



Minutes

Meeting of the Senate

Date: 24 June 2026

Present: The President & Vice-Chancellor in the Chair

Dr A Akram, Professor T Baldwin, Professor P Bath, Professor A Beckerman, Professor A Bingham, Professor B Birdi, Professor R Blakeley, Professor L Brooks, Professor S Brown, Dr J Burr, Dr J Chamberlain, Dr SJ Cooper-Knock, Professor L Cross, Professor E Davies, Professor K Dommett, Professor A Fletcher, Professor J Flint, Professor G Gee, Professor S Goodwin, Dr L Gray, Dr N Harris, Professor S Hartley, Dr F Henshaw, Professor S Hincks, Professor T Hodgson, Professor J Hodson, Professor R Howell, A Jeffries, Professor J Kirby, Professor R Kirkham, Professor D Lambert, Professor R Lawthom, Dr S Marsh, Professor F Matthews, Professor C Nic Dháibhéid, Dr S North, S Omondi, Dr R Orfitelli, R Sykes, E Thompson, Professor M Vincent, Professor H Woolley, Dr K Zbinden

Secretary: D Swinn

In attendance: E Allan, R Black (Item 4.1), S Callan, D Jones (Item 4.1), D Lodge (Item 4.1), M Marshall (Item 4.2), A Priestley, Dr E Smith, K Sullivan, S Taylor, L-M Till

Apologies: The Senate received apologies from 30 members.

Welcome

The President & Vice-Chancellor (P&VC) welcomed members to the meeting. One new member had joined Senate since the last meeting.

1. Introduction and Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

1.1 Pre-Submitted Questions

1.1.1 9 questions were submitted in advance of the meeting and were covered under the relevant items.

1.2 It was acknowledged there would be a number of conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest arising from item 11, Report of the Senate Nominations Committee, where the recommendations relate to individuals' appointments on other committees.

2. President & Vice-Chancellor's Report to Senate

2.1 The President & Vice-Chancellor (P&VC) presented the report, which provided information on key current and forthcoming developments in the policy environment and against each of the themes in the University's Strategic Plan. The report was taken as read and attention was drawn to the following updates and developments since the written report was prepared:

2.2 **Update on the current political situation**

- 2.2.1 Due to uncertainty over the next Prime Minister, Government commitments and policy development would be paused in the immediate term and it could therefore be difficult over the next few weeks and months to get traction on issues that the University had raised through its own activities and those of the representative groups of which it was a part. The University would continue to work constructively within the sector and with policymakers to maintain focus on the issues that were important to it.

2.3 **QS Top 100**

The QS World University Rankings 2027 had been announced the previous week. The University had climbed 10 places to 82nd in the world and had also risen one place in the UK at 14th. The VC expressed his gratitude to the entire University community for helping to achieve this positive outcome.

2.4 **Review of the faculty structure**

- 2.4.1 As part of a suite of broader communications, Senate had been informed by email that, following the creation of the new academic school structure, Council had approved proposals for the faculty structure to be reviewed, as part of which UEB had been asked to return to Council at the end of September with a detailed proposal for a three-faculty model. Senate received a further update on the rationale for this change, the expected timeline, the envisaged impact on faculty teams and faculty-facing teams and the planned next steps.
- 2.4.2 It was noted that the proposed transition to a three-faculty model was driven by several strategic ambitions: to create greater consistency in staff and student experience, address inconsistencies in size and financial sustainability, enable more interdisciplinarity and collaboration where that was desirable, and apply learning from the wider Russell Group, many of whose members had or were in the process of undertaking similar changes to their Faculty structures. It was explicitly noted that these proposals would not seek changes to schools, academic disciplines, programmes of study, or school-level professional services structures.
- 2.4.3 The proposed timeline was as follows:
- September 2026: Submission of the initial outline proposal to Council.
 - Autumn 2026: A period of formal engagement with staff and students to gather input on challenges and opportunities.
 - January 2027: Submission of the final proposal to Council for approval.
 - September 2027: Expected commencement of implementation.
- 2.4.4 A discussion followed the update, with the following key points raised:
- In the context of other substantive changes to both the structure of the University and to the ways that the University delivered education, a member observed that, directly and indirectly, these changes had significantly impacted staff responsible for delivering and supporting education and research. The importance of managing the pace and predictability of change and the cumulative impact of changes was emphasised, such that management should ensure:
 - Sufficient staff capacity to manage transitions.
 - The development of a robust evidence base for reform.

