- 80.2 Jen Walklate, School of Social Science commented that as someone working in an interdisciplinary subject, from a department not in a single disciplinary area, this was a particularly welcome project. She commented specifically that it would enable more interdisciplinary communication across departments within the University as a whole. She noted that one of the current best ways for this to take place was through the Museums and Special Collections Forum. She also noted that interdisciplinary research often does not receive appropriate recognition in exercises such as the REF stocktake.
- 80.3 Alessandra Cecolin, School of Divinity, History, Philosophy and Art History noted that working in her field of the Middle East she shared some of the concerns expressed about expressing interdisciplinary research in publications, particularly as some overseas journals do not rate as highly as others, leading to individuals having to make difficult decisions regarding where to submit for best REF return.
- 80.4 Karin Friedrich, School of Divinity, History, Philosophy & Art History sought clarification that both the Research Culture paper and the REF stocktake paper were referring to the same Wellcome Trust bidding round. Andrew confirmed was the case. That being so, Karin queried whether the bid would only support the specialist area of History of Medicine or be supportive of research culture more generally.
- 80.5 Iliia Xpolia, School of Social Science noted that there was only one session planned for gathering inputs to support the bid and expressed the view that this was not sufficient time for such as exercise.
- 80.6 Responding, Andrew confirmed that Lisa Collins from Special Collections and Archives was one of the individuals involved already; he further confirmed that the references to Wellcome in the two papers did refer to the same bid and the bid was not focussing solely on the History of Medicine; he confirmed the Group were aware already of the difficulties encountered in terms of REF for interdisciplinary research and international publications. He concurred that the single session might be an issue for those unable to attend at the scheduled time and encouraged any members in that position to get in touch with the co-ordinator, Hazel Hay. He noted that if there was a strong need for a further evidence-gathering session, this could probably be arranged bearing in mind the timeline constraints.

REF STOCKTAKE AND UPDATE

- 81.1 Marion Campbell, Vice-Principal (Research) provided summary details about the conduct of the REF Stocktake and also about what is known about the next REF exercise, expected to take place in 2028 (slides available from the [website](#)). The first formal information is expected to be received during the summer. Marion detailed that at this stage the expected assessment

window is 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2027; outputs are expected to be from a minimum of one to a maximum of five. The main message learned from REF2021 has been that, in order to generate maximum funding, the focus should be on increasing the proportion of publications of the highest quality and impact rather than volume.

- 81.2 Marion thanked everyone who had participated in the stocktake exercise. The outcome of this exercise, based on one output and scoring mechanisms from REF2021, indicated that approximately 80% of output had an indicative score of 3* or above, with approximately 20% at 4*. The exercise had been useful in helping to identify areas for focus in the future and the need for continued and active support for research going forward. She noted the delaying impact that covid had had on a lot of research output. Marion highlighted that Court had now approved a package to support investment in research worth up to £11M over the next three years. The Action Plan agreed with Court includes a competitive programme of Research Leave for up to 100 academics each year; a visiting scholar scheme; support for developing impact case studies and also an Impact Support Officer within Research & Innovation; up to 100 centrally supported awards for conference attendance; enhanced administrative support for REF and also calibration and impact support training. This support is provided in addition to the work already underway seeking to support a research environment which provides time, resources and the culture to support quality outputs.
- 81.3 Marion gave details of the research leave scheme, due to be launched shortly, intended to support leave from the second half-session of 2023/24. The scheme would run biennially commencing in the late spring.
- 81.4 Karen Scott, School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition queried the difference between the Research Leave scheme and the Pump-Prime Funds, noting the Pump-Prime Funds could also be key for a lot of people.
- 81.5 Katie Gillies, School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition asked whether the Research Leave Scheme could also be used to 'buy-out' clinical academics from NHS responsibilities? She also noted that many of the research projects, which will form the basis of the outputs for the next REF, have already been funded and she queried how the production of quality outputs from these would be supported?
- 81.6 Iliia Xypolia, School of Social Science, asked for a comparison of the current standing, of 80% 3* and 20% 4* outputs, with the similar point in the previous cycle.
- 81.7 Chantal den Daas, School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition, asked how, given that staff are already covering for colleagues who have left and are not being replaced due to the recruitment freeze, will the programme of research leave operate in understaffed groups? Will staff members in these areas be less likely to be awarded research leave as it would create difficulties in covering teaching?
- 81.8 Justin Rochford, School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition, queried what the actual start-times for the research leave, associated with the autumn and spring application rounds, would be?
- 81.9 Jen Walklate, School of Social Science, asked how the proposals would support everyone working in interdisciplinary areas?
- 81.10 Karin Friedrich, School of Divinity, History, Philosophy & Art History queried how long it was anticipated that the visiting professorships would be for? Marion indicated that two per school per year was planned but no indication was given as to how long individuals would stay.
- 81.11 Euan Bain, School of Engineering, noted the intention to backfill a significant proportion of the Institution's teaching staff and queried how the quality of the backfill was going to be maintained so as not to impact on the outstanding and sector leading teaching?

