

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Cardiff University Senate Held on Wednesday 6 November 2024 at 14.15, in the lecture theatre of the Hadyn Ellis Building.**

**Attendance**

Professor Wendy Larner	P	Dr Hesam Kamalipour	
Professor Rudolf Allemann	A	Dr Tahl Kaminer	P
Professor Stuart Allan	A	Professor Deborah Kays	A
Professor Anthony Bennett	P	Professor Andrew Kerr	P
Dr Emma Blain	P	Professor Urfan Khaliq	A
Shola Bold		Professor Mark Llewellyn	P
Professor Kate Brain	P	Professor Eshwar Mahenthiralingam	P
Professor Gill Bristow	A	Dr Olaya Moldes Andres	P
Dr Andreas Buerki	P	Claire Morgan	A
Professor Christine Bundy	A	Greg Mothersdale	P
Dr Cindy Carter	A	Ana Nagiel Escobar	P
Eve Chamberlain	P	Rebecca Newsome	
Professor David Clarke	P	Professor Gerard O'Grady	P
Lauren Cockayne	A	Joanne Pagett	
Professor Vicki Cummings	A	Micaela Panes	P
Professor Juliet Davis	P	Dr Vassiliki Papatsiba	P
Michelle Deininger		Catrin Edith Parry	P
Dr David Doddington	P	Dr Juan Pereiro Viterbo	P
Dr Derek Dunne	P	Dr Jenny Pike	A
Professor Dominic Dwyer	P	Professor Simon Pope	P
Professor Tim Edwards	A	Michael Reade	P
Professor Edwin Egede	A	Cadi Rhys Thomas	P
Professor Rachel Errington	P	Kate Richards	P
Fflur Evans	A	Professor Stephen Riley	P
Professor Dylan Foster Evans	P	Dominic Roche	
Graham Getheridge		Professor Barbara Ryan	P
Professor Hayley Gomez	P	Professor Karl Schmidt	P
Dr Sandy Gould	P	Professor Gavin Shaddick	A
Professor Julian Gould-Williams	A	Professor Katherine Shelton	P
Professor Clare Griffiths	P	Dr Andy Skyrme	
Professor Mark Gumbleton		Helen Spittle	A
Professor Thomas Hall	P	Georgia Spry	P
Dr Natasha Hammond-Browning	A	Tracey Stanley	A
Professor Adam Hedgecoe	P	Professor Phil Stephens	A
Dr Jonathan Hewitt		Professor Patrick Sutton	P
Madison Hutchinson	P	Dr Catherine Teehan	P
Professor Aseem Inam		Grace Thomas	A
Dr Anthony Ince	P	Dr Jonathan Thompson	P
Professor Nicola Innes	A	Professor Damian Walford Davies	P
Claire Jaynes		Matt Walsh	P
Luke Jehu	P	Professor Roger Whitaker	P
Professor Dafydd Jones	P	Professor Jianzhong Wu	P
Dr Kathryn Jones	A	Dr Xuesheng You	P
Dr Nicholas Jones	P		

**In Attendance**

Katy Dale (minutes)	Daniel Lawrence
Ruth Davies	Professor Caroline Lear
Sian Ballard	Dr Angharad Naylor
Laura Davies	Daniel Palmer
Dr Rob Davies	Dr Paula Sanderson
Sally-Ann Efstathiou	TJ Rawlinson
Rhodri Evans	Professor Amanda Tonks
Professor Claire Gorrara	Professor Karin Wahl-Jorgensen
Tom Hay	Simon Wright (Secretary)
Professor Kerry Hood	Darren Xiberras

**1084 Welcome and Introductions**

Noted

- 1084.1 that new members were welcomed to the meeting (Shola Bold; Eve Chamberlain; Catrin Edith Parry; Professor Tim Edwards; Dr Anthony Ince; Professor Clare Griffiths; Dr Sandy Gould; Luke Jehu; Dr Olaya Moldes Andres; Greg Mothersdale; Ana Nagiel Escobar; Professor Simon Pope; Cadi Rhys Thomas; Professor Karl Michael Schmidt; Georgia Spry; Dr Xuesheng You).