- Adherence to pedagogical and institutional best practices.
- Effective monitoring and evaluation of impact.
- Recognising the shared commitment to supporting staff through these changes, there could be merit in Senate playing a more productive role in helping to coordinate changes across the institution, not only individual changes, and determining associated timescales.
- The Chair responded by affirming that responsible delivery of significant institutional changes included a consideration of implications and delivery methods. In the case of the faculties, Council was the starting point for the initial proposal and, subject to Council's decision, a formal consultation process would be instigated. In general, Council valued input from Senate during this type of process and it was therefore expected that Council would seek advice from Senate about the faculty structure proposals in due course. It was noted that the final decision remained the remit of the Council.
- In follow-up, the member observed that, while current structures allowed for effective feedback on individual committee business, the Senate was less equipped to assess the cumulative coordination of change across the University. It was suggested that a systematic method for exploring the overall pace and extent of change with the Senate would be valuable. This would better position the Senate to assess potential risks and opportunities to the University's core missions of education and research.

2.4.5 A further discussion followed, with key points raised as follows:

- A member observed that the arguments for the faculty review (financial stability and consistency) mirrored those used for the previous school restructure and, therefore, they questioned whether the aims of the school restructure had been met.
- The member asked what analysis had been done to inform these proposals and raised concern that insufficient time had been allowed for reflection/evaluation of the new school structure before initiating further significant change.
- The member expressed further significant concern regarding the cumulative impact of major changes on staff, specifically referencing professional services, and queried whether the University still valued the academic "breadth and depth" associated with the current five-faculty model.
- The response noted that effectiveness, efficiency, consistency and financial stability were not binary states. Improvements had been seen in overall performance since the implementation of the new school structure, but, while it was the case that at the time the move to new schools was developed and approved there was no imperative to change the faculty structure, this does not imply that there would never be any future improvements, or need for change, regardless of any previous steps having been taken.
- It was important to understand the faculties proposal in this context, whereby they constituted further progression in the broader evolution of the University, rather than implying that the school restructure had failed to deliver its intended benefits.
- UEB did consider recommending the restructuring of the faculties at the same time as the schools, but ultimately decided that it was not necessary or appropriate at that point, for two primary reasons:
 - Capacity for Change: A key consideration was the institutional capacity needed to support such significant organisational shifts; the University decided to focus its resources on establishing the new schools first, with a view to revisiting the question of the faculty structure at a later date if necessary.
 - Institutional Progression: Now that the school restructure was complete and there were fewer schools, UEB proposed building on that through a consolidated

faculty structure as a logical next step to ensure consistency and financial sustainability across the University.

- Council expected the University to make these decisions to remain attractive and sustainable in a highly competitive environment with significant recruitment challenges that necessitated proactive and decisive action. Council would continue to monitor the impact of any previous and future changes and hold the executive to account for delivery and management.

2.4.6 Next Steps and Communication: There was recognition that the news may cause concern among the wider staff population due to the volume of recent change. Immediate actions to manage these uncertainties included:

- All-Staff Briefing: Scheduled for Thursday, 2 July, to take immediate questions.
- Digital Updates: An updated webpage featuring FAQs would be distributed via the staff newsletter.

2.5 In response to a pre-submitted question about the latest admissions data shared in the report on applications, offers, acceptances and whether these data had been normalised to account for the reduced number of courses now on offer, to ensure an equitable year-on-year comparison, it was clarified that the data had not been normalised to account for the reduction in the number of courses offered. This was because a changing portfolio did not necessarily translate into fewer applications. In many cases demand was simply redistributed, with students having chosen an alternative within the same subject area. In respect of low recruiting programmes, the significantly low demand in application, offer, acceptance and registration had not made a material difference to the year-on-year position. This was illustrated with the 2026 admissions figures showing increases in applications across all areas when compared with 2025, despite a reduction in the overall course portfolio.

