SENATE

Minutes: Wednesday 6 November 2013

Present: Principal (in the Chair)
Dr P Allan, Dr E Bonnar, Professor E Shaw, Dr C Cassidy, Professor B Conway,
Professor Cooper, Dr D Dixon, Professor A Duffy, Dr J Ferguson, Dr M Grant, Dr D
Grierson, Professor S Hart, Mr S Jennings, Professor A Kendrick, Professor W Kerr,
Dr J Liggat, Professor S McArthur, Professor A McGrew, Mr G McPheat, Professor
X Mao, Professor K Miller, Professor J Murphy, Professor N NicDaeid, Professor D
Nickson, Dr V O’Halloran, Dr I Oswald, Dr S Rasmussen, Professor D Mackenzie,
Dr C Schaschke, Professor R Stewart, Dr T Tanyimboh, Dr R Tate, Professor R
Thomson, Dr D Willison, Professor L Woolfson, Dr J Young.

Attending: Mr K Adjei, Mr J Ferns, Dr C Prior, Mrs H Gould, Professor V Belton, Professor C
Grant, Mr H Hall, Professor D Littlejohn, Mr D Thompson.

Apologies: Professor D Christie, Mr T Collins, Mr B Dickson, Professor J Fraser, Professor R
Finlay, Dr D Greenhalgh, Dr D Harle, Professor S Howick, Professor I Hunter,
Professor A Wilson, Professor P McGregor, Professor K Paudyal, Professor S
Marshall, Dr A McLaren, Professor R Martin, Dr J Mowat, Professor D Nash,
Professor B Clark, Dr S Terzis, Dr K Thory, Professor P Winn.

Formal Matters

11611. Welcome
The Principal welcomed Senators to the meeting. He informed Senators that revised
timings meant that lunch would take place after the Principal’s Report. Senate would then
reconvene to cover the rest of the business agenda.

11612. Minutes of the meeting of 11 September 2013
Members approved the minute as an accurate record of the meeting.

11613. Matters Arising
There were none.

Presentations and Items for Discussion

11614. Principal’s Report
In addition to noting the Convener’s Actions undertaken by the Principal since the last
meeting and listed in Paper B, Senate was provided with an update on the following items:

- SFC Funding Letter and Ministerial Letter of Grant – The Principal noted that the
  funding settlement for the sector for 2014/15 amounted to flat cash. The
  Ministerial Letter had reaffirmed the Scottish Government’s commitment to
  Outcome Agreements, greater SME engagement and Innovation Centres.
• Outcome Agreements – The Principal emphasised that Outcome Agreements were part of the funding contract with SFC and that Senators would hear more on this issue, later in the agenda.

• Business School MBA Rankings – The Principal congratulated the Business School and Executive Dean on achieving impressive positions within the rankings of both the Financial Times (58th) and the Economist (28th).

• University Values – The Principal informed Senators of the ongoing efforts to finalise an agreed set of University Values. These would have a key role in supporting the realisation of University’s strategic objectives. It was agreed that the Values would come to the Senate meeting in January so that Senators could reflect on what they mean for academic staff.

• MOOCs – The Principal asked Prof NicDaeid and the Associate Deputy Principal (Education) to comment on the progress being made in this area. The Forensic Science MOOC was now set for launch in January 2014, to be followed by a second in Business Awareness.

• Golden Jubilee Celebrations – A series of events were being planned to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the award of the University’s Charter. The Vice-Principal confirmed that events would be designed to cover all disciplines and appeal to the full range of the University’s stakeholders.

• National Student Survey – The Principal reflected on the strategic discussions at Senate on 11 September 2013. In addition to the activity flowing from that meeting, the Principal had written to Departments and Schools to encourage the identification of student class representatives. The USSA Vice-President confirmed that numbers had increased since last year. The USSA President thanked the Principal for his support in this matter.

• Times Higher Education Awards 2013 – The Principal confirmed that the University had been shortlisted for two awards: Entrepreneurial University of the Year and Outstanding Contribution to Innovation and Technology.