**1085 Apologies for Absence**

Noted

- 1085.1 that apologies received would be recorded in the Minutes.

**1086 Declaration of Interests**

The Chair reminded members of their requirement to disclose any direct or indirect interests which could influence their judgement. Disclosure of interests should be made before an item was discussed and the individual concerned should either withdraw from the meeting or not take part in the discussion, as appropriate for that part of the agenda.

Noted

- 1086.1 that no member disclosed any interests.

**1087 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2024 (paper 23/840) were confirmed as a true and accurate record and were approved by the Committee on 6 November 2024.

**1088 Matters Arising**

Noted there were no matters arising.

**1089 Constitution and Membership of Sub-Committees (Honorary Fellowships and Degrees Committee)**

Received and considered paper 24/91, 'Honorary Fellowships and Degrees Committee Constitution'. The Chair spoke to this item.

Resolved

1089.1 to approve the revised constitution for the Honorary Fellowships and Degrees Committee.

**1090 Items from the Chair**

Received and considered paper 24/116C, 'Report of Chair's Action since the last meeting'. The Chair spoke to this item.

Noted

1090.1 that three Chair's Actions had been undertaken since the last meeting, relating to the establishment of four new trust funds, the withdrawal of an Honorary Fellowship, and amendments to programme specific regulations.

**1091 Report from Vice Chancellor**

Received and considered paper 24/198C, 'Vice-Chancellor's Report to Senate'. The Chair spoke to this item.

Noted

1091.1 that a large amount of activity was taking place across the University and change in relation to the new strategy was now becoming practice; three key areas of work were underway (academic futures, functional alignment, and redefining Schools and Colleges);

1091.2 the first of the all-staff Q&A sessions had been held before the meeting of Senate;

1091.3 that it was emphasised the work on Schools and Colleges was not a critique of Schools and aimed to standardise processes and outcomes for students across the institution (including central Professional Services); it was highlighted that timetabling was a current issue and the knowledge of schools in this area should be harnessed;

1091.4 that a review of the governing instruments (Charter, Statutes and Ordinances) would be undertaken to ensure the University had the governance framework it needed to deliver the new strategy;

1091.5 that two new Deans had been appointed (Professor Monjur Mourshed as Dean for Environmental Sustainability and Dr Anghard Naylor as Dean for the Welsh Language);

1091.6 that a large amount of work had been undertaken in relation to the Future Research Service, which was a precursor to wider work on functional alignment;

1091.7 that the student recruitment position remained challenging, especially in relation to international PGT; the University had recruited well to international UG to offset some of this impact; thanks were extended to all progressing January 2025 entry with a good number of applications received;

1091.8 that drops in international student recruitment had been seen across the sector but these varied; for example, recruitment from India had been impacted by UK government changes to student visa arrangements and recruitment from China was impacted by institutions' rankings in league tables; there had been up to a 50% decline in international PGT numbers in some universities;

- 1091.9 that the University's position in league tables was impacting student recruitment, especially in South-East Asia and China, where there was great sensitivity to league table positioning; work was underway to improve the position, although actions undertaken would take time to show results; a recent visit to China and South-East Asia had highlighted the importance of league tables and speed of admissions processing in attracting international students; work was underway to smooth the applications process, especially for more complex cases or those where further information was required; current turn-around times for applications with all necessary information was 36-48 hours;
- 1091.10 that the University's league table position also had an impact on current students (not just prospective ones) and raised concerns for some on future employability; the Academic Registrar would review support and work around employability of international students; it was highlighted that a new Dean for PGR Students had been created and provided an opportunity to review the Cardiff offer for both home and international PGR students;
- 1091.11 that in regards to the University's desire to be a Welsh University, this did not come at the expense of achieving a good league table position, but that it captured the University's aspirations as a global-civic institution;
- 1091.12 that there were some concerns from students in regards to the new strategy and the future of their courses; the Vice-Chancellor confirmed all students would be fully supported to complete courses on which they were registered;
- 1091.13 that the University had always been clear on its lines around protests and demonstrations: peaceful protests were a part of student life and freedom of speech and academic freedom supported, but that any unacceptable behaviour would not be tolerated;
- 1091.14 that there was no response from the Welsh Government as yet in regards to the announcement to increase tuition fees in England; the Vice-Chancellor was meeting the Minister the following day.

