WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair welcomed all participants to the meeting.

It was noted that steps would be taken to bolster the ability of members joining from Dubai and Malaysia to participate in meetings of the Senate. The Secretary of the University, the Director of IS and their teams were investigating suitable solutions.
MIN REF
M18/02  MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
Received  The minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2017.
Approved  The Senate approved the minutes as a correct record, with an amendment to the list of members present, and an amendment to M17/86 to reflect the intention for a paper to be brought to the Senate for consideration.

M18/03  MATTERS ARISING
Noted  There were no matters arising from the minutes that were not already listed on the agenda.

M18/04  REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE SENATE [Paper: SEN/18/01]
Received  A report from the Chair of the Senate, which provided a view of key issues and news for the University and the wider HE sector.
Noted  The Chair drew the attention of Senators to the recent success of the School of Mathematical and Computer Sciences in being named as Europe's first Centre of Actuarial Excellence (item 8 in the report). It was recognised that this was a significant achievement, and was a testimony to the expertise and hard work of colleagues in the School.

The Chair thanked and congratulated all colleagues involved in the recent international event, in which colleagues and Students had celebrated the international nature and the diversity of the University.

The Chair highlighted the recent discussion paper from the Commissioner for Fair Access, Sir Peter Scott (item 1). This challenging paper dealt with Retention, Outcomes and Destinations for full-time first degree students from deprived backgrounds, and was commended to Senators to read and digest. It was noted that there would be opportunity for the Senate to return to the themes in the paper in future discussions. It was suggested that the topics might usefully be considered by the University Committee for Learning and Teaching in the first instance. The report can be viewed at:  https://beta.gov.scot/publications/commissioner-fair-access-discussion-paper-retention-outcomes-destinations/

With regard to student recruitment for Session 2018/19 (Item 3), the Chair reported that the current overall position was satisfactory but delicate. It was emphasised that further work was required in Schools and centrally to ensure that the actual recruitment in autumn 2018 met the targets that were required to enhance the future well-being of the University.

The Chair reminded the Senate of the forthcoming distinguished lectures, noting that the following excellent speakers had agreed to come to Heriot-Watt: Professor David Lane CBE, Founding Director of the Edinburgh Centre for Robotics (Dubai Campus on 13 February 2018); Professor Max Lu, President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Surrey (Edinburgh Campus on 20 February 2018); and Professor Dame Jane Francis, Director of British Antarctic Survey (Edinburgh Campus on 5 April 2018). Senators were urged to attend as many of the lectures as possible, and were reminded that all colleagues and Students were very welcome at these events.

The Chair drew the attention of Senators to a letter he had sent to Staff the previous day with regard to the dispute over proposed changes to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS). It was noted that the trade union for academic Staff and many in the professional services, UCU, had voted to undertake strike action, and action short of a strike, in the coming weeks in protest over the proposed changes to USS. It was noted that pension provision was an important element of the competitive reward package that the University provided to help to retain and attract high quality Staff.

The Chair re-stated the background to the complex matter of ensuring the long-term sustainability of the Scheme, and expressed empathy with those who would be adversely affected by the changes. It was emphasised that the pensions regulator required action to address the significant future deficit in the Scheme and that sector-wide decisions would have
MIN REF

Approved at the Senate meeting on 23 April 2018

to be taken with regard to securing the longer term viability. Some detail was explained of the complex proposed changes, and it was suggested that the likely impact of these changes was not yet commonly understood among Staff.

The Chair expressed disappointment at the extent of the industrial action, whilst respecting the freedom of individuals to undertake that action. It was emphasised that the senior staff of the University were committed to continue to work with colleagues to seek to minimise the impact on the student experience of the industrial action. It was noted that discussions would be held between University management and the local UCU representatives.

A number of points were raised in discussion, and it was noted that there was strong feeling on the topic among many Staff. A strong desire was also expressed to protect the student experience. It was noted that, wherever possible, Students would be informed at the earliest opportunity of classes being cancelled, or other effects of the industrial action. Due to the nature of the action, there would often be little or no notice of such consequences. It was recognised that any negative impact on the student experience could have an adverse effect on the outcome of the latest iteration of the National Student Survey. It was suggested as imperative, therefore, for colleagues to work in partnership to seek to ensure that the student experience would not suffer. It was reported that the forthcoming Student Union AGM in Edinburgh would have speakers from the University Executive and the UCU.

