



University
of Exeter

SENATE

MINUTES AND ACTIONS - APPROVED BY SENATE

18 JUNE 2025 - 14:00-17:00 – MICROSOFT TEAMS

NB text in BLACK is for publication; text in BLUE has been redacted for publication.

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ATTENDEES *(listed according to the membership as detailed in [Ordinance 20](#))*

- a) **Chair: Professor Lisa Roberts, President & Vice-Chancellor**
- c) Professor Tim Quine, Vice-President & Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Education and Student Experience
 Professor Richard Follett, Vice-President & Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Global Engagement
 Professor Rajani Naidoo, Vice-President & Deputy Vice-Chancellor, People and Culture
 Professor Martin Siegert, Vice-President & Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Cornwall
 Professor Krasimira Tsaneva-Atanasova, Vice-President & Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research and Impact
 Stuart Brocklehurst, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Business Engagement and Innovation
- d) Professor Beverley Hawkins, Dean for Taught Students
 Professor Stacey Hynd, Dean for Postgraduate Research and the Doctoral College
- e) Professor Alex Gerbasi (ESE)
 Professor Gareth Stansfield (HASS)
- f) Professor Dave Hosken (ESE)
 Professor Konstantinos Chalvatzis (ESE)
 Professor Duncan Russel (HASS)

- Professor Adam Watt (HASS)
- Professor Anni Vanhatalo (HLS)
- g) Clare Wydell, Divisional Director of Education and Academic Services
- h) Professor Loukas Balafoutas (ESE)
- Professor Nicola Thomas (ESE)
- Professor Tim Harries (ESE)
- Professor Ion Sucala (ESE)
- Professor Stefano Pascucci (ESE)
- Professor Fiona Cox (HASS)
- Professor Jane Milling (HASS)
- Professor Naomi Sykes (HASS)
- Professor Rebecca Langlands (HASS)
- Professor James Wakefield (HLS)
- Professor Karen Knapp (HLS)
- Professor Clare Hulme (HLS)
- Professor Jon Brown (HLS)
- Professor Mark Wilson (HLS)
- i) Professor Barrie Cooper (ESE)
- Dr Sarah Hodge (ESE)
- Professor Tim Naylor (ESE)
- Dr Edvard Glucksman (ESE)
- Professor Alison Truelove (ESE)
- Professor Ben Zissimos (ESE)
- Professor Daniel Fountain (HASS)
- Professor David Jones (HASS)
- Professor Fabrizio Nevola (HASS)
- Professor Sue Prince (HASS)
- Dr Alex Fairfax-Cholmley (HASS)
- Professor Brian Rappert (HASS)
- Professor Laura Salisbury (HASS)
- Professor Ruth Garside (HLS)
- Professor Ioanna Kapantai (HLS)
- Dr Maisha Reza (HLS)
- Dr Abby Russell (HLS)
- Dr Hope Gangata (HLS)
- Professor Katie Lunnon (HLS)
- Dr Genevieve Williams (HLS)
- Dr Dominic Wiredu-Boakye (HLS)
- j) Mike Shore-Nye (Senior Vice President and Registrar & Secretary)
- l) Alex Martin, President Students' Guild
- Sebastian Racisz, Education Officer
- Thomas Tran, Communities and Equality Officer, Students' Guild
- m) Connie Chilcott, Falmouth and Exeter Students' Union President Exeter
- Marketa Carruthers, Vice-President, Falmouth and Exeter Students' Union
- Fina Day, Vice-President, Falmouth and Exeter Students' Union

IN ATTENDANCE:

Totty Brobyn	Governance Services Administrator (Minutes)
Dr Jeremy Diaper	Director of Governance Services
Imelda Rogers	Deputy Registrar and Executive Divisional Director of Human Resources
Alison Chambers	CEO, Students' Guild
Dave Stacey	Chief Financial Officer

Sarah Hicks

Deputy Head of Governance Services

Roscoe Hastings

Director of Teaching Excellence and Enhancement (*for item 10*)

Charlotte Murphy

Director of Technical Strategy and Services (*for item 12*)**APOLOGIES:**

Professor Dan Charman

Caroline Chipperfield

Professor Mat Collins (ESE)

Dr Raphaelle Haywood (ESE)

Professor Sallie Lamb (HLS)

Professor Lindsay Hetherington (HASS)

Dr Raphaelle Haywood (ESE)

Professor Christine Parkin-Hughes (ESE)

Professor Tina Phillips (HASS)