Resolved

- 1091.15 for the Students' Union President and Director of Communications, Marketing and Student Recruitment to review communications on the strategy to students.

## **1092 Encampment: University Commitments**

Received and considered an oral report from the Chief Operating Officer and University Secretary.

Noted

- 1092.1 that the Chief Operating Officer and University Secretary noted they had commenced in post at the end of the encampment and therefore extended thanks to all the hard work undertaken by others to reach a resolution, especially the work of the Students' Union;
- 1092.2 that the University was not currently in discussions with Caerdydd Students for Palestine (CS4P) due to recent behaviours which were felt to be unacceptable; the University was still continuing to progress the commitments;
- 1092.3 an internal audit review had been undertaken to assist the Major Incident Team with reviewing its processes for the future; training and support for those undertaking negotiations was also being investigated;

- 1092.4 that the Major Incident Team had first met in May 2024; the camp had then voluntarily disbanded on 17 July 2024; and the University therefore did not need to issue a notice to quit, unlike other universities;
- 1092.5 that the majority of commitments had now been successfully completed:
- .1 the number of asylum-seeking scholarships had doubled from 6 to 12;
  - .2 detail of the University's investment holdings had been published on the website;
  - .3 the University had confirmed there were no anonymous donations in the last ten years (which was the furthest records could be accessed) and that all donations were included on the donor role;
  - .4 the University was working with Campaign for at Risk Academics (CARA) on publishing information on the work undertaken to support the rebuilding of Palestine's education; the University had also undertaken an agreement with CARA to host a displaced academic from Gaza;
  - .5 the University had addressed the demand for culturally-sensitive wellbeing and counselling drop-in sessions across Student Health and Wellbeing Services covering immediate, medium and long-term support pathways and included badging relating to global events; the University had also launched "report+support" platform which allowed students to report any discriminatory or harassing behaviours;
- 1092.6 that in relation to the commitment to create specific web and intranet content detailing support for Palestinian students, the University had ensured that access to support for all affected or impacted students on a range of issues had been clearly promoted; it was noted that the commitment had agreed for this to be specially for Palestinian students and this would be picked up outside of the meeting;
- 1092.7 work remained ongoing in relation to two of the commitments; in relation to a review of the University's current definition of armaments and its relation to research partnerships, principles for research partnership had been agreed at the University's Research Committee; further development of wider principles for partnership, collaboration and funding were being drafted and next steps would involve consultation, including with students; these wider principles would also assist with the commitment to review the University's Student Futures Code of Ethics;
- 1092.8 that next steps focussed on agreeing the wider principles, seeking input from the Funders Advisory Panel (FAP) on these principles, and continuing to foster an open culture of discourse;
- 1092.9 that the Students' Union continued to lobby the University on the commitments, as these were made to the whole student body (not just one group of students);
- 1092.10 that a statement was made from a Senate member, noting that although progress was good, there were concerns that deadlines had been missed by the University and this risked appearing as bad faith with the students; there were also concerns that the student group was no longer being communicated with, that students were facing disciplinary action for alleged harassment of frontline staff and that this could be considered to be "persecution" of those students; the individual noted that by their nature, protests could be disruptive and disrespectful; it was requested commitments be made to Senate that:

- .1 that any deadlines for the University to meet the commitments would be treated in the same way as student deadlines;
- .2 that the University would re-commence communication with CS4P;
- .3 that students would no longer be “persecuted”;

1092.11 the statement had been heard;

1092.12 the need for acceptable behaviours and for respect from both sides; it was noted that communications had been halted with CS4P due to unacceptable behaviour;

1092.13 that a date for achieving the final commitments could not be agreed at this time, as there was a need for engagement from all;

1092.14 that the correct name was Caerdydd Students for Palestine (CS4P) and this should be used throughout any documentation/communication.

