



APPROVED

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

SENATE

30 OCTOBER 2024

Present: Professor Ivison (chair), Professor Abbott, Ms Akram, Professor Alexander, Mr Ashraf, Ms Bailey, Professor Barnes, Ms Baynes, Professor Bianchi, Professor Brass, Dr Breban, Professor Brennan, Professor Chambers, Dr Collins, Professor Cruickshank, Dr Demkowicz, Professor Devine, Dr Emery, Professor Fagan, Ms Farzalizadeh, Professor Finn, Dr Firth, Professor Flint, Professor Ford, Professor George, Professor Georghiou, Dr Gill, Professor Green, Professor Hallam, Professor Hardacre, Professor Heagerty, Professor Hubbard, Professor James, Professor Jones, Dr Lander, Professor Martinez Lucio, Professor Mativenga, Professor Matthews, Mr Mawdsley, Dr McBride, Dr Merrywest, Dr Moore, Dr Mossman, Professor Pacey, Professor Parsia, Professor Pattison, Ms Roberts, Dr Sansom, Professor Schmidt, Professor Siperstein, Dr Skyrme, Professor Smyth, Dr Stamford, Professor Stelma, Dr Strowe, Ms Studd, Dr Sumner, Dr Tarmey, Professor Taylor, Professor Thakkar, Professor Turchetti, Dr Turnbull, Professor Turner, Professor Venkatesan, Professor Verma, Professor Walet, Dr Walsh, Professor Westwood, Professor Woolf and Dr Yildiz (69)

Apologies: Professor Cowen, Professor Currell, Professor Curry, Dr Eissa-Barroso, Professor Evans, Professor Gale, Dr Hager, Professor Harper, Professor Hooper, Ms Jackson, Dr Magri, Professor McMahon, Professor McPhail, Dr Naylor, Professor Pressler, Professor Sampson, Professor Schultz, Professor Trafford and Professor Shultz.

Secretary to Senate: Patrick Hackett (Registrar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer), supported by Mark Rollinson (Deputy Secretary), and John Marsh (Senior Governance Manager) (minutes).

1: Welcome

Noted: the Chair welcomed the following new members to Senate:

Ex-officio members: Duncan Ivison (President and Vice-Chancellor), Allan Pacey (Interim Dean of FBMH), and Juup Stelma (Head of School, SEED from 1 November 2024). **Elected members:** FSE: Emily Collins (School of Engineering), Katie Moore (School of Natural Sciences), and Riza Batista-Navarro (School of Engineering; FBMH: Robert Naylor (School of Medical Sciences), Dr Ayodele Sasegbon (School of Medical Sciences), and Penelope Stanford (School of Health Sciences, Chair of the School Board); Humanities: Nick Turnbull (School of Social Sciences), Ümit Kemal Yildiz (SEED), and Andrew James (AMBS). **UMSU representatives:** Adil Ashraf (PG Research Officer), Gabrielle Bailey (FBMH Officer), Lexie Baynes (Union Affairs Officer), Elliot Briffa (City and Community Officer), Nahid Farzalizadeh (FSE Officer) and Charlie Roberts (Activities and Culture Officer).

2: Thanks to Departing Members of Senate

Noted:

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- a) Senate's thanks to the following members whose terms on Senate had concluded, or would conclude prior to the next Senate meeting (12 February 2025): **Ex-officio members:** Luke Georghiou and Martin Evans; **Elected members:** Mike Harte;
- b) on the occasion of his final Senate meeting prior to standing down as Deputy President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor, and in recognition of his career and service at the University for a period of over 50 years, Senate's unanimous thanks and good wishes to Professor Luke Georghiou.

3: Declarations of Interest

Noted: that no declarations were made.

4a: Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Agreed: to approve the minutes of 5 June 2024, subject to minute 12 being amended to clarify that it was established *practice* for the University to speak to on-campus protesters through UMSU and not engage directly.