2.6 The report highlighted the Prime Minister's commitment at a recent antisemitism summit that universities will be expected to publish the scale of antisemitism on campus as well as the specific steps taken to clamp down on it. In response to a pre-submitted question about the scale of antisemitism at the University and how it compared to others in the sector, Senate received a detailed update on the number of Jewish students registered at the University, the number of disclosures of antisemitism over the last two academic years, the number and types of university interventions made and the overall student disclosures made to the University. It was highlighted that the number of Jewish students at the university was very small (96 as of 1 December 2025), but it was recognised that this may not include students who chose not to disclose. There were no formal disciplinary processes relating to antisemitism in either year.

2.7 Senate had been notified of a correction to an Industrial Action update in the written report, which had been replaced in the meeting papers on 19 June. This related to the reasons for UCU's decision to formally censure the University and escalate to a global academic boycott. Senate had also been referred to a letter the University had received from UCU, which was publicly available online. The Interim University Secretary had received a request to correct the record due to a concern about the factual accuracy of the previous information provided to Senate in the report, relating to the stated reasons for industrial action, and a concern over the potential impact of such inaccuracies in the context of that industrial action. As a result, the record had been updated and reshared with Senate in the

papers. The concerns were shared in full with Senate and Members noted the importance of ensuring that Senate received accurate information.

- 2.7.1 A member shared feedback that some students had reported that their initial compensation claims (arising from the impact of industrial action) had been rejected; the member raised concern and asked whether Council was aware of the level of regulatory risk associated with the position. It was noted that, after the first round of industrial action, the University introduced and expedited a new appeal process to reduce the burden on students. Because this was a new and unfamiliar process, the University had become aware that some students felt their claims were being dismissed. Following a review, it became clear that students needed more information; updated communications were circulated and a student Q&A was held to update them on the process and invite them to resubmit. It was noted that, after this, a significant number of claims were submitted, the majority of which had received a decision. It was also noted that Council received a regular report on compliance with the OfS Conditions of Registration and would receive the minutes of the Senate meeting. It was clarified that Council had been provided with the same information as Senate regarding the OfS' request for information about the University's approach to student compensation, which was set out in the written report.
- 2.8 A member observed that the Committee of University Chairs had recently published a revised Code of HE Governance and that currently the Students' Union member of Council was not permitted to take part in some Council business. The member queried how this aligned with best practice in terms of good governance. It was clarified that the current position was because Council was actively managing a conflict of interest, which it was equally required to do, in line with the institutional procedure on managing conflicts of interest in decision making. Council was actively monitoring and reviewing the approach in liaison with the Students' Union.

3. Matters Requiring Approval

- 3.1 Senate received and noted a summary of the matters for which Senate's formal approval was sought.

4. Teaching and Research

4.1 REF Update

- 4.1.1 Senate received a detailed presentation on the REF, which include an overview and updates on; why REF matters; REF 2029 Assessment Framework; REF Guidance Timeline and current priorities; REF 2029 Optimisation Strategy; REF Outputs Stocktake (2026) and priority actions; 2026/27 Stocktake; REF 2029 Engagement and Impact Overview; impact priorities for 2026-27 and actions required and the REF 2029 Strategy People and Environment (SPRE).
- 4.1.2 It was highlighted that:
- The University was 70% of the way through the REF assessment period; current priorities were highlighted. The complete set of guidance would not be available until 'Autumn' 2026

- The REF 2029 Optimisation Strategy aims were summarised; this work was being led by REF Steering Group with Faculty input. UEB discussion and approval was scheduled for 14 July.
- REF Outputs Stocktake (2026) was summarised and priority actions were highlighted. Members were encouraged to contact the Library if assistance was required with open access.
- It was important to ensure continued monitoring, engagement and activity.
- In terms of the REF 2029: Strategy, People and Environment (SPRE), there was still some work to do to understand and articulate this and that work was ongoing.

4.1.3 Senate noted a point raised by a member which highlighted that time spent on preparing for the REF and every change made to the REF process itself reduced colleagues' capacity to undertake research.

4.1.4 The Vice President for Research and Innovation expressed their appreciation to the REF team for their work on this. The presentation slides would be shared with members after the meeting **[Action by: DS]**

4.2 Marks Management and the Degree Algorithm

4.2.1 Senate received a detailed presentation on Marks Management and the degree algorithm. It highlighted that these were two major steps towards de-risking from both a regulatory and student experience perspective. This delivered a clear, straightforward and understandable way of calculating degree classifications, aligned with the sector and UKSCQA Principles for Effective Degree Algorithm Design and a consistent and systemised approach to producing and holding accurate and timely marks for all students.