### **1093 Update on Implementation of Bicameral Review Recommendations and Membership of Task and Finish Group**

Received and considered paper 24/161, ‘Update on Implementation of Bicameral Review Recommendations and Membership of Task and Finish Group’. The Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor spoke to this item.

Noted

1093.1 that the Bicameral Review had been commissioned by Council, and Council had agreed the Task and Finish Group would take forward implementation of the recommendations from that review;

1093.2 that significant progress had been made over the summer, with most recommendations and suggestions now closed (as detailed in appendix 1 of paper 24/162); remaining items were paused or had been rolled into wider reviews;

1093.3 that recommendations 7 and 8 were key, and related to the role of Senate and the provision of assurance to Council; it had initially been agreed that a sub-group of the Task and Finish Group would review Ordinance 5 (Senate) and include representatives from all membership categories of Senate; there had been only two nominations for this group, one of which had later withdrawn;

1093.4 that a review of the governance framework (Charter, Statutes and Ordinances) had arisen in light of the new strategy and the committee structure would also be reviewed; in light of this, reviewing Ordinance 5 in isolation would risk duplicating work and lack of clarity; the review of Ordinance 5 would therefore be undertaken as part of this wider review, not by the sub-group; there were no changes to the approval route, with any proposed changes reviewed by both the Task and Finish Group and Senate;

1093.5 that there had been minor changes to the membership of the Task and Finish Group, to include two new Senate members and one further Council member;

1093.6 that the timescale for the review of the governance framework was not yet confirmed; it was hoped to complete the review by the middle of 2025, to enable Privy Council approval to be sourced for any agreed changes to Charter and Statutes; the timescale for approval by the Privy Council was unknown;

1093.7 it was confirmed that Senate member induction activities would be undertaken each year; induction slides and a video recording were available to all Senate members;

1093.8 a discussion was held on how to garner interest from the institution for Senate vacancies; workload, lack of business for Senate input and the necessity for two seconders for nominations were noted as possible reasons; the Corporate Governance Team welcomed any suggestions for improvements.

#### **1094 Report from Students' Union President**

Received and considered paper 24/113R, 'Students' Union President's Report'. The Students' Union President spoke to this item.

Noted

1094.1 that there were three continuing sabbatical officers from 2023/24; this year was also the first all-female sabbatical team;

1094.2 that the priorities for the year were housing, the cost of living crisis, student wellbeing, and student safety (especially sexual misconduct);

1094.3 that Black History Month activities had been undertaken in October and been expanded across the year due to their importance;

1094.4 that the Students' Union had again won second place for the best Students' Union in the WhatUni Student Choice Awards 2024;

1094.5 that the "Clean Up Cardiff" campaign continued to run this year and the Students' Union liaised with other unions to share good practice;

1094.6 that in regards to sexual misconduct and violence, consent training was available to all UG students and Schools could further promote this to students, given it was currently optional; the report+support platform would also enable University-level reporting on incidents.

#### **1095 Student View – University Response**

Received and considered paper 24/121R, 'Cardiff University Response to the Student Views 2024'. The Head of Education Governance spoke to this item.

Noted

1095.1 that each year the Students' Union issued a Student View, with recommendations to improve the student experience; the University continued to work through actions from the 2023 Student View to ensure they had been implemented and were making a difference;

1095.2 that the paper included a response to the 2024 Student Views on accessibility, a Welsh University, Clinical Placement Experience and PGR Student Experience;

1095.3 feedback on the response had been received from the Students' Union and was currently being worked through;

1095.4 from 2025, an action plan would be developed and approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education and Student Experience and an update provided to Senate in the Autumn; this would limit any delay in progressing actions;

- 1095.5 that a c.17% reduction in funding for Welsh events had been implemented but this was due to a reduction in the need for travel funding given the location of events in 2024, not a reduction in the offering; the Dean for Welsh Language confirmed that the Welsh Festivals Group would be consulting students on what events they would like the University to be involved with;
- 1095.6 that the Deputy Vice-Chancellor would liaise with Academy Cymraeg in regards to the consultation on Welsh-speaking residences; the Dean for Welsh Language confirmed they were liaising with Estates on the future of Welsh Language needs;
- 1095.7 that the response to the accessibility Student View needed to be reviewed, as some items listed had been discontinued (e.g. £3 lunch offered in CSL).