Professor Joanne Smith (HLS)

India Walton-Salmon, Societies and Employability Officer, Students' Guild

Dr Birgul Yilmaz (HASS)

ACTIONS

MINUTE	ACTION	LEAD
6.6	AGREED: To schedule a strategic discussion at Senate on the diversification of the educational portfolio, including: Online Education, Degree Apprenticeships, Executive Education, Continuing Professional Development and the Life-Long Learning Entitlement (LLE).	VP and DVC (Education and Student Experience)
9.11	AGREED: Additional information on statistical significance and specific percentage point trends would be included in future reports to enable a more detailed understanding of potential patterns and to more clearly signal the extent to which trends were the product of random variation.	VP and DVC (Education and Student Experience)
9.11	AGREED: Undertake further analysis to explore the impact of assessment type across different years of study to highlight any specific trends and identify where additional levels of support could potentially help to close awarding gaps.	VP and DVC (Education and Student Experience)
9.11	AGREED: To explore opportunities to work in collaboration with the Guild insights team to identify outcomes across different group characteristics and consider any revealing trends or patterns.	VP and DVC (Education and Student Experience)
9.11	AGREED: To schedule a 'Deep Dive' on Degree Outcomes and awarding gaps in the Academic Year 2025-26.	VP and DVC (Education and Student Experience)

DECISIONS

MINUTE	DECISION	PAPER
9.11	ENDORSED: the Degree Outcomes Statement and Degree Classifications Data Report for onward consideration at Council on 10 July 2025.	SEN/58/24-25 SEN/59/24-25
10.10.6	ENDORSED: The next stages of the implementation of the Curriculum for Change Programme within Departments across Faculties, including: Progressing the next stages of implementation of C4C within departments (programme review, including; skills framework; belonging and transition; employability opportunities; smoothing of teaching and assessment across all 3 terms of the academic year) and across faculties (minors); Continued engagement of Senate in C4C through regular reporting at each Senate meeting during the next three years of implementation.	SEN/60/24-25
11.2	APPROVED: The Early Career Researcher (ECR) Strategy.	SEN/61/24-25
13.1	ENDORSED: The Revised University Intellectual Property (IP) Policy for onward consideration at Council on 10 July 2025.	SEN/62/24-25 Confidential
14.1	ENDORSED: The Student Wellbeing and Welfare Services Annual Report for onward consideration at Council on 10 July 2025.	SEN/63/24-25

1. Chair's introduction and Declarations of Interest

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed Senators to the final meeting of Senate for the academic year 2024-25 and noted the apologies received in advance of the meeting.
- 1.2 The Chair invited any declarations of interest. There were no new declarations of interest in relation to the agenda items.

2. Minutes from the meeting of 12 March 2025 (SEN/52/24-25)

- 2.1 The committee **APPROVED** the minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2025.

3. Senate Action Log 2024-25 (SEN/53/24-25)

- 3.1 Senate noted the action log for the 2024-25 academic year, which had been updated to include actions from the previous meeting in March 2025. It was noted that the outstanding actions from the previous meetings of Senate were either completed or in progress.

4. Senate Business Schedule 2025-26 (SEN/54/24-25)

- 4.1 Senate noted the draft business schedule for the 2025-26 academic year which was provided for information.

5. Matters Arising

a) Senate Council Representative Election Result

- 5.1 The Senior Vice-President and Registrar & Secretary announced that the election to find a replacement for Professor Sue Prince as Senate Representative on Council had concluded in April 2025, with Dr Maisha Reza (Senior Lecturer in Biomedical Sciences in the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences) successfully elected for a first term of office commencing on 1st August 2025.
- 5.2 On behalf of Senate, the Chair extended their thanks to Sue Prince for her outstanding contribution to Council over the last three years and congratulated Maisha Reza on her successful election.

b) Student Complaints Procedure (Regulation H) and the Procedures Relating to Student Academic Appeals (Regulation G)

- 5.3 The Senior Vice-President and Registrar & Secretary confirmed that a number of in-year amendments to the Student Complaints Procedure (Regulation H) and the Procedures Relating to Student Academic Appeals (Regulation G) had been approved on 12 May 2025 via Chair's action, following endorsement via Chair's Action by the Chair of Education Board and Post Graduate Research Board respectively along with confirmation of support from the Vice-President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience). The documentation for these amendments were provided in Part II (SEN/73/24-25) for information and assurance.