4b: Matters Arising

Received: an update on matters arising since June 2024 Senate.

Noted:

- a) concerns had been raised on behalf of the School Board of Natural Sciences regarding August resits. A detailed response from the Director of Student and Academic Services had been circulated to Senate, updating it on implementation activity on the proposals to change academic year dates (agreed by ballot following 5 June Senate). The Chair of the School Board of Natural Sciences indicated that he believed that members of the School Board were unlikely to see the implementation activity as being sufficiently ambitious or timely;
- b) an update from the School Board of AMBS regarding its special meeting on 11 September 2024. The meeting had concluded that the University should consider developing a written policy which safeguarded individual freedom to decline involvement in research, teaching and associated administrative activities in relation to specific organisations or regimes whose ethics and practices conflict with an individual's moral values and principles. In response the Vice-President (Social Responsibility) advised Senate that the development of guidance was underway;
- c) several members had queried the approval route for academic promotion criteria. Senate was reminded that the Board of Governors was the employing authority for all University staff, and in practice this was delegated to Planning and Resources Committee. Proposals for the updating of promotions criteria were of a sufficiently detailed employment-orientated nature to come under PRC's remit.

5: Senate Forward Agenda

Noted:

- a) the Senate Forward Agenda 2024-25;
- b) that the Governance Office would develop a more dynamic forward agenda, which would integrate Senate business and that of its two committees. Details of consultation opportunities for policy development would also be included; **Action: Governance Office**
- c) guidance regarding how members could request agenda items for Senate, and the sponsorship and presentation of agenda items, including School Board motions

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would be shared with members by the Governance Office. **Action: Governance Office**

6: Terms of Reference: Senate and its Academic Quality and Standards Committees

Received: the terms of reference for Senate and its Academic Quality and Standards Committees.

Noted: that the Governance Office would lead a review of Senate Standing Orders during 2024-25.

Agreed: that an opportunity to reflect on Senate practice and culture would be scheduled.
Action: RSCOO

7: Summary of the Board of Governors' Meetings

Received and noted: a summary of the Board of Governors' 10 October 2024 meeting.

8: Report of the President and Vice-Chancellor

Received: the Report of the President and Vice-Chancellor.

Noted: the key initiatives and priorities of the President and Vice-Chancellor since taking office in August, with a focus on engaging with the University community, the commencement of a strategic planning exercise, reflections on governance structures, key areas of work including student satisfaction and innovations in teaching and learning, and the launch of Unit M, government relations, and employee updates.

9: 2023-24 Annual Academic Assurance Review (Teaching, Learning and Students)

Received: the 2023-24 Academic Assurance Review (TLS), which had been considered and recommended to Senate by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee (TLS) at its 17 October 2024 meeting.

Noted:

- a) the 2023-24 Academic Assurance Review (AAR) provided: 1) assurance that the academic standards and quality assurance of programmes met and adhered to the internal procedures set out in the University Quality Framework and Regulations and consequently complied with external regulatory requirements, 2) an overview of performance (TLS Deep Dive), and 3) an assessment of trends, good practices, and risks mapped to appropriate internal and external benchmarks, utilising a single data source in the areas of Student Experience, Student Outcomes, Access and Participation, and linking to relevant measures from the Board's balanced scorecard;
- b) following feedback from the Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC) TLS on the 2022-23 Review, the 2023-24 AAR had been revised to be more action-based and solution-focused. This approach had been welcomed by AQSC TLS at its 17 October 2024 meeting which agreed to recommend the 2023-24 AAR to Senate subject to a number of amendments which were incorporated into the Review presented to Senate;
- c) AQSC TLS also requested that the 2024-25 Annual Academic Assurance Review follows a similar format to the 2023-24 Review, directly references it through a comparative approach, and is action-focused;
- d) targeted actions would focus on enhancing the Student Academic Experience during 2024-25, and were aligned with the following key TLSE priorities: 1)