4.2.3 The presentation included detailed updates on: the degree algorithm itself and its implementation; requests for review; Marks Management capabilities and implementation; how the IT for Marks Management worked; inconsistencies that needed to be addressed; how this work sat within the broader work to improve assessment and feedback frameworks and further steps to consider to reduce risk and improve student experience.

4.2.4 The presentation included a link to a video demonstration of Marks Management; this couldn't be shown at the meeting but was included in the slides which would be shared with members after the meeting **[Action by: DS]**

5. Governance Matters

5.1.1 Senate Standing Orders Annual Review

Senate received a report on the annual review of the Senate Standing Orders, with proposed amendments to the Senate Standing Orders provided for consideration. Key changes were as follows:

- i. That the unconfirmed minutes be circulated to the Senate at the same time as they are provided to Council in the council papers.
- ii. A change to the deadline for advising the University Secretary of any proposed amendments to the minutes to forty-eight hours before the meeting, instead of twenty-four hours before the meeting.

- 5.1.2 Senate approved the proposed amendments to the Senate Standing Orders, noting that the process of formally approving the minutes, including considering any proposed amendments, would remain unchanged and take place at the following Senate meeting.

5.2 **Senate Code of Conduct**

Senate noted administrative updates made and confirmed the Senate Code of Conduct for 2026-27. The key change made was to reflect that the Ethics and Integrity Commission (EIC) had replaced the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL); relevant hyperlinks had been updated.

REPORTS FROM STATUTORY BODIES

6. **Report on the Proceedings of the Council**

(Meeting held on 30 April 2026)

- 6.1 Senate received and noted the Report on the Proceedings of the Council.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE

7. **Report of the Senate Academic Assurance Committee**

(Reports of the meetings held on 10 March and 19 May 2026)

- 7.1 Senate received and noted reports from the last two meetings of the Senate Academic Assurance Committee (SAAC), noting that there were no specific matters requiring approval. It was highlighted that across the two meetings SAAC undertook 4 deep dives on PGT Student Experience, Academic Misconduct, Research Impact and Research Funding. An overview of each Deep Dive was provided along with SAAC's assurance determinations in each area, which were set out in detail in the report.
- 7.1.1 It was noted that SAAC was not assured regarding Research Impact, observing that the current Impact Case Study stocktake represented a deterioration in assurance levels from the previous cycle. The Committee emphasised that available levers were limited, and that strong academic leadership at all levels would be the critical mechanism for driving engagement with outstanding and underdeveloped submissions. Prioritisation of this activity across the institution would be essential.
- 7.2 A pre-submitted question referenced the findings of the Deep Dive on Academic Misconduct; With regard to a recent rise in exam cheating (e.g. use of smart technology like Google Glasses) the member asked whether measures to check for earpieces and smart glasses were already in place for exams. Clarification was provided that the current rules prohibited any electronic devices (except approved calculators) and invigilators were aware of this. As technology developed the University would keep its rules and invigilation under review. Work would take place over the Summer to look across the sector to understand best practice. In practical / logistical terms the term 'electronic devices' was used as a catch all to ensure the University kept up to date with advances in technology, within the current rules and regulations. Senate was assured that invigilators were reminded each session to

be clear in their announcements that all devices that were introduced to a hall should be switched off and placed in the tray provided.

8. Report of the Senate Education Committee

(Meeting held on 14 May 2026)

- 8.1 Senate received the Senate Education Committee (SEC) report, noting that there were several specific matters requiring approval. Six questions were received in relation to the SEC Report in advance of the meeting, these were taken under the relevant items for approval. The following was highlighted:
- 8.2 Senate considered and **approved** a new policy on posthumous awards, which reflected current practice. This policy applied to any degree covered by the General Regulations XV For First Degrees and General Regulations XVI for Higher Degrees, Postgraduate Diplomas and Postgraduate Certificates.
- 8.3 Senate considered and **approved** the updated Degree Outcomes statement. It noted that awarding gaps for certain groups of students continued to increase. Senate was assured that interventions were in place, via the University's Access and Participation Plan, which sought to reduce these gaps, with a focus on students from particular under-represented groups. The University was running student experience panels and student coaching sessions to better understand and support students from these groups.
- 8.4 Senate considered updates to General University Regulations XII, General Regulations relating to Examinations XVIII and Regulations relating to the Discipline of Students XXII. During discussion the following was noted:
 - i. Questions regarding the General Regulations relating to Examinations XVIII:
 - In response to a point raised in a pre-submitted question about conflicting statements relating to mobile phones, it was clarified that mobile phones may be brought in to exams but must be switched off. It was agreed to amend the regulation (at point 12) to read:

