THE SENATE

In the Chair: Professor Richard A Williams

Present Also:
- Professor Scott Arthur
- Dr Tessa Berg
- Dr Lyonell Boulton
- Dr Jim Cameron
- Professor Malcolm Chrisp
- Professor Patrick Corbett
- Mr Shai Davido
- Dr Christopher Dodd
- Dr Alan Forster
- Professor Ian Galbraith
- Dr Fadi Ghaith *
- Dr Alan Gow
- Dr Amos Haniff
- Professor Gillian Hogg
- Dr Stephen Houston
- Dr David Jenkins
- Professor Julian Jones
- Professor Ammar Kaka *
- Dr Sara Keith
- Professor Omar Laghouache
- Professor Stuart Macgregor
- Professor Robert Macintosh

In Attendance:
- Ms Ann Marie Dalton-Pillay
- Ms Sue Collier
- Mr Jay Clifford
- Mr Diarmuid Cowan
- Ms Lucy Graham
- Dr Maggie King
- Ms Kathy McCabe
- Mr Richard McGookin
- Mr Paul Travill
- Mr David Baskill (Invited attendee)
- Dr Guy Walker (Invited attendee)
- Mr John McDermott (Clerk)

* Indicates member participating remotely

Apologies:
- Professor Mushtak Al-Atabi
- Dr Frédéric Bosché
- Dr Rink Van Dijke
- Dr Catherine Donnelly
- Dr Shumei Gao
- Dr Lilia Georgieva
- Dr Aude Le Guennec
- Professor Angus Macdonald
- Professor Heather McGregor
- Mr Dilip Mothiram
- Dr Mehdi Nazarinia
- Dr Gina Netto
- Mrs Vanessa Northway
- Mr Mutasim Nour
- Professor Raffaela Ocone
- Professor Isabelle Perez
- Ms Jane Priest
- Professor Verena Rieser
- Dr James Richards
- Professor John Sawkins
- Dr Bill Wallace
- Dr Tom Ward

MIN REF
M18/32

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair welcomed all participants to the meeting, including those colleagues joining remotely from Dubai, and two colleagues, Mr Baskill and Dr Walker, who had been invited to contribute to the Online Provision discussion item.

The Chair noted that this would be the final meeting for a number of Senators, including the out-going SU President and SU Vice-President, Community. It was noted to also be the first meeting to be attended by the new Student Union officers, Mr Singh (SU President) and Mr
Robson Renner (SU Vice-President, Community), who were congratulated on their election success and welcomed to membership of the Senate. The Chair also congratulated Ms Graham on her re-election for a second year as Vice-President (Scottish Borders Campus).

The apologies for absence were recorded.

**M18/33 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

*Received*  
The minutes of the meeting held on 23 April 2018.

*Approved*  
The Senate approved the minutes as a correct record, following the correction of some dates of meetings of Standing Committees.

**M18/34 MATTERS ARISING**

**18/34.1 Creating our Future – Progress Report**

*Received*  
A verbal report from the Principal and Vice-Chancellor, which noted that work remained on track for the Senate to receive a formal proposal at its September meeting for the future academic structure of the University.

The Deputy Principal (Research and Innovation) gave a further verbal update on the progress of discussions since the previous meeting of Senate in relation to the formulation of appropriate structures to support the enhancement of research across all campuses of the University. It was noted that there had been reflection on the feedback received at the workshops, and consideration given to how best to address concerns that had been raised.

*Noted*  
It was noted that the Senate had on two previous occasions considered joint submissions from the Head of School of Social Sciences and the Executive Dean of Edinburgh Business School with regard to developments aimed at closer working between the two Schools. It was noted that these developments were very important for the University, both academically and financially, and it was proposed that the Senate invite the Head of SoSS and the Executive Dean of EBS to bring a proposal to the Senate early in Session 2018/19 to give greater detail as to how a closer relationship between the Schools might work.

The Secretary of the University reminded the Senate that the EBS was a distinct Charitable entity within the University, with its own Board and own Strategy. This would require there to be careful consideration given to governance arrangements. Accordingly, there had been initial ‘Trustee to Trustee’ conversations between members of the EBS Board and members of the University Court, with a remit to explore all possible models of relationship. It was emphasised that any future decisions would have to accord with the charitable aims of both the University and EBS. The Board of EBS was passionate for the success of EBS and the University. It was noted that although the EBS had been established as a separate entity, it had always made awards under the auspices of the Senate. There had also been increasing levels of joint working in recent times, and the relationship had evolved considerably.