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addressing student positivity in Assessment and Feedback, 2) strengthening the Student Voice and Representation, 3) implementing the Access and Participation Plan 2025-26 to 2028-29, 4) reviewing the Postgraduate Taught Portfolio, and 5) enhancing Graduate Experiences and Outcomes;

- e) in discussion, the following issues and themes:
- i. concerns from a small number of members regarding: 1) the role of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee in relation to Senate. The AQSC TLS had undertaken detailed consideration of the AAR on 17 October, and members were concerned that this may diminish the role of Senate, and 2) the volume of supporting material provided for Senate's information and whether this had been circulated early enough (circulation was on 24 October, six days before the meeting);
 - ii. the importance of ensuring focus on academic quality as well as process with regard to External Examiners' reports;
 - iii. Student Voice: NSS Q24 (how clear is it that student feedback on the course is acted upon) and the University's performance against this. One member suggested that the importance of pedagogy and teaching quality needed to be recognised as being distinct from student satisfaction;
 - iv. several members raised significant concerns regarding the Teaching Sustainability Project in Humanities, and suggested that more detail would have been helpful regarding Inclusive Practice, Size and Shape and Teaching Sustainability initiatives, particularly in Humanities (section 3.3.4 of the TLS report).

Agreed: to recommend the 2023-24 Annual Assurance Report to the Board of Governors, via Audit and Risk Committee, noting that Dr Gill, Professor Parsia and Dr Yildiz declined to do so due to their concerns regarding the volume of paperwork which the AAR was comprised of and the timeliness of its provision to Senate.

10: 2023-24 Annual Academic Assurance Review (Research)

Received: the 2023-24 Academic Assurance Review (Research), which had been considered and recommended to Senate by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee (Research) at its 17 October 2024 meeting.

Noted:

- a) the 2023-24 Review provided a summary and assessment of the deep dive data in the areas of 1) research funding, 2) postgraduate researchers (PGRs) and 3) research quality;
- b) the following key measures of success used available UK benchmarking data to assess these three areas: 1) research funding: number of discipline areas (UoAs) in the top five for research income per FTE, 2) research funding: Increased market share of external research funding measured by five-year market share of priority research funders, 3) PGRs: number of discipline areas (UoAs) meeting top five threshold for PGR per FTE, 4) PGRs: proportion of PGRs completing within five years, and 5) research quality: number of subjects (UoAs) in the top five of the Russell Group for the proportion of outputs in the top decile for citations;
- c) the University was on track to meet benchmark targets for PGR numbers. but was currently behind target regarding the four other key measures of success;
- d) the AAR also provided context by drawing on the Research and Discovery annual report and quarterly Senate research reports to highlight successes in the three areas of research funding, PGRs and research quality and to update on actions which supported these three areas, and by providing an update on ongoing work and initiatives in relation to research culture and the environment;

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- e) the AAR identified the following strategic priorities for Research and Discovery: 1) growing research income, 2) enhancing research quality (with a focus on citation performance), 3) developing research leadership capacity, 4) fostering interdisciplinary research, 5) building an enhanced research culture and environment, 6) improving PGR completion rates in underperforming Schools, 7) preparing for the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2029, and 8) optimising the professional service research support environment;
- f) discussion of the Review focused on:
 - i. the University's research performance in world rankings, and in particular its weaker performance in citations and the resulting effect on the University's rankings;
 - ii. activity that would be undertaken to address this and enhance citations, and a recognition of the nuanced context regarding citations (e.g. the value of co-publication with partner institutions, the contractual status of Teaching and Scholarship staff, EDI implications of citations, and citations of Social Responsibility research).

Agreed: to recommend the 2023-24 Annual Assurance Report to the Board of Governors, via Audit and Risk Committee.

11: Senate Academic Quality and Standards Committee: Research

Received: the report of the Committee's 17 October 2024 meeting.

