



SENATE

12 FEBRUARY 2025

Present: Professor Ivison (Chair), Professor Abbott, Aisha Akram, Professor Alexander, Adil Ashraf, Gabrielle Bailey, Professor Barnes, Lexie Baynes, Professor Bianchi, Professor Brass, Dr Breban, Elliot Briffa, Professor Cartmell, Professor Chambers, Dr Collins, Professor Cowen, Professor Cruickshank, Professor Danquah, Professor Devine, Dr Eissa-Barroso, Nahid Farzalizadeh, Professor Finn, Dr Firth, Professor Flint, Professor Ford, Professor George, Dr Gill, Dr Habib, Dr Hager, Professor Hallam, Professor Harper, Professor Hooper, Katie Jackson, Professor James, Professor Jones, Dr Kirk, Dr McBride, Professor McMahon, Professor McPhail, Professor Martinez Lucio, Dr Magri, Professor Mativenga, Professor Matthews, Dr Mawdsley, Dr Merrywest, Dr Mossman, Dr Naylor, Professor Nirmalan, Professor Pacey, Professor Parsia, Professor Pattison, Dr Radhakrishnan, Charlie Roberts, Professor Sampson, Dr Sansom, Dr Sasegbon, Professor Schröder, Professor Schultz, Professor Siperstein, Dr Skyrme, Professor Smyth, Dr Stamford, Professor Stanford, Dr Stowe, Ms Studd, Dr Sumner, Dr Tarmey, Professor Trafford, Professor Turchetti, Professor Turner, Professor Venkatesan, Professor Verma, Professor Walet, Dr Walsh, Professor Westwood, Professor White, Professor Woolf and Dr Yildiz. (78)

In attendance:

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

Apologies: Professor Brennan, Professor Currell, Professor Curry, Dr Demkowicz, Professor Fagan, Professor Green, Professor Hardacre, Professor Heagerty, Professor Hubbard, Dr Hull, Professor Schmidt, Professor Stelma, Professor Taylor and Professor Thakkar.

1 Welcome

Noted: the Chair's thanks to members for the constructive discussion that had taken place prior to Senate in the informal Senate Culture and Practice workshop which preceded Senate.

2 Declarations of Interest

Noted: that Simon Merrywest and Andrew Walsh declared an interest in **Uniac**

Review of Academic Governance: Implementation of Recommendations:

AQSC terms of reference and membership (minute 19) on account of the paper proposing that their substantive positions as Executive Director for the Student Experience and Executive Director of Research and Business Engagement become members of the Senate Academic Quality and Standards Committees for Teaching, Learning and Students, and Research respectively.

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Agreed: to approve the minutes of 30 October 2024, subject to the strength of feeling from members who spoke regarding programme closures in Humanities being more clearly emphasised.

4 **Matters Arising**

Noted:

- a) the Matters Arising update;
- b) that the Vice-President (Social Responsibility) had subsequently advised the AMBS School Board that guidance regarding safeguarding 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, would not be taken forward. The Chair of the AMBS School Board indicated that while the School Board would respectfully disagree with this approach, it was grateful to the Vice-President for the update.

5 **Senate Forward Agenda 2024-25**

Noted: the Forward Agenda.

6 **Summary of Board of Governors' Meeting**

Received: the summary of the 20 November 2024 Board of Governors' meeting.

Noted:

- a) that on the recommendation of People Committee, at its November 2024 meeting, the Board had agreed that for an initial nine-month trial period, the requirement for lay members of the Board to chair disciplinary/dismissal panels be delegated to a member of staff (this delegation did not extend to procedures for dismissal relating to redundancy or the chairing of appeal panels). UCU had raised concerns about this matter and had issued a failure to agree. The RSCOO confirmed that there was a difference of opinion relating to interpretation of the relevant Statutes between University management and UCU. Senate was advised that discussions with UCU were ongoing;
- b) a summary of the 2023-24 Prevent Report would be shared with Senate.

Action: RSCOO

7 **Report of the President and Vice-Chancellor**

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

Noted:

- a) the following regarding membership of the University Executive: 1) that there was currently no intention to recruit to the vacant position of Deputy President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor, and 2) an update on preparations for recruitment to the position of Vice-President (TLS). Suggestions regarding Senate engagement with the recruitment process were invited by the President and Vice-Chancellor;
- b) that levels of funding investment for Manchester 2035 would be guided by capital planning for the University's estate and its digital infrastructure, and also by sector challenges including environmental sustainability and financial sustainability. The importance of the University maintaining fiscal discipline was recognised;
- c) the development of Manchester 2035 was entering phase 2 of the process which would develop proposals for initiatives and projects that advanced the University's ambitions across five domains. It was anticipated that the domains would facilitate distinctiveness ('Manchester-ness') for the University;
- d) an update on ongoing AI initiatives led by the Associate Vice-President (Research) and the Chief Information Officer. In addition to utilising AI to

enhance service provision for staff and students, it would also be important to 1) ensure that AI and associated technology aligned with the University's values, and 2) contribute to the HE sector's role in articulating the public good aspects and ethics of the adoption of AI.

