

Heriot-Watt University

## THE SENATE

Minutes: 06 September 2023

In the Chair: Professor Richard A Williams, Principal and Vice-Chancellor

Present:	Dr Çakıl Agnew	Dr Bill MacPherson
	Professor Mushtak Al-Atabi	Professor Julian Malins
	Dr Nasir Al Lagtah	Professor Mercedes Maroto-Valer
	Dr Ross Alexander	Dr Alistair McConnell*
	Dr Yousef Al-Gumaei	Professor Martin McCoustra
	Professor Mark Biggs	Dr Richard McCracken*
	Dr Linda Buchan*	Professor Dame Heather McGregor
	Ms Joleen Chong Si Cheng*	Dr Ruaraidh Mcintosh
	Professor Malcolm Chrisp	Dr Yvonne McLaren-Hankin
	Mr Jose Condé	Professor Steve McLaughlin*
	Dr Demitrios Cotsovos	Mr Lee Miles
	Professor Paul Dalgarno	Dr Shameel Muhammed*
	Professor Dugald Duncan	Professor Gillian Murray
	Dr Neamat El Gayar	Dr Katriona Myhill
	Dr David Ellis	Dr Hendrik Nahler
	Dr Erkal Ersoy*	Dr Yasemin Nielsen
	Professor Anna Fenge	Dr Rabee Rustum
	Dr Fadi Ghaith	Dr Chris Rutherford
	Professor Igor Guz*	Dr Christian Saemann*
	Dr Amos Haniff	Professor Mathini Sellathurai
	Professor Ted Henry	Dr Harpreet Seth*
	Dr Kirin Hilliar*	Ms Devanshi Sharma*
	Dr Timothy Johnson	Mr Nader Shouly
	Professor Helinor Johnston	Ms Celia Silva*
	Dr Britta Kalkreuter*	Ms Andrea Sneddon
	Dr Craig Kennedy	Dr Kathrin Stark
	Mr Ryan Koh*	Dr Katerina Strani
	Professor Reza Kouhy	Dr Monica Tamariz
	Professor Angus Laing	Dr George Vasdravellis
	Mr Andrew Lee	Dr Kathryn Waite
	Dr Helen Lewis	Professor Fiona Waldron
	Dr Min-Hsiu Liao*	Dr Tze Chuen Yap
	Professor Sara Lombardo	Dr Humphrey Yiu*
	Ms Jasmine Low	Professor Hind Zantout
	Dr Alex MacLaren	

In attendance:	Mr Nathan Bircham	Dr Maggie King
	Professor Martha Caddell	Ms Ruth Moir
	Mr Iain Dods	Ms Susan Orr
	Professor Fiona Grant	Mr Marc Quinn
	Mr Mark Hamid (Clerk)	Ms Kirsty Scanlan

Apologies:	Professor Lehel Banjai	Dr Lucy Robertson
	Dr Anne Bernassau	Mr Scott Anderson
	Ms Sue Collier	Ms Georgia Noble
	Professor Annie Hill	Mr Connel Greenhorn
	Ms Samantha Kane	