6. Report of the Vice-Chancellor, Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellors (SEN/55/24-25 Confidential)

- 6.1 The Chair presented the report from the President & Vice-Chancellor, Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellors, including further updates from across the University and wider Higher Education sector.
 - 6.1.1 The Chair drew attention to the UK government spending review which would result in an investment in Research and Development of £86 billion overall, rising from £20.4 billion in 2025/26 to £22.6 billion in 2029/30. Over the spending review period this represented an above inflation increase and signaled the government's commitment to investment in research and development.
 - 6.1.2 The Local Innovation Partnerships Fund had been announced to support the seven established mayoral strategic authorities across the UK to drive transformative innovation and economic growth by focusing on regional strengths. As Exeter was not part of a Combined Mayoral Authority further consideration was being given to the long-term strategic implications for the University;
- 6.2 The House of Commons Education Committee had launched an enquiry into the financial viability of the Higher Education sector in England, inviting written evidence from institutions across the country and exploring insolvency procedures for Universities, international student policy and the impact of possible university closures.
 - 6.2.1 Further REF 2029 guidance had been published and confirmed key changes, including the decoupling of individuals from output submissions, the removal of minimum and maximum output requirements from individual staff, and the process for demonstrating a substantive link between the institution and an output. A full update will be brought to Senate in the Academic Year 2025-26;
 - 6.2.2 Further to approval by Senate and Council via e-circulation in June 2025, the Chair confirmed Professor Liz Jones had been formally appointed as the Vice-President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Education and Student Experience and would join the University on 1st October 2025 and work alongside Professor Tim Quine until he stepped down from the role at the start of 2026. Professor Jones joined Exeter from the University of Leicester, where she had been Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education since October 2021. The

Chair extended her thanks to Maisha Reza for their involvement in the recruitment process as a representative of Senate.

- 6.3 The Complete University Guide 2026 had ranked Exeter 11th (up from 14th in 2025), with 20 disciplines ranked in the top 10. The latest QS World University rankings had placed Exeter 155th, which represented a 14-place rise in the prestigious global rankings.
- 6.4 The University Executive Board had agreed to award the University's inaugural Chancellor's medal to His Highness The Ruler of Sharjah, in recognition of his significant transformational support and philanthropy to the University of Exeter over four decades. The Chancellor's Medal is the University's highest symbol of gratitude and will principally recognise major benefactors for significant contributions. Two of the University's climate scientists were honoured in the King's birthday list, including: Professor Peter Cox (appointed CBE for services to science and climate modelling); and Professor Tim Lenton (appointed OBE for services to understanding climate tipping points).
- 6.5 The Chair thanked all Senate members for their contributions and extended particular thanks to retiring members for their service to Senate. The student Sabbatical Officers were also commended for their excellent work and contributions to Senate.
- 6.6 A Senate member queried the approach being adopted towards the diversification of the educational portfolio, including online education, Degree Apprenticeships, Executive Education and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and the Life-long Learning Entitlement (LLE). It was highlighted that it would be beneficial to enable more widespread consultation and engagement with staff at individual discipline levels to ensure all potential strategic opportunities were identified and explored. It was also recognized that it was important for Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellors and Executive Deans to ensure there was input from all Heads of Department, whilst recognizing that colleagues in External Engagement and Global had a detailed understanding of viable programmes based on the latest market demand.

AGREED: To schedule a strategic discussion at Senate on the diversification of the educational portfolio, including: Online Education, Degree Apprenticeships, Executive Education, Continuing Professional Development and the Life-Long Learning Entitlement (LLE).

7. Education and PGR Board Reports (Verbal Updates)

- 7.1 The Dean for Taught Students and the Dean for Postgraduate Research and the Doctoral College provided verbal updates on the latest issues from their respective areas.
- 7.2 In her absence, Professor Stacey Hynd (Dean for Postgraduate Research and the Doctoral College) sent a summary overview of the following updates from the PGR Board:
 - 7.2.1 The following had been actioned: PGR Student number strategy;
 - UKRI T&Cs policy revision;
 - Exceptional years policy;
 - Upgrades policy revision;
 - Dean's Commendations for PGR Academic Citizenship;
 - Dean's Commendation for PGR Supervision;
 - EDI recruitment best practice review;
 - International PGR T&F;
 - Review of Guild/SU PGR Representation;
 - Connected Doctoral College articulation of roles & responsibilities;
 - PGR fee waivers guidance;
 - New supervisor & pastoral tutor training;

- Quality review on PGR employability & careers support.