It was noted that any salary deductions made from colleagues taking industrial action would be used to maintain the quality of the student learning experience. This would include a contribution to the Student Hardship Fund. It was noted that in previous disputes involving academic Staff in recent years, all withheld pay had been put to the Student Hardship Fund.

An objection was recorded with regard to the publicity being given to a fashion graduate being chosen to create clothing for the Scottish representative at the 'Miss World' contest. In related discussion, it was noted that the University's Equality and Diversity action plan was in full operation, but that its visibility could be enhanced.

The Senate noted the Report.

M18/05 UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING [Paper: SEN/17/53]

Received The minutes of the meetings of the University Committee for Learning and Teaching (UCLT) that had been held on 3 October; 1 November; and 6 December 2017. These minutes had initially been submitted to the Senate meeting on 14 December 2017.

Noted That the UCLT had put forward several items that would require significant discussion by the Senate. There had been insufficient time at the previous meeting of the Senate to devote to the matters, and so they had been deferred to this meeting. The energy of the work of the Standing Committees of the Senate was recognised, as was the importance of the Senate to consider the matters brought forward from each of its Standing Committees.

Considered Each in turn of the matters detailed in the paper, with an explanatory narrative provided by the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching), supported by the Head of Academic Quality and the Director of Learning and Teaching in the School of Engineering and Physical Sciences.

Paper SEN/17/53(a) presented a number of matters for consideration.

The UCLT sought a view from the Senate as to whether all Undergraduate Integrated Masters and Taught Postgraduate Masters degrees across all Schools should become classified awards. It was noted that this was common practice in other institutions.

The UCLT brought to the attention of the Senate the lack of academic support provision for students from areas categorised in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). It was noted that proposals would be put to the University Executive (UE) for this to be addressed, along with the need for learning analytics provision to underpin the early identification of students at risk and thereby provide targeted, timely interventions. It was noted that a sub-group of the UCLT would meet shortly to help take forward the widening access elements of the University’s Strategic Plan.
The UCLT brought to the attention of the Senate a suggestion that the responsibility (both at executive and committee level) regarding the whole student experience, could benefit from clarification. In particular, it was noted that aspects related to the wider student experience were outwith the remit of UCLT, and that this was a particular concern in relation to the experience of widening participation students. It was noted that the UE would consider this matter, and that any proposed modification to the remit of any Standing Committee of the Senate would be brought to the Senate for consideration.

It was noted that the Secretary of the University would consider the request from UCLT for resources to conduct an investigation into the extent to which an attainment gap exists at HWU across all characteristics groups. The Senate expressed interest in receiving a report of the outcome of the investigation in due course.

Paper SEN/17/53(b) presented matters for information. The Senate wished to recognise the efforts of colleagues at School level who are engaged in broadening access.

Paper SEN/17/53(c) presented a number of matters for consideration. The Senate was invited to approve the revised policy for Academic Integrity to replace the current, more narrowly-focused and outdated Plagiarism Policy, as presented in Appendix 2 of the paper. It was requested that implementation should be from the start of Semester 1, 2018/19. It was noted that an awareness campaign was planned in conjunction with the respective Student Presidents.

The UCLT put forward a proposal for revising student-related academic policies and associated procedures with students at the centre in the design of effective and efficient services. It was noted that this ‘World Wide Watt’ approach would include working in partnership with the Student Administration Revitalisation Programme (SARP).

The Senate considered a proposal regarding General Degrees. It was noted that the UCLT had not reached consensus on the matter, and wished to put the matter to the Senate for consideration. It was noted that proposals had been developed further to recommendations made by the Senate at its meeting on 25 January 2017. The development process had been led by the Associate Director of Studies - Engineering, in the School of Engineering and Physical Sciences.