“A mobile phone is potentially a method of storing unauthorised material: see Regulation 4 for Invigilated Examinations.”
 - In response to a pre-submitted question about the removal of the requirement for students to obtain an approval sticker for their calculator before using it in exams and whether there would be an alternative method for invigilators to check calculators, it was clarified that further guidance for staff and students would accompany this change next session. There would be a much reduced list of permitted calculator models; the Student Examination and Results Team in Student & Academic Services would draw up the list in conjunction with relevant schools. This would make it easier for invigilators to visually see and check that the calculator was permitted.

- In response to a pre-submitted question, which sought clarification on whether the amendments to the regulation weakened the rights of students around exams clashing with religious observances, it was clarified that revisions relating to religious observances continued to enable students to request that mandatory religious observance was taken into account when the exam timetable was drafted. The aim was to facilitate religious observance; however, practically this may not always be possible within the current constraints posed by scheduling a high number of invigilated exams within a short window.
- ii. Question regarding the General Regulations relating to the Discipline of Students XXII
- In response to a pre-submitted question, which sought clarification on whether the amendments affected the right for students to call witnesses in disciplinary hearings, it was clarified that the proposed amendment (to paragraph 29) was in line with the proposed Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) guidance set out in the OIA Consultation - Handling reports of harassment and sexual misconduct. The OIA issued good practice to the sector and the University had sought to meet those requirements, noting that the University's student disciplinary proceedings were not a legal process. The attendance of witnesses was applicable to hearings of non academic misconduct, including sexual misconduct, where a trauma informed approach alongside due process was key. Details were shared on how the amended process, including matters relating to witnesses, would work in practice.
 - A question was raised about whether students had access to more detailed definitions of some of the terms used in the student discipline regulations, for example terms like improper and disorderly, so that students could better understand these terms. It was agreed to look into this and provide an update outside of the meeting. **[Action by: MV]**

8.4.2 Senate approved proposed updates to the following:

- General University Regulations XIII
- General Regulations relating to Examinations XVIII - subject to the amendment agreed at minute 8.4.1.i
- Regulations relating to the Discipline of Students XXII

8.5 Senate considered and **approved** Exceptions to the General Regulations for First Degrees for specified programmes due to General Dental Council requirements which required students to demonstrate professional competencies.

8.6 Senate considered recommended changes (as set out in the attached report) to introduce standard assessment approaches for 2026-27 onwards; introduce a regulation that stipulated that modules were passed on aggregate; restricting the use of qualifying mark ("must pass") assessment to where there was an accreditation requirement to pass the component; to not permit the model of threshold assessment; to adopt standard terminology: resit, reassessment and repeat and ensure a consistent approach on when alternative reassessment could be used.

- 8.6.1 It was noted that colleagues had spent significant time looking at this, in particular at some of the inconsistencies identified through the Marks Management work. It was important, including from a regulatory perspective, to ensure that the approach taken across the University was consistent such that all degrees were comparable.
- 8.6.2 The Students' Union Officer members of Senate welcomed these changes; in response to a query it was noted that the University would ensure the changes were clearly communicated.
- 8.6.3i A pre-submitted question highlighted concern with the Consistency in Assessment Practices proposal due to a lack of alternative assessments for students who had been exempted from previous submission for Exceptional Circumstances (ECs). The member felt this may be unworkable in parts of the University and that the removal of threshold/grading assessments could be pedagogically damaging. In addition, the member felt that the document as a whole needed refining to remove ambiguity and improve readability. It was proposed to take the proposals back for consultation and redrafting.
- 8.6.3ii It was highlighted that there had already been a consultation at school and faculty level. Faculty Education Committees had discussed, with the University's Assessment, Progression and Awards Manager in attendance, a set of papers relating to consistent assessment practices at their April meetings before these were consolidated and discussed by Senate Education Committee in May. Faculty Directors of Education highlighted that this had been a good model of engaging colleagues with the rationale and had allowed discussion of the implications of the changes for different areas of the University. All SEC members had supported the proposals, which had been particularly welcomed by the Students' Union Officers on SEC for the resulting clarity and consistency for students and the approach to 'like for like' reassessment.