- 81.12 An elected member from the Business School, asked how it would be guaranteed that different people would benefit from sabbaticals? There is an impression that it is the same group usually benefit from sabbaticals. She also queried what the institution was doing to support competitiveness with other Scottish Universities in terms of support for maximising research impact evaluation; time allowed for this at Aberdeen is nothing close to that allocated elsewhere.
- 81.13 Diane Skatun, School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition, noted that it had been acknowledged that some staff had not managed to get a publication, and the possible reasons for that. She queried whether the exercise had any performance management aspect to it in identifying individuals in need of support, or whether the exercise was purely taking stock recognising that many quality publications are not achieved until late on in the REF period?
- 81.14 Responding to the questions; Marion highlighted that Pump-Prime funds (81.4 above) were definitely available for upgrading a 3* to a 4* publication if funding were needed to support, for example, an additional piece of research. She indicated that queries in this context should be directed to Liz Rattray, Marlis Barraclough and herself; in the context of the query regarding buyout of clinical NHS staff (81.5) Marion and the Siladitya Bhattacharya (Head of School, MMSN) confirmed that although they did not know the answer to this they would find out, however it was noted that the issue in the NHS currently is capacity and that money on its own would not be sufficient; in terms of how support would be given to ensure outputs are 4* prior to publication, Marion noted that this can only be achieved through an open, collegiate research culture which encourages authors to seek comment from peers, internally and externally. The achievement of this open culture is something she discussed regularly with Heads of School; in terms of the comparison with 2018 (81.6) Marion noted that exactly comparable data for 2018 was not available, however that were more staff at this point with no papers than there were in 2018 – the Principal asked that the heavily caveated comparison data be made available for members; in the context of the issue raised around capacity (81.7), Marion confirmed that the research leave proposal expects that Teaching Fellow backfill is costed into the proposal and, linking to the quality query (81.11), that it would be for Schools to ensure that the backfill appointed was appropriate to the courses and programmes involved; responding on the expected timelines (81.8) Marion noted that the full paperwork was to be considered by SMT imminently, but the indicative timings for the current round would be for applications submitted by mid-June, decisions would be back to schools by the end of July for research leave during second half-session 2023/24, the system is intended to operate a year ahead; Marion confirmed that there was no fixed term in mind for visiting professors (81.10), but the model in mind was similar to the Fulbright model of one or two months for discussions; Marion noted that the data indicated that some groups were further behind than others (81.12) and that applications would be sought from these groups in particular; the issue of interdisciplinarity in REF (81.9) is acknowledged as a sector wide issue and is core to discussions at the sector level to ensure that it is addressed in the next REF. Marion undertook to speak to those whom she had not had time to answer during the break, but quickly noted the stocktake exercise had been intended to be supportive (81.13).
- 81.15 In closing the discussion, the Principal highlighted the importance of the research agenda in defining the institution as research-intensive and noted that the topic would be returning to Senate regularly in the future.

Karl Leydecker, Senior Vice-Principal chaired this section of the meeting.