The Senate discussed different elements of the proposals for introduction of institution-wide General Degrees. It was noted that the proposals had been informed by evidence presented by individual Staff in different Schools and from different campuses, but that there had been no market data sought. The contribution of the existing Combined Studies programmes was recognised. It was noted that many of the students who currently choose this route, where available, are of high quality. It was suggested that the proposals could have beneficial effects for widening access and to enhance retention. The need was recognised to brand clearly and resource adequately the initiatives to enhance retention and widen access. In discussion a suggestion was put that a ‘major and minor’ approach could be considered. It was noted that further work would require to be undertaken, and that consideration would be given by the UE in the first instance.

Agreed

The Senate agreed in principle that all Undergraduate Integrated Masters and Taught Postgraduate Masters degrees across all Schools should become classified. It was noted that the detail of the classification would be consulted upon, and that a proposal would be brought back to the Senate for approval.

The Senate approved the revised policy for Academic Integrity, as presented in Appendix 2 of the paper, and agreed to its implementation from Semester 1, 2018/19.

The Senate endorsed the approach to revising student-related academic policies as presented in Appendix 3.

The Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) agreed to revisit the proposals for the introduction of institution-wide General Degrees, including to consider timing issues, and to submit a paper to the UE in the first instance before bringing further proposals to the Senate.
CREATING OUR FUTURE UPDATE

A verbal update from the Principal and Vice-Chancellor on the steps intended to be taken towards the creation of a modified academic structure to deliver an effective, integrated global University.

Noted

It was noted that it was intended for a paper containing a firm proposal to be brought to a future meeting of the Senate (e.g. April 2018). The Senate would be asked to agree a recommendation that would then be put to the Court for approval. Prior to that, it would be helpful for dialogue to be conducted so that Senators could express views on the matter.

Agreed

It was therefore agreed that two informal, workshop-style, meetings of Senators would be held in March/April 2018. The informal nature would be intended to facilitate broad discussion on the proposed modified structure, and on the rationale for the change. It was noted that draft outline proposals would be circulated ahead of these sessions, and that the discussions would help to shape the proposals for formal consideration by the Senate. The dates for these informal meetings would be issued shortly.

RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK (REF) 2021 STRATEGY AND PREPARATIONS

A presentation by the Deputy Principal (Research and Innovation) outlining some recent decisions with regard to the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021, and reporting the outcome of a recent review of the readiness of the University for REF 2021.

Noted

It was noted that the census date for persons to be in post for consideration in REF 2021 would be 31 July 2020, and that the latest date for publications to be considered would be 31 December 2020. The Senate noted the decisions that had been taken on Outputs and on Impact. It was noted that the University was aiming for 100% ORCID compliance, and that the School Directors of Research were supporting colleagues to help achieve that aim. Other decision were noted to relate to jointly authored output, and exceptional circumstances. It was further noted that a Code of Practice to ensure fairness, equality and diversity would be required to be submitted for approval (probably Spring 2019).

The intention was reported for 100% of eligible staff to be included in the return. In the previous exercise 85% of eligible staff had been included. It was noted that work was on-going to ensure that all contracts had properly been recorded on the iHR system. Work was also on-going in Schools to ensure that colleagues were undertaking research activity consistent with their contracts. It was noted that there was still the opportunity for colleagues employed with Teaching-only contracts to seek to gain contractual recognition of Research activities that they may be undertaking. It was suggested that it would be unlikely for there to be many colleagues for whom a change away from a Research contract would be appropriate.

The Senate was informed of the categories that had been applied to Impact Assessment. The initial ‘snapshot’ analysis of preparedness of each Unit of Assessment was provided. It was noted that work was on-going to enhance the position, and there remained sufficient time to ensure a robust submission. It was noted that detailed work continued with the University of Edinburgh with regard to joint research activities. It was further noted that the impact case studies were being updated, and that the institutional environment statement was also being worked upon. It was noted that individual colleagues would receive feedback on how their outputs had been scored.

The Senate considered the means by which the predictions had been made. It was noted that the 2014 REF outcomes had been the starting point, and that the external calibration work would help to fine tune these, as would further detailed analysis of the data as more detail became available. It was emphasised that the information presented was yet to be sharpened up, and that significant work would continue in the Schools over the months ahead.

