

THE SENATE

Minutes: 27 October 2025

In the Chair: Professor Richard A Williams, Principal and Vice-Chancellor

Present:	Dr Yousef Al-Gumaei Professor Mushtak Al-Atabi Dr Karen Alexander Dr Dima Alkawadri Dr Syed Andrabi Mr Kevin Antony Sahayaraj Professor Lehel Banjai Professor P. A. Muhammed Basheer Professor Ian Baxter Dr Juan Casanova Dr Hassam Chaudhry Dr Florence Chiao Mei Choong Ms Jenny Coady Dr Manuel Cresciani Dr Ross Curran* Professor Paul Dalgarno Dr Louise Delicato Dr Christopher Dodd Professor Joanna Drugan Dr Rofayda ElHout Dr Taha Elhag Dr David Ellis Dr Erkal Ersoy Professor Anna Fenge Mr Cameron Fields Dr Carlos Ferreiro-Rangel Ms Judith Gorham Professor Igor Guz Dr April Henning Dr Adnan Ilyas Dr Ramon Ingla Professor Michel Kaiser Dr Britta Kalkreuter	Dr Barbara Keating Professor Reza Kouhy Professor Angus Laing Dr Suzanne Lampert Dr Florence Chiao Mei Choong Lee Professor Sara Lombardo Professor Dame Heather McGregor Dr Alex MacLaren Dr Stephen Mansell Professor Mercedes Maroto-Valer Ms Holly McAdams Dr Alistair McConnell Professor Martin McCoustra Dr Yvonne McLaren-Hankin Professor Steve McLaughlin Dr Ruaraidh McIntosh Dr Mubbashar Mehmood * Dr Hannah Menke Dr Farnaz Mohsenpour Professor Gillian Murray Dr Senthil Muthukumaraswamy Mr Matthew Myers Dr Yasemin Nielsen Dr Hendrik Nahler Dr Shereen Nassar * Mr Adrian Nathai Professor Mehdi Nazarinia Professor Tadhg O'Donovan Dr Stefano Padilla Professor Beatrice Pelloni	Ms Ruzanna Abd Rahman Dr Marta Romeo Dr Rabee Rustum Professor Christian Saemann Dr Mohammed Saleh Dr Yasaman Sarabi Dr Florian Scheuring Dr M Shadi Mohamed Ms Devanshi Sharma Professor Mercedes Sheen * Dr Hebatallah Shoukry Mr Nader Shouly Mr Karamjeet Singh Ms Andrea Sneddon Dr Ryad Soobhany Dr Kathrin Stark Ms Sabrina Syed Dr Hai Chen Tan Dr Monica Tamariz * Professor Chris Turney Dr Abrar Ullah Dr Marta Vallejo Dr George Vasdravellis Professor Fiona Waldron Dr Robin Westacott Dr Euan Winton Dr Mesfin Woldetensay Dr Tze Cheun Yap
----------	---	---	---

* denotes partial attendance

In attendance:	Professor Fiona Armstrong Professor Martha Caddell Dr Fiona Grant Ms Samantha Kane Dr Maggie King	Mr Fraser Muir Ms Vanessa Northway Ms Kirsty Scanlan Ms Megan Morgan (Clerk)
----------------	---	---

Apologies:	Ms Lilja Piuli Alam Dr David Brown Dr David Cavallaro Mr Andrew Hock Cheong Dr Demitrios Cotsovos Dr Neamat Elgayar Dr Yun li Go Dr Noor Zainab Habib Dr Craig Kennedy Ms Jasmine Low	Dr Jia Lu Dr Richard McCracken Dr Thomas Methven Ms Ruth Moir Dr Phil Renforth Dr Lucy Robertson Professor John Sawkins Dr Nazia Talat Dr Katriona Myhill Dr Vahid Razaviarani
------------	--	---

MINUTE
REF

ACTION BY ACTION DATE

M25/65 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

65.1 The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting and noted the apologies as recorded above.

M25/66 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 26 AUGUST 2025 (SE-25-50)

66.1 The Senate **approved** the minutes of the meeting held on 26 August 2025 as a fair and accurate record and reflection of the meeting.

M25/67 ACTIONS LOG (SE-25-51)

67.1 The Senate **noted** the Actions Log. It was agreed that the completed actions would now be removed from the Log.

M25/68 DEEP DIVE ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (SE-25-38)

68.1 The Senate **noted** the report and accompanying video, presented by the Deputy Principal (Education and Student Life) and Global Director of IS. The report outlined the University's approach to Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a core digital competency for staff and students, with progress outlined on governance, guidance and the AI manifesto.