Noted: that the Committee had approved updates to the following policies and procedures: 1) Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Regulations, 2) Degree of Master of Philosophy (MPhil) Regulations, 3) Presentation of Theses Policy, and 4) Policy on the Progress and Review of Postgraduate Researchers.

12: Senate Academic Quality and Standards Committee: Teaching, Learning and Students

Received: the reports of the Committee's 26 June and 17 October 2024 meetings. The 17 October report recommended the Policy on the Harmful Use of Substances or Alcohol by Students to Senate, for approval.

Noted:

- a) that the 26 June meeting had approved updates to the following policies: 1) Policy for Placement Learning, and associated guidance, 2) Policy on Interruptions to Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Programmes of Study, and associated guidance, 3) Policy on Religious Observance for Students, and 4) Policy on Additional Costs for Taught Programmes;
- b) the 17 October meeting was updated on the Assessment Framework Review and approved its revised timeline. It also received a briefing on maximum study periods and agreed that a policy statement be added into the forthcoming 2024-25 Review of Degree Regulations;
- c) the re-introduction of a maximum study period would provide clarity, consistency and fairness of practice. Recognising a member's comments regarding potential complex needs cases around some interruptions, Senate was advised that data would be collected on the number of students who extend their study period for other reasons for periods of time longer than two years, to ensure that an approval process to exceed the two years would not cause a significant impact on workload for staff or the University experience of many students. This data would also contribute to an equality impact assessment which would accompany the policy change, to ensure that no students were discriminated against;

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- d) UMSU endorsed the Policy on the Harmful Use of Substances or Alcohol by Students. The UMSU Activities and Culture Officer advised Senate that the Students' Union would seek to advocate for the Policy to be applicable to all students (noting that students registered on certain professional practice programmes were subject to specific requirements for the declaration of issues relating to the harmful use of substances or alcohol, as required by external regulators).

Agreed: to approve the Policy on the Harmful Use of Substances or Alcohol by Students.

13: Matters Raised from University of Manchester Students' Union

Received: a report: *Our Student Insight: How to Improve the Student Experience* which had been authored by the UMSU Union Affairs Officer and Humanities Officer.

Noted:

- a) the report drew attention to the issues students were facing and suggested solutions. The Union Affairs Officer urged that collective support and advocacy be given to the proposals and suggested initiatives in the report;
- b) discussion of the report's view that the academic advisor structure was inconsistent across the Faculties and would benefit from reinforcement to ensure that all students were supported effectively. Senate was advised that the Students' Union would present a report to the President and Vice-Chancellor on this topic; Comments from other members of Senate highlighted 1) the significance of training for colleagues in advisory roles as an element of a consistent and coordinated process and structure, and 2) workload implications for academic advisers;
- c) other themes raised in discussion included:
 - i. the value of considering the wider implications of technological changes and associated access implications regarding certain buildings for staff and students;
 - ii. the problem-focused structure of the report was praised by members, and it was suggested that other papers for Senate and its committees could take a similar approach in terms of providing clarity;
 - iii. the perceived depersonalisation of aspects of the student experience, and the reduced level of contact between Professional Services staff and students, and resulting impacts on academic staff, and the nexus of the student experience and a sense of belonging and community at the University.

14: Student Mental Health Support Evaluation Data

Received and noted: the key findings of a deep dive into student mental health and subsequent evaluation of various metrics and other indicators which illustrated the effectiveness of the University's support offer.

15: Report of the Vice-President (Teaching, Learning and Students)

Received: the Report of the Vice-President.