Resolved

- 1095.8 to recommend to Council approval of the Response to the Student Views 2024, subject to revisions made in response to feedback from the Students' Union.

### **1096 Supporting Research Excellence Programme Update**

Received and considered paper 24/199C, 'Supporting Research Excellence Programme Update'. The Pro Vice-Chancellor Research, Innovation and Enterprise spoke to this item.

Noted

- 1096.1 that the paper provided an overview of the first assessment in the Supporting Research Excellence Programme, relating to preparedness for REF 2029;
- 1096.2 each school had provided a written submission around the REF assessments (research outputs, impact and engagement, people, culture and environment); meetings had then been held and each school assessed against the baselining framework (noted in the paper);
- 1096.3 that there had been great engagement from schools, along with the College Deans for Research and Innovation, the Heads of Schools and PS staff involved with research;
- 1096.4 that the paper contained an anonymised summary of all the results; this reflected that institutionally, there was strong performance in impact and engagement; outputs was the weakest area across the institution; in light of this, the University was reviewing aspirational comparators on their outputs and reviewing citations;
- 1096.5 that there was good practice within the institution that could be shared;
- 1096.6 that a number of common issues had been raised by schools (section 3.6) which would be explored further;
- 1096.7 that priorities for the coming academic year were a Converis system for outputs and peer reviews, a policy for external support and assessors, and a review of publication practises around citations (especially as this impacted on rankings);
- 1096.8 a further checkpoint exercise would be undertaken in April/May 2025 and the University would continue to engage with the REF 2029 People, Culture and Environment pilot project; a "Roadmap to REF 2029" was being developed, along with a Code of Practice;

- 1096.9 that being a signatory to DORA did not prevent the University using citations in meaningful way and the University would be mindful of DORA obligations in this work;
- 1096.10 that the University continued to work through the new output requirements and would consult further;
- 1096.11 that the University did not want a blanket policy for use of external reviewers and there was experience within the institution which could be used; the cost implications for any external reviewers required for REF were not yet known;
- 1096.12 that there was a need to continue to invest in staff to continue to produce great research and the research leave scheme had been maintained to assist with this;
- 1096.13 that there was scope to better promote research internally.

### **1097 Annual Quality Report**

Received and considered paper 24/160, 'Annual Quality Report 2023-24'. The Head of Education Governance spoke to this item.

Noted

- 1097.1 that the Annual Quality Report aimed to confirm the University aligned with and satisfied external requirements, that the standards of awards were appropriately set and maintained, and that positive steps had been taken to enhance the student experience;
- 1097.2 that Senate had a role to provide assurance to Council in this area; Council would be asked to approve the report in order that it could submit assurances to Medr;
- 1097.3 that in relation to student experience, it was pleasing to see improvements in the NSS and PGT Surveys; it was noted that there was low response rate in the PGT survey; there had been improvements in all questions and thematic areas in the NSS and the University had improved its sector position; this reflected the actions taken by Schools and the wider Education and Student Experience programme projects were having an impact; however, three questions remained below benchmark and the University remained under regulatory monitoring (6 subject action plans covering 12 subjects);
- 1097.4 that in relation to degree outcomes, the data from the previous two academic years reflected a fall in the proportion of first-class degrees to below pre-pandemic levels;
- 1097.5 that external examiners had confirmed the standards of awards remained aligned with the UK sector;
- 1097.6 that the data reflected the ethnicity awarding gap remained a concern and had increased for the year; this was widening for Asian students and decreasing for Black students (although still persisting); the University had an Inclusive Education Framework for use by staff, including resources to help make progress on the awarding gap; further support was needed for students transitioning to university and this was part of the new strategy;
- 1097.7 compared to the sector, there was perhaps a more moderated inflation in the awarding gap during the pandemic due to the use of the University's safety net;