68.2 In discussion, Senators welcomed the University's commitment to a strategic approach across three lenses: teaching and learning, research and operational effectiveness. Senators highlighted the need for clear and consistent guidance, particularly for PGR students and supervisors. Current practice varied significantly, which created uncertainty around acceptable use of AI tools for research activities such as transcription. It was noted that the Research Futures Hub was updating PGR supervisor training which included AI guidance.

68.3 Senators discussed the role of AI in academic integrity. It was agreed that AI should be positioned as an enabler, rather than, a replacement and that students must be prepared to use AI critically and ethically. The potential reputational risks of unregulated use were acknowledged, and the University would continue to consider safety, security and sustainability as the adoption of AI increased.

68.4 The Senate noted the institutional guidance which required course teams to specify permitted AI use in assessments, supported by an AI Assessment Scale, and highlighted the need for authentic assessment design to mitigate risks of misconduct. The [Artificial Intelligence SharePoint Hub](#) would be a key resource to showcase AI applications, best practice and guidelines. It was agreed that the AI Futures Group would continue to harness internal expertise, which included colleagues actively researching AI and ensure representation from across Schools. The Global Director of IS confirmed that work was underway to expand access to licensed tools and provide training materials via SharePoint. The Chair concluded that AI literacy would become a core component of curricula and professional development, aligned with Strategy 2035. Collaboration with industry partners would be essential to prepare graduates for AI-enabled workplaces.

FM

Ongoing

The Senate **noted** the update.

M25/69 REPORT FROM THE PRINCIPAL AND VICE-CHANCELLOR (SE-25-52)

69.1 The Senate **noted** the report presented by the Chair, which outlined recent institutional achievements and sector developments.

69.2 The Chair thanked Senators for strong attendance at the recent induction and confirmed that induction would become mandatory for all Senators, with timing adjusted to support global engagement. The Chair paid tribute to the late Chancellor, Professor Emeritus Sir Geoff Palmer KT OBE. A memorial service celebrating his life and legacy had taken place on 10 October 2025 at St Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh. His lifelong commitment to education and equality was acknowledged as central to the University's values.

Clerk

August 2026

The Chair highlighted progress on national rankings and reputation, with work underway to improve NSS outcomes, QS rankings and research citations. The Chair re-affirmed the University's commitment to advancing Strategy 2035 and strengthening its global profile.

M25/70 TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION PROJECT FOR EXPANSION IN THE MIDDLE EAST (SE-25-64)

70.1 The Senate received an update from the Provost and Vice-Principal (Dubai) on the proposed transnational education initiative in the Middle East. The Chair outlined the strategic rationale for the project, noting its alignment with Strategy 2035, the University's mission to extend global reach and the objective of diversifying revenue streams to support long-term sustainability. The timeline of engagement was summarised, including governance approvals and licensing requirements currently in progress.

70.2 Senators discussed the opportunities presented by the initiative, including the potential to strengthen academic partnerships, broaden programme delivery, and enhance the University's international profile. The importance of maintaining academic integrity, quality assurance and compliance with institutional standards was highlighted, with assurance that HWU would retain full academic control and operate within its established frameworks. It was confirmed that accreditation requirements had been reviewed and risk oversight was being managed through an advisory board and formal governance processes.

70.3 The discussion acknowledged concerns raised by some Senators regarding cultural and ethical considerations, equality and diversity and reputational risk. These were balanced by views that education can act as a catalyst for positive change and that the University's experience in other regions demonstrated the value of engagement. Senators agreed that continued consultation, transparency and clear communication would be essential as the project developed.

70.4 The Senate **noted** the update and agreed that a further paper, including programme details, would be brought to the Senate in November 2025 meeting for continued consideration.

HMG/LJ November 2025

M25/71 SENATE PRIORITIES 2025-2026 AND PRINCIPLES FOR MEETINGS (SE-25-53)

71.1 The Senate considered the proposed Senate priorities and principles for meetings in 2025-2026, presented by the Chair. The priorities had been developed following feedback from the August 2025 planning meeting and had been endorsed by SCIBE. The principles set out the intention to ensure meetings were strategically focused, inclusive and effective. Key principles included maintaining transparency, fostering active engagement and embedding opportunities for feedback and continuous improvement.

71.2 Senators welcomed the approach and agreed that the priorities and principles would be a standing agenda item at future Senate meetings and cascaded through Senate committees to ensure coherence and alignment throughout governance structures.

71.3 It was agreed that Senate meetings would adopt the same hands-up voting approach as the Court, using the Teams 'raise hand' function for clarity and transparency in decision-making. Senators welcomed the introduction of measures to strengthen Senate's effectiveness and governance. It was noted that the adoption of formal voting represented a significant enhancement in transparency and decision-making processes, and while further improvements may be considered, this development was regarded as an important step forward.