The Senate thanked the Deputy Principal (Research and Innovation) for the presentation, and looked forward to returning to the topic as the process of preparing for REF 2021 continued.
The report of a meeting held on 24 January 2018, which included matters considered by correspondence from December 2017 to January 2018.

The Senate noted that, among other business, the SCIBE had agreed: to put forward Dr Ghaith, Dean (Science and Engineering), as the Dean to serve as the member of the Court; the committee responsibilities of the new Deans; some revisions to the Terms of Reference for the University Committee for Research and Innovation; the composition of some interview panels for professorial appointments; the granting of honorary titles, including an Emeritus Professorship; and the granting of interim awards.

It was noted that a call for expressions of interest had been made with regard to the Associate Deans. The Senate would be informed of the outcome of that process.

It was noted that a call for expressions of interest had been made with regard to some committee appointments, including an elected Senator to serve on the SCIBE. Any Senators interested in any of these positions were invited to contact the clerk to the Senate.

The report of business conducted by the Committee, which included: a proposal to introduce a validation process for Graduate Level Apprenticeships; a review of the Annual Monitoring and Review process; an Internal Audit progress review; a report of the Quality Assurance Agency Educational Oversight Monitoring visit to the West London College.

To approve the validation process for Graduate Level Apprenticeships as detailed in the paper.

The report of business conducted by the Academic Council, which included some proposed revisions to the Terms of Reference. It was noted that these revisions would be put to the Senate Committee for Interim Business and Effectiveness for consideration in due course.

The Senate welcomed the report, which had been the first submitted from the Academic Council (Malaysia) for some time.

The report of business conducted by the Committee, which included: reports from external examiners; new programme proposals; and withdrawal of programmes.
The Chair’s Actions taken between meetings as reported in the minutes related to: the approval of thesis titles and the appointment of internal and external examiners for specified research students; the appointment of approved supervisors for specified research students; amendments to students’ registration; the appointment of external examiners for postgraduate taught programmes.

The Senate noted that the consideration of resource implications and costings for proposed programmes was outwith the remit of this Committee, and should not, therefore, be discussed at meetings. It was emphasised that the Postgraduate and Undergraduate Studies Committees should be concerned solely with ensuring the academic merits of proposals for new or modified programmes.

**M18/13 UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE** [Paper: SEN/18/07]

*Received*  
The minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2017.

*Noted*  
The report of business conducted by the Committee, which included: consideration of a request to compulsorily withdraw a student from a programme; a new programme proposal and a modified programme proposal.

The Chair’s Actions taken between meetings as reported in the minutes related to: the approval of amendments to students’ registration, and the appointment of external examiners for undergraduate programmes.

The Senate noted that Dr Ghaith recently had been appointed as Chair of the Committee, and welcomed him to the role.

**M18/14 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

*Noted*  
That the next business meeting of the Senate would be held on Thursday 12 April 2017 in the Craig Room, James Watt Centre, commencing at 9.30 am (UK time).

That the arrangements would be announced shortly for the informal meetings of the Senate to conduct initial discussions on the academic structure of the University.

*Received*  
The proposed schedule of meetings for Sessions 2018/19 and 2019/20. It was noted that the dates as proposed would allow for three meetings on Wednesday mornings and two on Thursdays (as per the convention initially agreed in 2016). It was noted that all meetings of the Senate would commence at 9.30 am (UK time) and would normally be planned to continue for approximately two and a half hours.

*Agreed*  
The Senate was content with its forward schedule of meetings as listed:

**2018/19:**
- Wednesday 12 September 2018
- Thursday 13 December 2018
- Wednesday 27 February 2019
- Thursday 11 April 2019
- Wednesday 12 June 2019

**2019/20:**
- Wednesday 11 September 2019
- Thursday 12 December 2019
- Wednesday 26 February 2020
- Thursday 23 April 2020
- Wednesday 17 June 2020

**M18/15 CLOSING REMARKS**

*Noted*  
The Chair thanked all members and attendees for their patience with the difficult communications during the meeting, and closed the meeting.