- 1097.8 that risks within the paper had been aligned with strategic risks to enable better comparison; future controls would need to be reviewed to further reduce risk;
- 1097.9 that the wording of section 4.3 needed to be amended; similarly the typo needed to be corrected on page 34;
- 1097.10 that there was a potential impact on student attainment due to further financial pressure and increased fees; it was noted there was a need for both more institutional funding and more student support;
- 1097.11 that there were variances in the effectiveness of Staff Student Panels and improvements to be made in some areas;
- 1097.12 that there remained some concerns over the Welsh translations of some historical signage.

Resolved

- 1097.13 to recommend to Council approval of the Annual Quality Report, subject to the amendments noted in sections 4.3 and 5.3 [minute 1097.9].

### **1098 Academic Standards and Quality Committee Report to Senate**

Received paper 24/200, 'Academic Standards and Quality Committee Report'. The Head of Education Governance spoke to this item.

Noted

- 1098.1 that the paper requested approval of the Postgraduate Research Partnerships Policy; this complemented the Education Partnerships Policy and aimed to provide clarity on requirements and expectations on PGR partnerships and collaborations; it was confirmed that due diligence and appropriate supervision and resources would be undertaken for External Placement PhDs;
- 1098.2 that the annual review and enhancement process had been replaced by a continuous process, undertaken through the education governance committees in Schools and Colleges; this avoided duplication of work;
- 1098.3 the Committee had identified which policies and processes would be reviewed in the 2024/25 academic year, to allow time for consultation and early notice of such events;
- 1098.4 that the constitution for the Committee had been amended to note the changes to education governance approved by Senate last year.

Resolved

- 1098.5 to approve the Postgraduate Research Partnerships Policy.

### **1099 Education and Student Experience Committee Report to Senate**

Received paper 24/201, 'Education and Student Experience Committee Report'. The Head of Education Governance spoke to this item.

Noted

- 1099.1 that the Constitution had been amended to update references to HEFCW, the previous Education Sub-Strategy and the Welsh Assembly Government;

- 1099.2 the Committee had received a report on the closure of the Education and Student Experience programme which had run until July 2024; a benefits and measures dashboard had been created to monitor the ongoing impact until July 2027 and to ensure there was an impactful and lasting improvement to student experience from the programme; thanks were extended to the Pro Vice-Chancellor and team for the leadership and work in this area;
- 1099.3 an Education Development service and toolkit had been developed;
- 1099.4 new Marking and Moderation and Academic Feedback policies had been approved for this academic year and implementation was being monitored.

## **1100 Any Other Business**

Noted

- 1100.1 that thanks were extended to Professor Phil Stephens and Grace Thomas who were attending their last meeting; it was noted that Professor Rachel Ashworth and Thomas Beach had left Senate since the last meeting and thanks were extended for their contributions;
- 1100.2 that Professor Rachel Errington had been appointed Head of the School of Medicine;
- 1100.3 that Claire Morgan was likely to be on leave until Spring 2025; Professor Nicola Innes would serve as interim Pro Vice-Chancellor Education and Student Experience on 0.5 FTE with support from Rhodri Evans and Helen Spittle.

## **1101 Items Received for Information**

The following papers were received for information:

- 23/837 ASQC Minutes – 8 July 2024
- 24/210 ASQC Minutes – 14 October 2024
- 24/204 ESEC Minutes – 10 October 2024
- 24/156R Academic Standards and Quality Committee Constitution
- 24/114R Education and Student Experience Committee Constitution
- 24/175R 2023-2024 Annual Statement on Research Integrity
- 24/202 Annual Report for the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers
- 24/203C Fee and Access Plan Monitoring 2023-24
- 24/122 Employee membership of University Sub-Committees 2024-25 (appointments made by Senate)
- 24/228 Senate Constitution 2024-25