ITEMS FROM THE QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE
EXTERNAL EXAMINING ACADEMIC REVIEW – RECOMMENDATIONS

- 82.1 Steve Tucker, Dean for Quality Assurance and Enhancement, presented a summary of work undertaken by a task and finish group which had been set up to review Institutional External Examining processes. These fell into four broad categories: the roles and responsibilities of External Examiners; the training and induction of External Examiners; External Examiner fees and expenses; and communication with External Examiners. Work had included significant research around practises across the Institution, including a questionnaire. The recommendations of the Group together with revised documentation were included in the paper for Senate's approval. In general, recommendations centred around improving and maintaining consistency, transparency and sharing of practice across the Institution. He thanked the Group, chaired by Jason Bohan, for their work on the subject.
- 82.2 Jen Walklate, School of Social Science, in connection with the third bullet point in section 7.3 of the paper queried the notion of a flat-fee and noted that this might prove problematic where a set proportion of papers had to be reviewed for particularly large courses. Steve asked Gillian Mackintosh, Director of Academic Services & Online Education to respond. Gillian noted that the flat-fee model is adopted quite commonly across the sector and recent information shared across the Academic Registrars' Council on the subject would be used to inform the detail for implementation.
- 82.3 Senate approved these recommendations by consensus.

RESOLUTION FOR CHANGES TO VARIOUS DEGREES

- 83.1 Steve outlined the changes being introduced in the draft Resolution to amend degree regulations. The changes fell into four broad categories: replacing Summer School for Access with its new title Access Higher Education; the establishment of a timeline for eligibility to attend an in-person graduation ceremony of one-year following completion of studies; changes required as a result of changes to the articulation agreement with South China Normal University (SCNU) arising as a result of changes required by the Chinese Service Centre for Scholarly Exchange (CSCSE) for the agreement to become a 2 plus 2.5 model to comply with the requirement that students complete at least two thirds of study in Aberdeen; the creation of a Master of Business (MBus) degree which will be an undergraduate degree, similar to the MA but with a requirement that one year is spent abroad.
- 83.2 Senate approved these recommendations by consensus.

CODE OF PRACTICE ON STUDENT DISCIPLINE (ACADEMIC)

- 84.1 Steve outlined the changes being introduced in the draft Resolution to amend the Code of Practice on Student Discipline (Academic), intended to address recent developments in Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools such as Chat GPT to ensure that unacknowledged use of AI tools is captured in the definition of plagiarism.
- 84.2 Richard Hepworth-Young, School of Natural & Computing Sciences, queried paragraph 4.2.1 which referred to Chat GPT having 'acquired' but noted that fundamentally AI 'understands' nothing. Steve responded to confirm the language used would be tidied up.
- 84.3 Karin Friedrich, School of Divinity, History, Philosophy & Art History questioned how such tools could be included in the definition of plagiarism when, as was noted, their use was not detectable? In reply, Steve noted that significant work was ongoing with various tools and pilots which may be able to detect it. Guidelines are available on ways of spotting AI authored work

within the Institution and the University is participating actively in sector-wide discussions in the area and Senate would be kept apprised as the situation develops.

- 84.4 Dragan Jovicic, School of Engineering welcomed the definition, but suggested removing 'unacknowledged' as it is authors that are normally 'acknowledged'. As a robot, AI cannot be acknowledged in this way and hence the word should be removed. Kirsty Kiezebrink, Dean for Educational Innovation, explained that 'unacknowledged' had been used as guidance is due to be published on how to acknowledge use of such tools, to confirm this should be undertaken in the same way as referencing, for example, a blog post which later disappears. The change being proposed aligns with both the sector and institutional guidance on how such sources should be acknowledged. She noted that Libraries are providing further guidance on how use of the tools should be referenced. She further noted that AI tools themselves may be plagiarising and in these instances the onus is on the student to reference the original source correctly.
- 84.5 Greg Gordon, School of Law noted a similar point to that of Dragan. Kirsty reiterated that the University Guidance states explicitly how use of the tool should be referenced, with a set of words provided to indicate the tool used and identify what was done with the information generated. She confirmed that the proposed change needed to read alongside the Guidance provided on the webpage. Acknowledgment of use of the tool across the sector, is being developed using guidance developed by Monash University.
- 84.6 Nicola McIlraith, School of Education Convener, commented on an article on the BBC highlighting where the technology had given false information and concluded that use of the technology should be discouraged as it does not encourage critical thinking. Steve noted that AI seemed likely to be a tool which would persist and therefore ways to incorporate it into teaching, learning and research were required, rather than seeking to outlaw its use which seemed likely to be an impossible task. Kristy noted that the tools do produce false information in addition to producing true information making it important that the University engages with the tools to enable staff and students to use them appropriately and effectively.
- 84.7 in drawing discussion to a conclusion, Karl noted that this was clearly an area for significant debate but noted continuing discussions did not invalidate consideration of the changes being proposed. Senate confirmed by consensus that they were content with this view and approved the changes.