It was noted that a report from a Strategic perspective would be considered by the Court in due course, with the Senate to discuss the academic implications. It was noted that the University Executive would consider the resourcing implications of the relationship, and appropriate tailoring of the planning process.

*Agreed*  
That the Head of SoSS and the Executive Dean of EBS would bring a proposal to the Senate early in Session 2018/19 to give greater detail of the closer relationship between the Schools.

**M18/35 REPORT FROM THE PRINCIPAL AND VICE-CHANCELLOR [Paper: SEN/18/19]**

*Received*  
A report from the Principal and Vice-Chancellor, which gave the Senate a summary of key issues and news for the University and the wider HE sector.

*Noted*  
The Principal and Vice-Chancellor informed the Senate that the projections for Student recruitment for Session 2018/19 suggested an overall satisfactory picture, with some areas of strength, and others where improvement was required. It was noted that recruitment to
programmes in Dubai had improved considerably, showing the benefit of the enhanced recruitment activities and the tremendous efforts of the Provost and Staff of the Campus. It was noted that the University would be in Clearing to help meet the increased target for Students from ‘SIMD 20’ backgrounds. Clearing would also be required to fill the required places for ‘Rest of UK’ Students. The Principal and Vice-Chancellor emphasised the imperative of the University meeting, and exceeding where permissible, all recruitment targets.

The Principal and Vice-Chancellor highlighted to the Senate the recently published ‘League Table’ in the Guardian newspaper, and noted that the University's reduced standing in this could potentially have a negative impact on Student recruitment. It was noted that further analysis would be provided to the Senate. The importance was emphasised of enhanced recruitment activity, as well as other marketing, to project the University's positive messages. It was recognised that, whilst there were areas that could be improved, there was a significant amount of excellent practice and much that the University could be proud of and should celebrate. It was emphasised that the ‘League Table’ did not reflect the calibre of Staff at the University.

The Chair highlighted positive activity and achievement within the University. The recognition of the Student Union as NUS Student Union of the Year 2018 was reported. Congratulations were offered to the President, the Executive, and the staff of the Student Union. Congratulations were also extended to Dr Donnelly, Senator, and Associate Professor in the School of MACS, who had been invited to join the expert panel to examine the valuation of the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS).

The Senate noted the success of the Centres for Doctoral Training in the University. It was noted that the success of these was an important marker of the growing reputation of the University, and had also contributed to the gaining of significant research grants.

**Considered**

The Senate discussed some of the factors that had been reflected in the Guardian League Table, with particular focus on underlying factors that had contributed to the National Student Survey (NSS) outcome for 2017 (noting that the 2018 NSS outcome would be announced in late July). It was suggested that the University's Student:Staff Ratios (SSRs) usefully could be assessed, with analysis conducted of the correlation between the size of SSRs and Student satisfaction. It was recognised that different subject areas might show different impacts. A potential impact on Student satisfaction of the industrial action earlier in 2018 was noted. It was suggested that Staff in some areas of the University were engaged in too large a number of courses, and that Schools might usefully deliver programmes that were more prescriptive. It was further suggested that important conversations required to be conducted regarding Staff morale, and that the Senate had an important role to play in this regard to engage with colleagues in order to address underlying issues. The Secretary of the University was available to provide HR support to teams as required.

It was noted that the University Committee for Learning and Teaching would continue to gather and assess different types of evidence, including external examiner reports, to inform evidence-led programmes of action to continue to enhance the Student experience. It was further noted that the on-going development of the Strategic Plan offered an opportunity to look some years ahead, and to plan appropriately, with resources gained and applied accordingly.

The Senate noted the Report.

**M18/36**

**DEVELOPING OUR ONLINE CAPABILITIES** [Presentation]

The Principal and Vice-Chancellor introduced the discussion topic, which offered a timely and useful opportunity for the Senate to learn and contribute to the discussions on the development of the University’s online capabilities. The Director of Information Systems gave a presentation on developing online capacity. The Deputy Principal (Engagement and Staff Development) gave a presentation regarding the development of on-line taught Masters provision. It was noted that the Executive Chair of SCHOLAR had been invited to contribute to the meeting but had been unable to attend due to a prior commitment.

**Noted**

That the development of online delivery capacity was crucial to enhancing the ability of the University to keep pace with the expectations of Students, and to open different markets for
the excellent programmes on offer. The additional income available from the expansion of online provision was noted to be an important contribution to the sustainability of the University.

It was noted that there was significant expertise within the University to support online delivery, and that a project was underway to draw this together and to seek ways of enhancing the capabilities. It was noted that whilst in the first instance, the University would make modest advances, this project would identify options for the desired step change and would work up a fuller project scope and business case. The Senate would be involved in further discussions in due course.