Noted:

- a) the Procedures for Protecting the Interests of Students and Postgraduate Researchers during Exceptional Events had been activated by the President and Vice-Chancellor on 2 July 2024 for the academic year 2024-25 due to the

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continuing impact of Covid on some cohorts. The continuing use of the Procedures had been supported by the University's External Examiner;

- b) Senate's congratulations to the new National Teaching Fellow (Dr Minjie Xing) and the University of Manchester Library Student Team (UMLST) who had received the Advance HE Collaborative Approach to Teaching Excellence (CATE) Award;
- c) several members shared their significant concerns regarding the process and use of delegated authority for withdrawal and suspension of UG and PGT programmes, and particularly focused on the Teaching Sustainability project in Humanities. It was suggested that due process had not been followed regarding programme withdrawal in Modern Languages and Cultures (MLAC), and that the withdrawal of programmes had a detrimental effect on staff trust in governance processes at the University;
- d) in response, Senate was advised by the Dean of Humanities that:
 - i. appropriate due diligence and formal processes had been followed in the Faculty for the withdrawal of programmes. Specific proposals from MLAC had been agreed via the Faculty Teaching Sustainability-Sub-Committee, and had been informed by extensive consultation;
 - ii. engagement had taken place with School leadership teams across all Schools in the Faculty regarding the Teaching Sustainability Project. The programmes identified for withdrawal in MLAC had low numbers of registered students in recent years, and it was important for levels of demand to be recognised and acted upon where necessary, and also for new opportunities for growth to be explored (e.g. languages and business programmes). The Faculty was cognisant of the challenges that HE-level languages faced in the UK due to low demand from applicants, and their optional status at GCSE-level;
 - iii. dialogue with MLAC and SALC was ongoing for a vision for modern languages at the University, and operating models at peer universities were being evaluated. The Faculty would continue to be committed to modern languages and value them;
- e) the Governance Office would review the origination of delegated authority regarding programme suspension and withdrawal. **Action: Governance Office**

16: Report of the Vice-President (Research)

Received: the Report of the Vice-President.

Noted:

- a) that the report included details of key achievements and updates in the priority areas of: 1) accelerating interdisciplinary research including updates from beacons and platforms, 2) developing research leadership and creativity including highlights of activity in relation postgraduate researchers and research staff, 3) an open and responsible research environment including updates from the research lifecycle programme;
- b) major research awards and research achievements and recognition were also highlighted along with updates on Horizon Europe funding, a summary of policy engagement within Greater Manchester and a report on Business Engagement and Knowledge Exchange activity, plus recent announcements relating to REF 2029.

17: Report of the Vice-President (Social Responsibility)

Received: the Report of the Vice-President.

Noted:

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- a) updates on Social responsibility priorities, enablers and measures of success;
- b) the Vice-President drew Senate's attention to: 1) the appointment of the new Executive Director of EDI, 2) the University ranking of seventh in the Stonewall Top 100 Workplace Annual Equality Index, 3) the achievement of the University Mental Health Charter (UMHC) award from Student Minds, and 4) the receipt of the International Green Gown Award in recognition of the University's ambitious decarbonisation plans.

18: Report of the Vice-President (Regional Innovation and Civic Engagement)

Received: the Report of the Vice-President.

Noted: updates on recent activity in regional innovation and civic engagement, including 1) the changing UK Government context (especially the extension of the Innovation Accelerator for a further year), 2) the outcome of the University's Regional Innovation Review, and the establishment of Unit M, a dedicated regionally-focused capability, with a mandate to own and drive the University's regional innovation strategy, as well as to coordinate existing, and deliver new, regionally-focused innovation activities, 3) an update on SISTER (formerly ID Manchester), and the implementation of the GM investment zone, and the implementation of the GM Civic University Agreement.

19: Uniac Review of Academic Governance

Received: the final report of the 2024 Uniac Review of Academic Governance.