8 University Executive Update

Received: an update regarding the University Executive's (UE) January 2025 meetings.

Noted:

- a) that UE's terms of reference were publicly available and would be signposted to Senate; **Action: Governance Office**
- b) the following regarding the University's student accommodation. Residential fees were used by Residential Life (ResLife) to cover routine expenses, refurbishments and future enhancements to the residential estate, and any surplus generated was similarly re-invested. Further details regarding recent investments in the residential estate would be shared with Senate; **Action: Director for the Student Experience**
- c) UE was exploring approaches to enhance systems and integration in key areas of Professional Services, such as Finance and People. These enhancements aimed to streamline operations, improve efficiency, and provide better support to the University's academic and administrative functions. An iterative approach would be taken to this work, and the establishment of foundational IT systems was being prioritised;
- d) it was anticipated that the development of Manchester 2035 would identify activity that could be implemented to enhance the current student experience. Furthermore, the mapping out of the strategy's timeline would identify outputs and priority activity that would take place across the lifecycle of the strategy;
- e) the review of academic advising would be informed by input from UMSU and the wider University community.

9 Senate Academic Quality and Standards Committee: Research

Received: the Report of the AQSC: Research 22 January 2025.

Noted: that the AQSC: Research had:

- a) approved substantial formatting updates to the existing Degree of MSc by Research Regulations;
- b) recommended to Senate for approval, updates to its terms of reference and membership (covered below in minute 19).

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

Received: the Report of the AQSC: TLS 29 January 2025.

Noted:

- a) that the AQSC: TLS had recommended to Senate: 1) the Annual Report on Student Appeals, Complaints and Discipline Cases for 2023-24 (minute 11 below), and 2) updates to its terms of reference and membership (covered below in minute 19);
- b) that the Assessment Framework Review would focus on ensuring that assurance could be provided regarding the quality and inclusivity of assessment approaches.

11 Annual Report of Student Academic Appeals, Student Complaints, and Student Conduct and Discipline Cases 2023-24

Received: the Annual Report which detailed the number and nature of academic appeals, complaints, discipline and fitness to practise cases handled in 2023-24.

Noted:

- a) that the overall number of cases during 2023-24 was a small proportion of the total student population (4%) and had fallen from 2022-23 (from 1781 to 1625 cases). Only one of the 69 cases considered by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) during 2023-4 had been found to be justified or partly justified. This demonstrated the rigour with which cases had been considered internally, and a willingness, when appropriate, to uphold appeals or complaints in favour of the student;
- b) that pre-arrival and Welcome Week activity and training was key in equipping new students with an understanding of what constituted academic misconduct. It was suggested that options be explored for delivering guidance to International students in their native languages;
- c) academic misconduct in relation to the use of AI had been recognised as an emerging challenge, and it was likely that instances of AI-related misconduct had been under-reported. Options to address this were undergoing thorough consideration. It was suggested that staff received additional support regarding the design of more robust assessment and examinations to counter this risk;
- d) that the 2024-25 Annual Report would be informed by members' comments regarding the disaggregation of Asian and Asian British data, and include a section that focused on diversity in its totality, and enable Senate to consider instances of overrepresentation of particular student demographics. **Action: Director for the Student Experience**

Secretary's Note: an update on exam malpractice was shared with the AQSC TLS at its 12 March 2025 meeting. The update [can be viewed here](#)

12 Matters Raised from University of Manchester Students' Union

Received: a paper, Student Voice Ahead of National Student Survey (NSS) 2025 which highlighted the ten best practices of the School of Environment, Education and Development (SEED), which had regularly achieved high NSS scores.

Noted:

- a) the paper highlighted student concerns regarding joint programmes, and in particular the potential for programme administration to cause confusion and issues with timetabling and instances of students lacking streamlined support. In response Senate was advised that this theme was under review by the Humanities Teaching Sustainability Project;
- b) the paper highlighted that some students did not feel comfortable in engaging verbally in a classroom environment. While Senate recognised the importance of promoting inclusivity in classroom engagement, verbal expression would continue to be a key output and transferable skill from a University education;
- c) a request that the future development of the University estate be cognisant of the importance of promoting a sense of belonging for students.

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

Received: the Report of the Vice-President, which included as an appendix guidelines for staff and students using or developing AI.