The Senate was informed of the specific development of online provision for Masters programmes. It was noted that these programmes would be Student-centred and flexible, to meet the requirements of Students undertaking the programmes. A suitable Regulation was being developed to govern this initiative. It was noted that in the first instance, the online programmes would be those presently offered as ‘distance learning’ by the School of Energy, Geoscience, Infrastructure and Society – with suitable modifications so as to be wholly online. It was noted that staff from other Schools – most likely Engineering and Physical Sciences – may also have to be involved due to cross-School teaching. It was noted that although starting at Masters level, this initiative could be expanded in time to also include Undergraduate provision, with perhaps Graduate Apprenticeships offering a useful opportunity.

It was noted that this project would be rolled out over time to offer a greater number of programmes. It was suggested that lessons could be learned from previous efforts to provide for online, and that the resources required should be recognised and planned for at the outset. The fact that this project had a ‘champion’ at Deputy Principal level was welcomed. Examples were provided of existing successful provision, and it was emphasised that this would be built upon. The success of the Edinburgh Business School in modifying its provision for the online environment was applauded.

Agreed The Deputy Principal (Engagement and Staff Development) agreed to bring further updates to the Senate in due course.

M18/37 DEVELOPING THE STRATEGY TO 2025 – UPDATE REPORT

Received A verbal update from the Principal and Vice-Chancellor on the on-going work towards the creation of a modified Strategy to secure the future of Heriot-Watt as an effective global University.

Noted The launch of the ‘global conversations’ was noted, and Senators were encouraged to participate in these online discussions, and to encourage colleagues in the Schools to do so also. Further workshops were also being held to gain views from Staff. Other means were also being used to gain input from Students, Alumni, external Stakeholders, and the wider community.

It was noted that a report would shortly be received from the consultants engaged to conduct horizon scanning. Over the summer months an initial draft document would be prepared, which would be considered by the Senate in the autumn, with the Schools also having the opportunity for discussion. A further submission would then be put to the Senate in December, with the intention to then submit to the Court for approval a proposed Strategy to 2025.

M18/38 OUTPUTS FROM THE CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW GROUP: PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CHARTER AND STATUTES AND SUPPORTING ORDINANCES

[Paper: SEN/18/20]

Received The Secretary of the University introduced the collated set of constitutional documents that provided the Senate with the outcome of a detailed drafting process for the revised Charter and Statutes, along with many of the supporting Ordinances.

Noted Revisions to the Charter and Statutes were required in order to accommodate the stipulations of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016. The opportunity had been taken when conducting this exercise to seek to tidy up, and to ‘future proof’ some aspects of the Charter and the Statutes, as well as bringing forward supporting Ordinances for different aspects of University governance. Accordingly, the Constitutional Review Group had given detailed consideration over a period of some months to the various documents, and the
Ordinances and Regulations Committee had also had opportunity to scrutinise and to modify the draft documents.

The Chair of the Ordinances and Regulations Committee (who could not attend the meeting) has made written representation to remind the Senate that the supporting Ordinances would need to include a new Ordinance to specify the Deputy Principals as members of the Senate ex officio under Statute 5, 1 (b); and that Ordinance P8 would need to be amended to make Heads of Primary Academic Units members of the Senate ex officio under Statute 5, 1 (a) (iv). The Chair of the ORC had further asked for Statute 5, 1 (a) ii to be clear that the elected Deans would continue to be members of the Senate “ex officio”.

The Senate gave the documents detailed scrutiny. It was noted that the term ‘Primary Academic Unit’ had previously existed in the definitions contained in the Charter, and now was proposed to be brought to the fore as part of the future proofing. It was noted that the revised documents removed the description of the Senate as an ‘executive body’ as it had been felt that this term had not correctly described the role of the Senate, which was confirmed as the primary academic forum of the University. It was noted that the Court delegated to the Senate responsibility for all academic work and standards.

It was noted that approval of the new Charter and Statutes may be received from the Privy Council as early as December 2018, although the process would be outwith the control of the University once the submission was made. The earliest that the new arrangements would come into force would therefore be January 2019. It was further noted that implementation of the new provisions would follow as soon as practicable after they came into force. This would include the addition to the Senate of further Student members.

With the amendment to ensure elected Deans would be ‘ex-officio’ members of the Senate, the Senate agreed to recommend the revised Charter and Statutes to the Court for submission to the Privy Council (via the Scottish Government Legal Department in the first instance).