7.2.2 The following was due for delivery in the summer of 2025:

- Doctoral College website revamp;
- Implementation of new UKRI T&Cs;
- Revising Training Needs Analysis and Supervisor Agreement;
- Guidance on GenAI in PGR research and assessment;
- Fieldwork preparation SharePoint & resources.

7.2.3 The PGR alumni relations & gap analysis and the development of the business case proposal for extension of Pastoral Mentor scheme to PGRs had been deferred to the 2025-26 academic year.

7.2.4 The following activity was ongoing through the academic year:

- PGR research culture & community activity;
- PGR data gathering & analysis;
- Enhancement of PGR training and development provision;
- Cost recovery T&F;
- PGRs living with disability & chronic illness T&F;
- DTE bid development process;
- Improvements to PGR admissions system;
- PRES action plan & EDI interventions.

7.2.5 The action plan for the 2025-26 academic year included some new items which had emerged from staff, PGR and sponsor input, including:

- implementing PGR Employability review;
- Review of Continuation Status and Extensions policy;
- Professional Doctorates TQA review;
- review of MPhil/PhD entry registration;
- Placements processes.

7.3 Professor Beverley Hawkins (Dean for Taught Students) noted the following updates from the Education Board. An overview of recent business was provided including:

7.3.1 The April 2025 Education Board had seen the approval of the Accessible Teaching and Learning Policy, textual amendments to the Exceptional Circumstances Handbook, and an update and discussions around the University position on Generative AI.

7.3.2 The June 2025 Education Board included the endorsement of the Degree Outcomes Statement 2025, amendments to the TQA manual around the Attendance and Engagement Policy, amendments to the General Regulations for Students and Ordinance 6, the introduction of Minor Pathways to replace the 'With Proficiency In' (WPI) model, proposals for the role of the University Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committee (UAPAC), Education Policy Priorities for 2025-26, Generative AI Assessment Guidance Update and proposals relating to feedback turnaround.

8. Student President Reports (SEN/56/24-25 Open) and (SEN/57/24-25 Open)

8.1 The President of the Exeter Students' Guild presented their report to Senate and highlighted the following points:

8.1.1 The success of the Insights function, particularly its nationally recognised efforts to diversify the

student voice in Higher Education. The Guild had run its biggest ever survey, 'Your Say, Your Way', with c. 5,000 responses on key questions about the Exeter student experience. The Guild 'Survey Superheroes' program had also been expanded to obtain student insight on a range of topics through monthly surveys, including: Accessibility, AI and Data Privacy, and the future of Higher Education. Moving forwards these insights would be further embedded into the University's academic governance structures;

- 8.1.2 The ongoing representation review would introduce a revised model within the Guild from the 2025-26 academic year. This new approach would offer more flexible and part-time opportunities for current students, enabling broader engagement, amplifying a wider range of student voices, and enhancing the relevance and impact of the Sabbatical Officer model.
- 8.1.3 The Mental Health Charter had incorporated extensive student input and would serve as a strategic framework for driving institutional improvement and meaningful change. Student feedback particularly emphasized the intersectional rise in mental health challenges, underscoring the need to ensure the University's support services and overall offering were as inclusive and accessible as possible.
- 8.2 The Exeter President of the Falmouth and Exeter Students' Union drew attention to the following points in their report:
 - 8.2.1 The Mental Health Charter work was ongoing in collaboration with the Exeter Students' Guild and the Falmouth and Exeter Students' Union;
 - 8.2.2 There had been a significant reduction in negative comments related to assessment and feedback received through Student Staff Liaison Committees, reflecting the positive impact of recent enhancements including extensive work undertaken in updating and optimising key digital platforms.
 - 8.2.3 Engagement with academic representatives has expanded beyond traditional academic matters to include key areas such as extracurricular activities, cost of living, transportation, and Curriculum for Change (C4C). The Students' Union remained committed to building on this momentum by fostering broader participation and integrating a more diverse range of student voices into institutional decision-making processes.
- 8.3 There had been excellent engagement and contribution from student representatives to the Graduation Planning Committee which had enabled students to help shape the forthcoming graduation ceremonies in July 2025, which would be the first year that the graduation ceremony had taken place at the Penryn Campus.
- 8.4 The President and Vice Chancellor and the Vice-President and Deputy Vice Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) extended thanks to both Alex Martin and Connie Chilcott and their teams for outstanding work during the academic year 2024-25.