Noted:

- a) the University in collaboration with UMSU had been awarded two Times Higher Education awards in recognition of outstanding support to students and STEM research;
- b) the development of guidance on AI would be consultative and iterative and be informed by members' comments on the availability of licences, aspects of discipline-specific use of AI by staff and students, and the potential for streamlining of teaching and learning processes. Both Senate AQSCs would be key stakeholders in this process.

Agreed: to approve the proposed updated membership for the University Examination Board (UEB).

14 Report of the Vice-President (Research)

Received: the Report of the Vice-President.

Noted:

- a) a suggestion that future reports include a focus on the PGR experience;
- b) the London Economics February 2025 report: *The Economic and Social Impact of The University of Manchester* was complimented, and the Director for Social Responsibility was thanked for his work in compiling the report.

15 Report of the Vice-President (Social Responsibility)

Received: the Report of the Vice-President.

Noted: a suggestion that the resourcing of remedial activity to address social inclusion challenges be reviewed by the University Executive to ensure that Social Responsibility received appropriate levels of support.

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

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

17 Intellectual Property Policy

Received: proposed updates to the University's Intellectual Property (IP) Policy.

Noted:

- a) that a review of the Policy (which included consultation with Senate in November-December 2024) had been undertaken during 2024. The proposal had also been shared with trade unions for comment and would be updated to reflect this;
- b) the Policy's reward sharing policy compared favourably to peer institutions;
- c) in discussion, the following suggestions: 1) that the Policy's clauses regarding copyright of teaching material would benefit from further review and ensure alignment of policy and necessary practice, and 2) that future reviews of the Policy be facilitated via a task and finish group.

Agreed: noting that the Policy was subject to joint approval by the Board of Governors and Senate, to approve the updates to the Policy.

18 Uniac Review of Academic Governance Implementation Update

Received: an update on the implementation of management actions from the 2024 Uniac Review of Academic Governance.

Noted:

- a) that an update on Workload Allocation Model for elected members of Senate from Humanities would be scheduled for April 2025 Senate. **Action:**

Governance Office. It was suggested that membership of the two AQSC should receive an enhanced workload allocation;

- b) UMSU representatives welcomed the enhanced opportunities for the student voice via participation on governance bodies (which now included School Boards) and suggested that representatives' role and contributions continue to be monitored to ensure their effectiveness;
- c) on future Senate agendas, the UMSU report would follow on from the President and Vice-Chancellor's Report; **Action: Governance Office**
- d) the Green Paper – White Paper review of Senate standing orders would be supported by a working group of Senate members; **Action: Governance Office**
- e) it was suggested that guidance to Senate on requests for agenda items clarify the requirement for sponsorship of reports to Senate and aspects of the agenda setting process;
- f) the following in relation to the informal Senate Culture and Practice workshop that had preceded Senate, and the Uniac Review which had been shared with members as context:
 - i. that further potential amendments to Senate's culture and practice and the ways of working/terms of reference of its AQSCs would be informed by the session's outputs;
 - ii. Professor Parsia's objections to the Uniac Review and its findings had been shared with members of Senate as an element of the preparatory documentation for the workshop. Similarly, Dr Gill's concerns regarding the presentation of qualitative data from the Uniac Review had also been shared with Senate;
- g) that while the Uniac Review had advised that elected members of Senate should not be considered to represent a constituency, several members challenged this conclusion and stated their opinion that through election, and engagement outside of Senate meetings with their colleagues at School and Faculty level, they were functioning as representatives of constituencies;
- h) recognition that governance at the University was a collective and shared endeavour.

19 Uniac Review of Academic Governance: Implementation of Recommendations: AQSC terms of reference and membership

Received: following recommendation from the AQSC: Research and AQSC: TLS, proposed amendments to the two committees' terms of reference and membership.

Noted:

- a) the proposed membership changes would appoint the Executive Director for Research and Business Engagement, and the Executive Director for the Student Experience to the Research and TLS Committees respectively, and thereby establish consistency with their membership of Senate;
- b) it was suggested that the composition of both AQSCs should reflect more exactly the composition of Senate in terms of the balance of ex-officio and elected membership.

Agreed: noting Professor Parsia's objections to the findings of the Uniac Review of Academic Governance, to approve the amendments to the AQSCs' terms of reference and membership.

20 Student Experience Programme Evaluation Update

Noted:

Approved

- a) the Evaluation Committee had held its final meeting on 12 February 2025, and its final report would be submitted to the Strategic Change Sub-Committee;
- b) Senate's thanks to the Co-Chairs of the Evaluation (Allan Pacey and Sandra Crosbie) and its Project Manager (Heather Devine), and the members of the Evaluation Committee;
- c) Senate recognised the challenging and emotionally straining nature of aspects of the Evaluation Committee's work;
- d) Senate and the University community would be updated on how the final report would be disseminated. An opportunity for Senate to review and reflect on the final report would be scheduled, and an open meeting would be organised for the wider University community to do so.