The Senate agreed to return to a detailed consideration of the supporting Ordinances, noting that there would be an additional Ordinance with respect to the membership of the Senate of the Deputy Principals, and that revisions to an existing Ordinance would be brought to cover the membership of the Senate of the Heads of the Primary Academic Units.

A request from the Governance and Nominations Committee of the Court, and which had been endorsed by the Senate Committee for Interim Business and Effectiveness, to extend for one month the term of office of the Chancellor.

It was noted that this was a pragmatic measure to enable the current Chancellor, Dr Robert Buchan, to preside over the late November/early December 2019 Congregations. It was noted that this extension would take the Chancellor’s term of office to two years and one month, which was significantly within the five-year maximum term permitted by the Statutes. It was noted that the Chair of Court, and the Principal and Vice-Chancellor had commended the proposal as small recognition of the service of Dr Buchan. It was further noted that, after due consideration, the respective Chairs of the Constitutional Review Group, and the Ordinances and Regulations Committee had been content that the proposal was in order.

It was noted that a draft Candidate Brief to aid the process for appointing the successor to Dr Buchan would shortly be circulated to Senators by correspondence.

The Senate approved the recommendation that the period of appointment of Chancellor Dr Robert Buchan, be extended to 31 December 2019.

The Chair of the University Committee for Quality and Standards (UCQS) gave a verbal update to the meeting, as the intended paper was not yet ready to submit to the Senate.
Noted

The Senate noted that it had not proved possible for the UCQS to reach agreement on a proposal for the Terms of Reference of the new Studies Committee. Although detailed discussions had taken place with the UCQS, the Undergraduate Studies Committee (USC) and the Postgraduate Studies Committee (PSC), as well as the SCIBE, a number of areas of detail remained unresolved. In order, therefore, to ensure continuity of business, it was suggested that the USC and the PSC should continue to operate for a further period.

Considered

The Chair of UCQS reminded the Senate of its decision in May 2017 whereby it had agreed that the USC and the PSC should continue to operate until such date as the Senate approved Terms of Reference for the proposed sub-committees of the University Committee for Research and Innovation and the University Committee for Quality and Standards. This, therefore, would be a continuation of that decision. It was noted that work would continue over the summer months to ensure that all delegations from the Senate are properly matched with a suitable committee. The vital processes to assure quality and standards would therefore be protected.

Agreed

The Senate agreed to the continuation of the USC and PSC with regard to the intended responsibilities of the Studies Committee until such date as the Senate approved Terms of Reference for the new Studies Committee. The Senate anticipated receiving a fully-developed proposal early in the new Session.

The Senate thanked the Chair of the University Committee for Quality and Standards for her on-going detailed work in this matter.

M18/41

SENATE COMMITTEE FOR INTERIM BUSINESS AND EFFECTIVENESS
[Paper: SEN/18/23]

Received

The report of a meeting of the Committee held on 24 May 2018.

Noted

All items in the report were for information on this occasion. The Senate noted the Report.

M18/42

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOR QUALITY AND STANDARDS [Paper: SEN/18/24]

Received

The minutes of the meeting of the University Committee for Quality and Standards (UCQS) that had been held on 11 April 2018.

Noted

The Chair of the Committee introduced the Report, and highlighted in particular the request to approve: the mapping of the University pass mark for Masters programmes, with the Malaysian system of Cumulative Grade Point Average; and an accompanying statement for submission to the Malaysian Qualification Agency.

Considered

Senate discussed the proposal, with some consideration as to whether a pass mark had to be attained in all courses of a programme. The implications for non-credit-bearing courses was also discussed.

Agreed

The Senate approved the mapping equivalence of the 50% pass level and the CPGA of 3.0 for Masters programmes, and the accompanying statement for submission to the Malaysian Qualification Agency as stated in the paper.

M18/43

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING [Paper: SEN/18/25]

Received

The minutes of the meeting of the University Committee for Learning and Teaching (UCLT) that had been held on 9 May 2018.

Noted

In the absence of the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching), the Director of Learning and Teaching (Engineering and Physical Sciences) highlighted in particular the suite of policies for: Mitigating Circumstances; Temporary Suspension of Studies; Submission of Coursework; and Inter-Campus Transfers (Academic Matters) for Undergraduate Taught Programmes. A proposed modification to the Terms of Reference for the Committee was also highlighted.

Considered

The contents of each of the proposed Policies were discussed. It was noted that the Temporary Suspension of Studies Policy was intended to apply to all Students, including Postgraduate
Research. The intention was noted for responsibility for considering temporary suspensions to be moved to the Schools so as to streamline the process, following the intended disestablishment of the Undergraduate Studies Committee (USC). It was agreed that since the USC was not, for the time being, to be disestablished, that the responsibility should remain with that Committee for the interim period, and that further discussion on the matter would accompany the future discussion of the Terms of Reference for the new Studies Committee.