Clerk Immediate

71.4 Following discussion, the Senate **approved** the priorities for 2025-2026 and principles for meetings.

M25/72 GLOBAL STUDENT UPDATE (SE-25-54)

72.1 The Senate **noted** the update presented by the Global Student Representative Bodies (GSRB). The update provided insights from Big 6 survey data 2024-2025 and the Mid-Semester Survey from Semester 1 2025.

72.2 Key themes included employability confidence, awareness of support services, feedback quality, opportunities to embed skills development and AI literacy into learning. Progress was noted in enhanced officer training, collaboration with external partners and the rollout of AI guidance. The Senate noted that next steps would focus on strengthening career support, delivering AI workshops and improving feedback mechanisms across all campuses.

M25/73 SCHOOL OF TEXTILES AND DESIGN PROPOSAL (SE-25-55)

73.1 The Senate considered the proposal to disestablish the School of Textiles and Design (SOTD) as a Primary Academic Unit and integrate its academic activities within the School of Social Sciences (SoSS), while retaining SOTD's distinct identity. The Vice-Principal and Provost and Executive Dean (SOSS) outlined the rationale, noting the administrative pressures on SOTD as a small unit, the opportunity to create efficiencies and the potential to strengthen academic synergies. Senators acknowledged recent investment in the Borders campus and the importance of preserving the School's heritage and growing design profile.

73.2 In discussion, Senators queried the consultation process, noting that anonymity in the staff survey might have encouraged more candid feedback. Questions were asked about the implications of creating a significantly larger School and whether this represented a strategic direction of travel. It was clarified that size reflected student numbers rather than structural intent and that Senate would retain consultation of governance decisions.

73.3 Senators highlighted opportunities for cross-school collaboration, joint teaching and research projects and enhanced connectivity across campuses. The potential to reposition the Borders campus and strengthen postgraduate provision was noted. The Chair highlighted that the proposal offered scope for growth and synergy if managed inclusively and transparently.

73.4 Following discussion, the Senate **recommended** the proposal to the Court. Next steps include a series of themed workshops to address identity, operational systems, collaboration and campus-specific priorities, ensuring continued staff and student engagement. A further report would be presented to Senate in April 2026 to review progress.

SMCL

April 2026

M25/74 MODIFICATIONS TO REGULATION A7: AWARDS (SE-25-56)

74.1 The Senate **approved** the proposed modifications to Regulation A7: Awards, presented by the Chair of the Ordinances and Regulations Committee (ORC).

74.2 The amendment would include provision for the Master of Research (MRes) degree under Section 8: *Higher Degree of Master*, correcting an omission identified during development of a joint MRes programme with an international partner.

M25/75 REPORT FROM THE UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING (SE-25-57)

75.1 The Senate **approved** the revised Terms of Reference.

75.2 The revised Terms of Reference included minor updates to improve clarity on UCLT's role in the student experience. The Senate **noted** the remainder of the report.

M25/76 REPORT FROM THE SENATE COMMITTEE FOR INTERIM BUSINESS AND EFFECTIVENESS (SE-25-58)

76.1 The Senate considered the report from the Senate Committee for Interim Business and Effectiveness (SCIBE), presented by the Chair.

76.2 The Senate **noted** the Effectiveness Report and welcomed the measures introduced following survey feedback which included increased feedback mechanisms, expanded in-person engagement, preparatory video briefings and a dedicated SharePoint site.

76.3 The Senate **agreed** that continued monitoring and feedback on meeting effectiveness would be essential.

76.4 The Senate **approved** the appointment of Jennifer Coady as Dean (Pan-University Constituency) to 28 October 2028. The Senate **approved** the SCIBE Assurance Check for 2024-2025.

76.5 The Senate **approved** the SCIBE Assurance Check for 2024-2025.

M25/77 ANNUAL INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY REPORT (SE-25-62)

77.1 The Senate considered the Annual Institutional Quality Report, presented by the Head of Academic Quality. Senators commended the paper as clear, comprehensive and highly informative. The Senate confirmed that the report demonstrated the effectiveness of, and confidence in, the University's processes for managing quality and standards, associated risks, and for enhancing learning, teaching and the student experience.

77.2 The Senate **endorsed** the report for onwards transmission to the Audit and Risk Committee and the SFC.

M25/78 REPORT FROM UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOR QUALITY AND STANDARDS (SE-25-60)

78.1 The Senate **noted** the report.

M25/79 REPORT FROM UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION (SE-25-61)

79.1 The Senate **noted** the report.

M25/80 SENATE FORWARD AGENDA PLAN 2025-2026 (SE-25-63)

80.1 The Senate **noted** the forward agenda plan.

M25/81 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

81.1 Thursday 27 November 2025
 Thursday 05 February 2026
 Wednesday 22 April 2026
 Thursday 11 June 2026