It was clarified that if a student failed a module they would undertake reassessment in the specific component(s) that they had failed. This had the benefit that the student also retained the marks for the components that they had already passed. Alternative reassessments would be permitted where it was not possible to reassess students in the same way as the first sit assessments. This would normally be due to the nature of the original assessment. Alternative re-assessments were only for students who failed the module and needed to resit the module, and not for other circumstances where students needed to be assessed or reassessed, such as ECs, during the resit period. Reasonable adjustments to assessments for students with learning support plans would not be affected.

The change to no longer using the model of threshold assessment (where the threshold assessment was taken separately to the grading assessment, and must be passed for the student to pass the module), was a change of practice in a small number of areas, predominantly in the Faculty of Engineering. The need to hold the threshold and grading elements of the assessment as sub-components and the unusual way of calculating the module mark, which was not common across the sector and therefore not supported by mainstream student record systems, meant that the assessments could not be clearly communicated accurately to students via any of the formal channels. This carried significant risk, particularly where different assessment methods (e.g. exam and coursework) existed in one overall assessment. It was confirmed that the Faculty of Engineering endorsed the decision. It was noted that affected modules had been identified

and faculties and central teams were working with schools to plan the associated changes.

8.6.3iv There was an extensive discussion about the proposals and the related clarity of drafting in the proposed documentation, in particular about the circumstances where alternative assessment methods would be permitted. A member gave an example of a situation where a student had not already been assessed for a component, for example group work the student had not been able to participate in. In this case the component would be missed, rather than failed. Because the student would not be able to be assessed using the original assessment method, the member expressed concern that the option of an alternative assessment method in this scenario was not covered in the proposals.

8.6.3v During further discussion, it was noted that in this scenario the case was likely to be considered on an individual basis and that it would be possible to consider an alternative assessment, but it was acknowledged that the recommendations and guidelines would benefit from some redrafting to make this clear. It was noted that if Senate chose not to approve the proposals at the current meeting, it would not be possible to implement the revised approach and realise the intended benefits to students in 2026-27. On balance, recognising the imperative to implement these changes for the 2026-27 academic year, it was proposed to approve the report as presented subject to the wording of the proposal being revised to remove ambiguity, where appropriate, and assurance was given that any issues with the process would also be brought to Senate's attention. **[Action: by MV]**.

8.6.3vi In response to a question from a Student Union officer about whether there would be scope for students to make a retrospective academic appeal in cases where they would have been awarded a degree under the new policy, it was noted that this would be possible.

8.6vii Senate **approved** changes to introduce standard assessment approaches for 2026-27 onwards and the introduction of a regulation that stipulates that modules were passed on aggregate, subject to the action agreed at 8.3v.

8.7 Senate **noted** the following:

- i. SEC had approved the phase 2 Programme Simplification Recommendations (included in the report).
- ii. SEC had approved the new, significantly amended, and closed and resumed programme and title changes approved by faculties between 23 January and 2 March 2026 and 3 March and 13 May 2026 (included in the report).

8.7.1 With regard to 8.7 ii, a pre-submitted question raised concern about the closure of MChem Chemistry with an Industrial Placement Year and highlighted that this had been approved despite opposition from the school. Several members raised concern that Senate had previously been assured that closures originated from, and were presented with the support of, schools. It was requested this be considered as an exemption from the institutional framework

8.7.2 As had been previously reported to Senate, recommendations on low-recruiting programmes were sometimes made on an institution-wide basis rather than "bottom up"

from schools. In June 2025 Senate approved SEC's recommendation on the closure of "with industrial placement year" entry routes through UCAS, aligning with the standard institutional offer that allowed students to make an informed choice to add a year abroad/placement once they were on their programme. Questions were raised about the MChem Chemistry with an Industrial Placement Year which had a different programme structure and so the closure was deferred to allow for discussions within the Faculty of Science. There had been formal governance and informal interactions at faculty and school level about this. These had concluded and the programme was formally presented to SEC for closure.