Ruth Taylor, Vice-Principal (Education) chaired this section of the meeting.

**PRESENTATION: STAFF SURVEY RESULTS AND ACADEMIC WORKLOADS:
IDENTIFYING THE ISSUES AND PLANNING ACTIONS.**

- 85.1 Karl Leydecker, Senior Vice-Principal gave a brief presentation (slides available from the [website](#)) updating Senate on the workload issues both positive and negative highlighted by the staff survey and the actions identified to address them. Karl noted that the Staff Survey results had been presented to staff by Heads of School and Directors and Schools and Directorates were developing and implementing plans to address specific feedback. Both SMT and UMG had reflected on the results with various University Committees and Groups undertaking in-depth analysis of various areas of specific relevance. In addition, a new University level Staff Experience Committee was being established, which Karl would chair, to oversee the Staff Survey follow up. Karl highlighted the response from 91% of academic staff that they frequently worked more than their contracted hours as being the most significant finding from the survey. Although similar problems were identified for professional services staff, the problem was

significantly more widespread among academic staff. In response to the survey the Workload Review Group had met to review the results in detail and an Academic Workload Engagement Exercise has been launched, details of which had been sent to all staff. The Group would be seeking to identify the key factors impacting on workload and how they could be overcome as well as the key system/process barriers being faced. Karl noted the relationship between academic workloads and those of professional services staff and the importance of addressing professional service workloads too in order to avoid shifting the pressures from one part of the University to another. Karl highlighted the need to do things differently as there is insufficient funding within the sector, and consequently in the University, to appoint enough staff to carry out current activities and continue to grow.

- 85.2 Richard Hepworth-Young, School of Natural & Computing Sciences, observed that the underlying assumptions seemed to be that we could continue doing what we are despite the funding situation and raised the possibility that maybe we were trying to do too much and rather than keep trying to make things more efficient whether we should be acknowledging that there are some things we just can't do? Karl agreed that this is exactly the approach we should be taking moving forwards.
- 85.3 Karin Friedrich, School of Divinity, History, Philosophy & Art History noted that the issue of over assessment had been identified previously, as well as teaching too many courses. She highlighted that one and a half years to change course assessments was too slow and processes were not agile enough and hampered changes to processes. Karl confirmed that this sort of issue is exactly what the process is seeking to identify and gather together information on.
- 85.4 Euan Bain, School of Engineering commented, in response to Karin's point, that currently we are able to respond very quickly to requests for assessment changes and it was not the case that these take a year and a half. For example, changes to assessment for first half-session of next academic year just needed to be submitted by the end of June this year. Ruth confirmed, as Vice-Principal (Education), that Euan was entirely correct in terms of changes to assessment.
- 85.5 Alessandra Cecolin, School of Divinity, History, Philosophy & Art History noted that the email exchanges required as part of the monitoring system were particularly time consuming and that some sort of automatic system for reinstatement would seriously improve things.
- 85.7 Karen Scott, School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition noted that certain tasks are undertaken by academics very infrequently, resulting in them being particularly time consuming whereas, someone using a system more frequently would undertake the same task much more quickly. As an example, she highlighted the recruitment systems. Karl noted that this was an aspect which had been heard many times across different systems; those staff using a system regularly were able to do so much more quickly when compared with infrequent users. And this was something which would be considered.
- 85.8 Iliia Xypolia, School of Social Science, queried whether TRAC data was taken into consideration, and also noted that there had to be an element of managing expectations as part of the exercise. She noted the importance of defining who should be undertaking specific tasks and that this would be particularly important with the move to a 35-hour working week pattern. In welcoming serious discussions about the workload issues highlighted by the Staff survey she added that there were other concerning figures, such as around bullying and harassment, and she asked what was planned to address these?
- 85.9 Euan Bain, School of Engineering noted that the monitoring system had been discussed extensively in other arenas and highlighted that the legacy systems in use for this are not fit for purpose and permit students to be missed. Due to the widespread impact of the system, it has to be a high priority for action.