\* denotes partial attendance

MINUTE REF	ACTION BY	ACTION DATE
<b>M23/46</b>	<b>CHAIR'S WELCOME &amp; NOTE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	
	The Principal and Vice-Chancellor welcomed all participants to the meeting, especially those new members of the Senate who were attending for the first time.	
	The apologies for absence were noted.	
<b>M23/47</b>	<b>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 15 JUNE 2023</b>	
	The Senate <b>received</b> and <b>approved</b> as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2023.	
<b>M23/48</b>	<b>MATTERS ARISING &amp; ACTION LOG</b>	
	There were no matters arising from the minutes or actions outstanding to comprise an action log.	
<b>M23/49</b>	<b>REPORT OF THE JOINT MEETING OF COURT AND SENATE HELD ON 10 MAY 2023</b>	
	The Senate <b>received</b> a report from the Vice-Principal summarising the feedback which had been received from the joint meeting of the Senate with the Court in the preceding semester. He noted that the views expressed supported the importance of sport, in its various forms, to the University community and that there was a manifest need for the opportunities and facilities offered to be inclusive for all. A key theme highlighted the challenges of providing provision on and off campus, and the desire, within financial constraints, to provide opportunities to a similar level globally.	
	The Senate <b>noted</b> the update.	
<b>M23/50</b>	<b>PRIORITIES FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2023/24 INCORPORATING PRINCIPAL'S REPORT</b>	
	The Senate received <a href="#">a series of presentations</a> by the chairs of the Senate's Committees setting out priorities for the academic year and framed by an introduction from the Principal and Vice-Chancellor.	
	The Principal also noted his report on recent developments within the University and higher education more generally, it having been circulated in advance. He noted an aspiration that the Senate should meet in person at least once during the academic year.	
	In his introduction, the Principal noted the challenging times being faced by the University and the wider sector, particularly in terms of international recruitment. He opined that clarity of purpose would allow the University to face these challenges. He also highlighted anticipated funding challenges which would affect the academic work which the Senate was tasked to lead on, and that the Global College was intended to secure international recruitment and its funding streams.	
	He noted that the University was now half-way through its strategy 2025 and that its QS rankings had exceeded expectations; the University had also managed to achieve success in recent surveys including being ranked 1st in Scotland and 2nd in the UK for Postgraduate Positive Outcomes.	

**M23/51 PRIORITIES FOR THE UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH & INNOVATION**

Professor Steve McLaughlin, Deputy Principal (Research & Impact) presented the year's priorities for the University Committee for Research & Innovation (UCRI) as its chair.

**M23/52 PRIORITIES FOR THE UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOR LEARNING & TEACHING**

Professor Malcolm Chrisp, Deputy Principal (Education & Student Life) presented the year's priorities for the University Committee for Learning & Teaching (UCLT) as its chair.

**M23/53 PRIORITIES FOR THE UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOR QUALITY & STANDARDS**

Professor Fiona Waldron presented the year's priorities for the University Committee for Quality & Standards (UCQS) as its chair, assisted by Dr Maggie King, Head of Academic Quality.

Following the three presentations from the Committee chairs, the Senators divided into breakout sessions of around 6-10 members to discuss two questions posed by the Chair, viz.:

- How can we ensure these priorities can be delivered as part of a global university?
- What are some of the challenging areas and how might we work together to achieve them?

**M23/54 FEEDBACK FROM BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

The Senate **received** feedback from three rapporteurs from the breakout sessions and agreed that all feedback would be collated and received at the next Senate meeting.

Clerk

October  
2023

The rapporteurs selected to feed back to the Senate meeting noted a desire the drive engagement between staff and foster a sense of community, which may have been lost during the pandemic, by bringing colleagues together. It was suggested that, at the Senate level, business should seek to go beyond the reporting of information and that engagement could take place more widely through town hall meetings and other forums.

The rapporteurs also noted a focus on ensuring that University strategy could be meaningfully implemented at an operational level, together with aspirations to ensure that flexibility in learning and teaching could be achieved, with the option to relax certain requirements to facilitate this.

A desire to promote cross-campus collaboration around research, in order to deliver a good return on capacity which had been invested for research across the University's global footprint and maximise research funding, was also expressed.

**M23/55 HERIOT-WATT UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA CONSTITUTION (SEN-23-31)**

The Senate **received** and **endorsed** the proposed new constitution for Heriot-Watt University Malaysia for onward approval by the Court and Malaysia Board.

During the discussion of the proposed constitution, it was noted that the document used a diversity of terms (notably for the Primary Academic Units) and suggested that these should be standardised in order to provide consistency with the University's other governing documents.

**M23/56 ANNUAL SFC REPORT ON QUALITY (SEN-23-32)**

The Senate **received** and **endorsed** the final draft of the HWU Annual Institutional Quality Report 2022/23 which had been circulated to Senators in advance.

**M23/57 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no items of other business.

**M23/58 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 18 October 2023  
Thursday 30 November 2023  
Thursday 08 February 2024  
Wednesday 24 April 2024  
Thursday 13 June 2024  
Wednesday 08 May 2024: Joint Meeting of Court & Senate