- 8.7.3 Following further discussion, it was noted that discussions had taken place at faculty and school level but not all decisions had been unanimous. It was agreed to record the objections of two members to the closure of MChem Chemistry with an Industrial Placement Year and ensure that future reports included details of any significant opposition, e.g. from a school. **[Action by: MV]**

9. Report of the Senate Nominations Committee (Meeting held on 11 June 2026)

- 9.1 Senate received and noted the Report of the Senate Nominations Committee (SNC) meeting, which had taken place on 11 June 2026.
- 9.2 Senate **approved** the report and the related recommendations, as follows:
- i. Terms of Reference and Membership - Senate approved the addition of a Term covering the Committee's regard for the impact of its decisions on the University's compliance with its legal and regulatory duties relating to free speech. The provisions of the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023 were covered as part of these duties.
 - ii. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion of Senate Committees - Senate approved that Principle 7 of the Guiding Principles for Committee Memberships be amended to state that, for Senate committees, the maximum length of appointment be changed from nine years to six, with the wording to read 'Where a position on a committee is by nomination or election, rather than ex-officio, then unless otherwise stated in Regulation members of committees of Council or Senate will be appointed for an initial three-year term, with one renewal possible by re-election/nomination for a further three-year term, up to a maximum of six years'. Any proposal to extend a term beyond six years would be regarded as truly exceptional and require a compelling rationale to SNC to support the request. It was felt this would significantly increase the availability of committee positions for interested colleagues and create further opportunities to increase diversity on committees.

In response to a point raised about what more could be done to increase diversity on committees, it was highlighted that the University was already undertaking a range of work specifically on increasing diversity on committees, which would be presented to Council. Suggestions from the Senate were welcomed and members

were invited to share ideas directly with the Chair of the SNC and/or the University Secretary.

- iii. Senate Representation on Senate Committees - Senate approved the recommendation and associated actions to extend the membership of Senate Education Committee (SEC) and Senate Research and Innovation Committee (SRIC) to include 'one elected Member of Senate appointed by the Senate' for 2026/27, which followed consideration of a matter referred by Senate from its March meeting.

It was noted prior to the formalisation of a process for nomination and appointment, an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) would be undertaken over the Summer to identify any implications of the approach that might need to be managed or mitigated. This would inform the future recruitment process and induction for new members. Subject to Senate's approval of the proposal, an EoI process would be run early in the new academic year once SEC and SRIC had finalised a person specification. The committees would then propose an appointment to Senate on the recommendation of Senate Nominations Committee, in the usual manner.

- iv. Annual Review of Committee Membership: Senate Representation
 - a. The recommendations relating to Senate representation on committees.
 - b. The recommendations and associated actions relating to the composition and membership of Senate Appeals Panel and Senate Discipline Panel.

10. Report of the Senate Research and Innovation Committee

(Meeting held on 6 May 2026)

- 10.1 Senate received and noted the report of the Research and Innovation Committee (SRIC) held on 6 May 2026, which included updates on the Research Excellence Framework (REF) and updates on reports received from the Open Research Advisory Group, the Research Governance Sub-Committee, the University Early Career Researcher Committee, the University Postgraduate Research Committee, the Research Culture Steering Board and the Research Integrity Steering Board, Open Research Advisory Group. The report also requested Senate approval for a new Academic Misconduct Policy for PGRs and a consequential amendment to section 4 of Regulation XXII to reference the new policy. The following was highlighted:
- 10.2 It was noted that the University had applied to become a founding member of the Defence Universities Alliance (DUA). In response to a pre-submitted question about what obligations this would place on and what this would mean for the University, it was highlighted that over 100 universities had applied for only 20 places and the results were still pending. The DUA would be a collaborative, strategic network of UK universities who were publicly committed to partnering with the Ministry of Defence (MOD), the Office of the Chief Scientific Advisor for National Security, the UK Armed Forces and the wider defence and national security sectors. The DUA had three main aims; Defence Research, Defence Skills and Career Promotion and Collaboration.

10.2.1 It was noted that there was nothing in the DUA Charter that did not align with the statements already made by the university with regard to its approach to working on research and innovation projects relating to defence. More information was available on the gov.uk website.