- 85.10 Jen Walklate, School of Social Science, concurred with the views of Euan entirely and in addition stated that it isn't just a system problem but also a function of processes and procedures. She noted there were also issues with the Worktribe ethics system resulting in projects being sent to the wrong ethics committees and substantial delays occurring in anthropology and other subject areas.
- 85.11 Responding to the points made, Karl confirmed that the focus on workload did not mean that the other issues identified in the Staff Survey would be ignored and that they would be looked at under the auspices of the Staff Experience Committee, in addition to Schools and Directorates. Karl noted that TRAC data is not gathered for the purposes of assessing individual workloads, it is gathered for part of the return required for the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and discussions are underway looking at whether this could be replaced with data from the workload model. He noted this was the intended direction of travel but that a significant amount of work would be required before this could be achieved. Karl noted that the issues identified in this Senate discussion were exactly the sorts of things which need to be raised and sorted out, and encouraged members to feed into the process either through the face to face sessions or via the email address.

MOTION ON CONSIDERATION OF WORKLOAD IN SENATE PAPERS

- 86.1 Richard Hepworth-Young introduced the motion calling for the inclusion of a specific section in papers for Senate to identify associated workload specifically. The intention behind the motion was to ensure that in approving any proposal Senate was fully aware of any explicit workload implications.
- 86.2 Kirsty Kiezebrink, Dean for Educational Innovation, noted that in the context of the motion's call for papers to include an estimated number of hours of work associated with proposals was quite a complicated task, and queried whether guidance should be made available to assist with this?
- 86.3 Martin Barker, School of Biological Sciences noted that the motion seemed quite logical and queried why it hadn't been done previously.
- 86.4 Karl Leydecker, Senior Vice-Principal, noted that that the proposal seemed entirely appropriate but queried what the workload associated with implementing the proposal would be, and also suggested that it did not align with plans for future workload measurement. He noted the intention was to move away from measuring workload down to the last hour and suggested that nothing would be added to proposals by paper authors trying to calculate precise workload requirements leading to discussions at Senate becoming lengthy and complex. His preference would be for papers to highlight possible workload implications, as Ruth's earlier paper had, rather than trying to exactly quantify time implications.
- 86.5 Chris Collins, School of Language, Literature, Music & Visual Culture suggested the proposal was only half of a possible solution but he suggested taking the approach might lead to Senate voting on proposals on the basis of the time something would take rather than whether it was an important thing to do. The motion ignored consideration of what could be done differently or stopped entirely to accommodate it.
- 86.6 Neil Vargesson, School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition agreed with Chris and noted that the intention of the motion had been to recognise that papers had a workload aspect and that the approach taken in the Academic Year paper was really what Senate was seeking. Papers need to account of the other things staff need to do.
- 86.7 Diane Skatun, School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition noted the intention was to recognise that most papers at Senate add to workload rather than decrease it. She noted that the recent proposal for extending personal tutoring to PGT students would have benefitted from

detailed consideration of the number of hours involved. She highlighted that it was only when a colleague in the Business School provided an estimate of the number of hours involved, that minds were focussed on exactly what would be involved. She suggested that the authors of some papers put forward to Senate do so without thinking of the actual work involved with the proposal and this is why an indication of hours involved was included in the motion.

86.8 Mirela Delibegovic, Dean for Industrial Engagement in Research & Knowledge Transfer commented that including an estimate of hours would be a very personal estimate. She noted that a lot of things being done to improve culture for early career researchers, for example, are queried in terms of how much they will add to workload and the response has to be, the amount of time put in, is a personal choice. In this context Mirela's personal opinion would be that including prescriptive indications in proposals would not be a helpful thing to do.

86.9 Summing up, Ruth suggested that there was general support for the inclusion of an indication of workload implications in papers for Senate. She suggested to the motion proposers that in light of the discussions just had, workload implications should be included in papers but not in terms of hours. Ruth suggested that this approach would allow discussion of the real issues associated with proposals and include consideration of any workload issues. Ruth suggested an amendment to the motion to that effect and queried whether this would be acceptable. As proposer of the motion, Richard Hepworth-Young confirmed he was content for this suggestion to be tried.

(Clerk's note: an amended version of the motion was supplied subsequent to the meeting and was filed with the papers as a replacement SEN22:55)

86.10 Ruth confirmed that this would be taken forward and the meeting closed.