The modification to the Terms of Reference for the Committee was proposed in order that the Committee would have fewer meetings in future, in tandem with the introduction of some strategy sessions. It was noted that this was an evolution in working arrangements.

Agreed

The Senate approved the revised Terms of Reference for the University Committee for Learning and Teaching to take effect from the start of Session 2018/19.

The Senate approved the Learning and Teaching Policies for Mitigating Circumstances; Submission of Coursework; and Inter-Campus Transfers (Academic Matters) for Undergraduate Taught Programmes to take effect from the start of Session 2018/19.

The Senate agreed to defer decision on the proposed Policy for Temporary Suspension of Studies, until the Terms of Reference for the new Studies Committee had been approved.

M18/44 POSTGRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE [Paper: SEN/18/26]

Received

The minutes of the meetings held on 10 April 2018 and 22 May 2018.

Noted

The report of business conducted by the Committee, which included: reports from external examiners; and new programme proposals.

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; approval of supervisor nominations for postgraduate research Students.

M18/45 UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE [Paper: SEN/18/27]

Received

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2018.

Noted

The report of business conducted by the Committee, which included: consideration of new programme proposals for Graduate Apprenticeships in two Schools.

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.

M18/46 ORDINANCES AND REGULATIONS COMMITTEE [Paper: SEN/18/28]

Received

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 April 2018.

Noted

The report of business conducted by the Committee, which included in particular the discussions that had been held on the proposed Amendments to the Charter and Statutes, and accompanying Ordinances.

M18/47 APPOINTMENT OF ACADEMIC STAFF IN 2018 [Paper: SEN/18/29]

Received

The report of academic appointments, including promotions, and leavers between 1 November 2017 and 30 April 2018.

Noted

The report, which had been circulated solely for the information of the Senate. The gender balance of appointments was noted, and it was suggested that this might usefully be scrutinised in order that action might be taken to address the apparent imbalance.
Noted

VALEDICTIONS

The Secretary of the University had hoped to report to this meeting the outcome of the elections from Schools to the Senate, however the counting process was not yet concluded, and so the Senators who were seeking re-election did not yet know if they would continue on the Senate. The Secretary of the University further noted that on the conclusion of the elections from Schools to the Senate, that an election would be held to elect three members of the Senate to the Court (as per Ordinance B3).

At the invitation of the Principal and Vice-Chancellor, the Senate offered sincere thanks for their service to the Senate to those who were completing their terms as Senators:

Mr Diarmuid Cowan; Mr Jay Clifford; Professor Isabelle Perez; Professor Greg Michaelson; Professor Verena Rieser; Dr Audrey Paterson; Dr Lilia Georgieva; Dr Stephen Houston; Dr Rink Van Dijke; Professor Omar Laghrouche; Dr George Streftaris; Professor Rafaella Ocone.

Professor Michaelson offered some valedictory remarks and reflections on his terms as an elected Senator over a career spanning in excess of thirty years at the University.

(Clerk’s note: subsequent to the meeting it was confirmed that the following Senators would stand down from the Senate for the time-being: Dr Yvonne McLaren-Hankin; Dr Olisawendu Ogwuda; and Mr Dilip Mothiram. The full results of the elections are available on the Senate webpages.)

At the invitation of the Principal and Vice-Chancellor, the Senate recorded a sincere appreciation of Professor Jim Ritchie, who would leave the University on 31 July 2018. Professor Ritchie’s long and distinguished career at Heriot-Watt had included service on the Senate as a member elected from the School of EPS, as well as a Dean Science and Engineering, and, latterly, Dean elected from the Pan-University constituency. The Senate recognised that the University had benefitted greatly from Professor Ritchie’s insight and expertise, through the Court, the Senate and many of its Committees, through his academic work in Mechanical Engineering, and also the many friendships he had forged.

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Noted

That the meetings of the Senate in Session 2018/19 would be:

- Wednesday 12 September 2018
- Thursday 13 December 2018
- Wednesday 27 February 2019
- Thursday 11 April 2019
- Wednesday 12 June 2019

It was noted that the normal timing of meetings would be 9.30 am to 12.00 noon (UK time), and that venues for the meetings would be notified in due course.

CLOSING REMARKS

Noted

The Chair thanked all members for their contribution to the Senate in the preceding year, and wished the Senate a pleasant and restful summer.