10.3 Senate **approved** the report and the related recommendations, as follows:

- i. The new Academic Misconduct Policy for PGRs.
- ii. A related amendment to section 4 of Regulation XXII: Regulations relating to the Discipline of Students, to reference to the policy as follows:

Academic Misconduct in the Assessment Process of the University 4. Reports of academic misconduct in the assessment process, will initially be considered by the relevant School who may investigate and respond to the matter in line with the University's Academic Misconduct Policy and Academic Misconduct Policy for PGRs. Matters which are considered serious may be reported to the Chief Operating Officer for consideration for referral to a Summary Hearing at paragraphs 17-25 of this Regulation or a Senate Discipline Panel at paragraphs 28-39 of this Regulation.

11. Report of the Senate University Research Ethics Committee

(Meeting held on 13 May 2026)

11.1 Senate received and noted the Report of the Senate University Research Ethics Committee (SUREC) meeting, which had taken place on 13 May 2026.

12. Report of the Honorary Degrees Committee

(Meeting held on 17 March 2026)

12.1 Senate noted an update including details of the nominees agreed by the Committee for the conferment of Honorary Degrees at Degree Congregations in 2026.

OTHER MATTERS

13. Student Formal Procedures 2024/25 Annual Report

13.1 Senate received and noted the report, which summarised Student Formal Procedure Casework in the previous academic session (2024-25). The report updated Senate on the volume and nature of activity in each area (Appeals, Complaints, Discipline, Fitness to Practise, Progress, and external review by the OIA) and would be shared with Council. It was noted that the 2024/25 report would usually have been received in December or March but had been delayed due to capacity issues.

14. Report on Action Taken

14.1 It was noted that The President & Vice-Chancellor had not taken any action on behalf of Senate since the last meeting.

15. Major Research Grants and Contracts

15.1 A report listing major research grants and contracts awarded since the last meeting of the Senate was received and noted.

16. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

(Meeting held on 18 March 2026)

- 16.1 Minute 8.4.2 - Rationale for suspension of low recruiting programmes** - As agreed, the minutes and papers from a previous meeting where this had been discussed had been circulated to members.

A member raised a point that, at the previous meeting, they had requested mathematical modelling of these costs to help members understand the argument that there were significant cost/resourcing implications to retaining programmes that comprised modules that were being taught elsewhere and this had not been responded to; the member repeated the request. As had been explained at the previous meeting, and meetings previous to that, cost was only one element of the rationale for the suspension of low recruiting programmes and the minutes and papers of previous meetings had been shared to show that this had already been considered at length by Senate and to remind members of the rationale for the approach taken. Given that the Vice-President for Education, who had led previous discussions on the matter as Chair of SEC, had left the meeting, it was agreed to review this request and respond accordingly. **[Action: DS]**

[Post meeting note: The March 2026 minutes show that the point raised by the member was responded to as follows (see minute 8.4.2): It was noted that this had been discussed extensively at Senate several times in the past, including how each programme offered in a school entailed more complexity and more cost that had to be absorbed within existing staff and other resources. Accurate financial modelling of the type that had been requested was extremely difficult due to such varied workload models and undertaking further detailed work on this would be highly complex, costly and time consuming.]

- 16.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2026 were approved.

17. Matters Arising on the Minutes

- 17.1 Senate was updated on matters arising in the minutes of the previous meeting not covered under relevant items on the agenda:

Minute 2.3 - Additional data on PGT admissions and recruitment had been shared with Senate by email.

Minute 8.3.1 - Student Compensation - The wording of the advice provided to students regarding compensation claims was reviewed and an explanation was recorded during an all-student Q&A session that was subsequently made available to all students.

Minute 8.4 - Suspension of low recruiting programmes - With regard to the suspension of low recruiting programmes, the issues highlighted at the previous meeting about communication were raised with the Faculty and reassurance given.

18. AOB and Farewells

This would be Mary Vincent's last meeting before she stepped down as Vice-President for Education at the end of August 2026. Mary had served 15 years on Senate. The Chair expressed deep gratitude for Mary's significant contribution to Senate, particularly her work to ensure students had become such an integral part of its work.

This would also be David Swinn's last meeting as Interim University Secretary before Riley Power took up the role of University Secretary from 17 August 2026. The Chair shared his gratitude to David Swinn for his support and leadership over the last 18 months.

The Chair thanked members whose term of office on Senate would end this academic year.