11615. Draft Outcome Agreements 2014/15

The Vice-Principal explained that efforts to engage Senate in the development of earlier versions of the Outcome Agreement had been constrained by short, externally imposed timescales. The importance of Senators’ contributions was recognised and the item was intended to facilitate this.

The Director of Strategy and Policy introduced the item and informed Senators of the outcomes of recent meetings with the SFC negotiating team where additional items discussed included engagement with SMEs and Gaelic language provision. Senators also heard that there was potential for additional widening access places in 2014/15, although additional PGT places were thought to be unlikely. The Director welcomed the suggestions received from Senators so far and asked for additional comments and feedback. Senate was content with the work undertaken to date.

The Director of Strategy & Policy left the meeting.

11616. ELIR – Update

The Vice-Principal provided Senators with an update on ELIR preparations. A copy of the Reflective Analysis (RA) document would be made available to Senators as soon as possible during the following week, after recent QAA comments had been incorporated. Following the submission of the RA on 22 November, the next phase of work would include preparations for the QAA visits. During this time, colleagues involved in the
submission would be working to identify key staff that might be asked to provide support during the QAA visits. The Vice-Principal thanked all staff involved for recent and continuing support.

11617. REF – Update
The Associate Deputy Principal (Research and Knowledge Exchange) provided Senators with an overview of the final preparations for the University’s REF submission. Following a range of consultative meetings, efforts were now focused on finalising the narrative parts of the submission. A higher number of staff were expected to submit than was previously thought.

The final stages of preparation would be completed and the submission would be finalised and verified by 15 November 2013. The submission deadline was 29 November but the expectation was for the University to submit earlier in anticipate of any last minute technical issues.

Senators asked if plans were in place for a post-REF review following submission. The Associate Deputy Principal stated that a range of plans were in place to maximise the learning opportunities following submission. One example given involved plans to create a documented summary of all the cases study examples used in the REF submission for the institution to use in other areas.

The Vice-Principal asked that the thanks of Senate be communicated to all members of the REF Team for their hard work in coordinating and shaping the REF submission.

11618. Feedback and Assessment Principles
Dr Bonnar introduced this item and informed Senators of the work being carried out to implement actions arising from the previous Senate meeting on 11 September 2013. A Working Group had been established to review the University’s Assessment and Feedback procedures and had met twice in October. This was drawing on available examples of best practice as well as recent work by student interns, who had surveyed over 350 students and interviewed 29 members of staff. Senators heard that a fully revised policy would be presented for approval at the January 2014 Senate meeting.

During discussions, it was noted that large class sizes in some subjects could make the logistics of student feedback more challenging. This was being addressed in some areas through smaller feedback groups but academic staff needed to consider, at an early stage, the additional resources that might be required with larger class sizes. The revised policy would try to highlight a best practice approach for dealing with larger class sizes.

It was suggested that a partnership approach with students should feature prominently within any revised procedure and that the revision of the policy was clear evidence of a continuation of this, with the Education Excellence-funded work undertaken by the student interns influencing the development of University policy.

Senators endorsed and approved the Feedback and Assessment Principles.

Committee and Faculty Reports to Senate

11619. Executive Team
Senate noted the report from the Executive Team

11620. Court
Senate noted the report from Court

11621. Education Strategy Committee
Senate noted the report from the Education Strategy Committee
11622. Quality Assurance Committee
Senate noted the report from the Quality Assurance Committee

11623. Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee
Senate noted the report from the Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee

11624. Strathclyde Business School
Senate noted the report from the Business School.

11625. Faculty of Engineering
Senate noted the report from the Faculty of Engineering.

11626. Faculty of Science
Senate noted the report from the Faculty of Science and approved:

- Withdrawal of BSc (Hons) Forensic Biology
- Introduction of a collaborative programme with China Pharmaceutical University
- Introduction of an external PhD supervision agreement with Princess Nora University

11627. Senate Discipline Committee
Senate noted the reports from the Senate Discipline Committee

11628. Report from Senate Business Committee
Senate noted the report from the Senate Business Committee.

Reserved Business