Noted:

- a) the audit was an element of Audit and Risk Committee's 2023-24 Audit Plan. The report provided advice and recommendations on the academic governance mechanisms (including the two Senate Academic Quality and Standards Committees) introduced at the start of academic year 2022-23 to strengthen academic assurance and OfS compliance;
- b) the audit had been presented to 18 September 2024 Audit and Risk Committee. Its conclusion was a reasonable risk assurance rating of the governance effectiveness of the new mechanisms adopted by the Board and Senate in response to the 2021 Halpin Review and compliance with Office for Students (OfS) regulatory condition E. Audit and Risk Committee had fully accepted the audit's recommendations and actions;
- c) seven findings were identified by Uniac. Four of these were classed as moderate risks and management actions had been identified. The Governance Office would be responsible for the implementation of management actions, and would also address issues raised by members of Senate during the audit which were deemed outside of the scope of the review. An update would be provided to February 2025 Senate; **Action: Governance Office**
- d) Uniac highlighted two examples of good practice: 1) the provision of written reports from the Students' Union to Senate, and 2) the governance, management and quality of papers presented to Senate;
- e) UMSU representatives suggested that a standing agenda item on student matters be added to AQSC TLS meetings;
- f) the review had highlighted the lack of a consistent Workload Allocation Model for all Senate elected members, and the RSCOO advised Senate that efforts would be made to prioritise addressing this;
- g) issues raised in discussion regarding the findings of the Uniac audit, and themes such as their relationship with Senate and use of delegated authority, how the two AQSC committees were working, their composition and chairing would be

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considered via the scheduling of the opportunity to reflect on Senate practice and culture that had been agreed earlier in the meeting.

20: Review of Senior Management Committees

Received: a summary of proposals to refresh the University's senior executive management committee structure to: 1) enhance the alignment and cadence of University business in relation to the Board of Governors' committee cycle, and 2) improve clarity, efficiency and transparency of decision-making, via the establishment of the University Executive as a formal committee.

Noted:

- a) that the University Executive (UE) would be established as a new formal committee from 1 January 2025 and supersede the informal Senior Leadership Team (SLT) group and the Planning and Resources Committee (PRC). Engagement between the University Executive and UMSU and Senate would be facilitated via 1) The Union Affairs Officer and a Senate member (elected by Senate – in the first instance this would be the member elected to PRC in 2024, Professor Ken McPhail) joining the quarterly UE strategic review meetings as members, and 2) a report from the University Executive would be presented to each standard business meeting of Senate;
- b) minutes of UE meetings would be made available on StaffNet and via student communication channels;
- c) UMSU was very supportive of the proposals;
- d) a member indicated that they found the reporting proposals to be constructive, and also suggested that 1) consideration be given to other bodies and groups reporting relationships with Senate, 2) that a review of UE's operation take place after an appropriate period, and 3) that Senate representation on UE should be an elected member of Senate.

Secretary's Note:

the establishment of the University Executive necessitated a revision to Ordinance VIII. The proposed text was presented to Senate for comment, prior to presentation to the Board of Governors for formal approval (20 November 2024). No comments were made by members of Senate.

21: Student Experience Programme Evaluation Update

Received: an oral update from the Co-Chair of the Evaluation. It was anticipated that the Evaluation's final report would be completed in December for presentation to Strategic Change Sub-Committee in January 2025.

22: Intellectual Property Policy Update

Received:

- a) an implementation update following June 2024 Senate's approval (also approved by the Board of Governors in July 2024) of the adoption of a modification to the University's spin-out equity sharing model;
- b) a summary of progress to date by the Intellectual Property Policy review.

Noted:

- a) that Senate would be consulted before the end of 2024 on draft Policy proposals, prior to their presentation to February 2025 Senate for approval; **Action:**
Governance Office

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- b) it was suggested by one member that the review process should be more consultative and delivered through a task and finish group.

23: Elections Update

Noted: an update on the election of Senate members to serve on the Board of Governors, Planning and Resources Committee, and the two Senate Academic Quality and Standards Committees.

24: Report on Exercise of Delegations (on behalf of Senate and the Board of Governors)

Noted: Emeritus Professor appointments by the President and Vice-Chancellor.