9. Degree Outcomes (including Degree Outcomes Statement 2025 and Taught Degree Classification Reports) (SEN/58/24-25 and SEN/59/24-25 Confidential)

- 9.1 The Vice-President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) presented the Degree Outcome reports and requested Senate to endorse the documentation for onward consideration by the Academic Governance, Education and Student Experience Committee and Council;
- 9.2 The Taught Degree Classifications Report 2023–24 consolidated the Undergraduate and Postgraduate reports, which were previously reviewed at separate points in the year. This integrated approach enabled more effective identification of key differences and commonalities across cohorts. It was important that Senate reviewed the report to provide academic assurance regarding the credibility and integrity of the

University's awards, particularly in the context of regulatory expectations from the Office for Students (OfS).

- 9.3 First-class degree awards peaked during COVID-19 but had since declined, returning to levels close to those seen prior to the global pandemic. Analysis of demographic awarding gaps highlighted persistent disparities, especially between international and UK-domiciled students; Asian, Black, Mixed and Other (ABMO) ethnicities and white students; and mature and young students. Ongoing efforts were focused on reducing these gaps, with several interventions under the Curriculum for Change (C4C) programme. This included targeted work around transition and induction to enhance student support from the outset of their university journey.
- 9.4 The reports had been produced following a rigorous process of assessment and drawing on examples of best practice, most notably the work undertaken by Professor Nicky King in analysing awarding gaps and their progression throughout degree programmes, and Professor Barrie Cooper's analysis on disaggregating multiple contributing factors and examining their intersectionality. These insights had helped to provide a strong foundation for evidence-based action and continuous improvement.
- 9.5 In response to a question regarding progress at other institutions, the Vice-President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) referenced Georgia State University, which measured student success primarily through completion rates rather than grades. This approach has enabled the institution to close attainment gaps between white, Hispanic, and Black student communities. It was further noted that initiatives such as the implementation of pastoral mentoring would play a key role in addressing disparities and supporting equitable student outcomes.
- 9.6 The Vice-President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) noted in relation to underlying methodological differences that data analysis had not identified the same awarding gaps across each of the different measures of disadvantage, including: TUNDRA (tracking under representation by area), POLAR4 and IMD (Index of Multiple Deprivation).
- 9.7 That first-year of academic performance remained a strong predictor of final degree outcomes, reinforcing the importance of providing targeted support early in a student's academic journey in order to positively influence long-term success.
- 9.8 Offering co-curricular events could potentially help to increase a student's sense of belonging and improve academic performance.
- 9.9 That it would be helpful to undertake further data analysis to explore how a combination of different demographic features within particular groups could result in specific awarding outcomes in an effort to identify certain trends and ascertain the reasons behind this. The Guild President proposed collaboration with the Insights team to analyse student characteristics, with the aim of uncovering underlying trends.
- 9.10 While some awarding gaps could be attributed to differences in prior attainment at the point of admission, the trajectory varied across programmes. The Dean for Taught Students highlighted the development of departmental-level data dashboards as a valuable tool to support monitoring of the most significant awarding gaps within specific disciplines and indicated that this should be integrated into the forthcoming Teaching Excellence action planning and monitoring review.
- 9.11 That in future Senate discussions on Degree Outcomes it would be helpful to consider the longer-term implications of Generative AI; the potentially positive impact of enhancing student engagement, access to student services, and co-curricular activities; and data analysis of specific emerging trends and any correlations insights and correlations drawn between Guild and University data.

Senate **ENDORSED** the Degree Outcomes Statement and Degree Classifications Data Report for onward consideration at Council on 10 July 2025.

AGREED: Additional information on statistical significance and specific trends as percentage point trends would be included in future reports to help enable a more detailed understanding of potential patterns and to more clearly signal the extent to which trends were the product of random variation.

AGREED: Undertake further analysis to explore the impact of assessment type across different years of study to highlight any specific trends and identify where additional levels of support could potentially help to close awarding gaps.

AGREED: To explore opportunities to work in collaboration with the Guild insights team to identify outcomes across different group characteristics and consider any revealing trends or patterns.

AGREED: To schedule a 'Deep Dive' into awarding gaps in 2025-26 academic year.

10 Update on Curriculum for Change Programme (SEN/60/24-25 Confidential)

10.1 Senate received a presentation on the Curriculum for Change (C4C) programme which was introduced by the President and Vice-Chancellor and included updates from Vice-President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) and from the Dean for Taught Students. During an extensive and wide-ranging discussion, the following aspects of the Curriculum for Change programme were considered and reflected on:

10.2 In relation to student feedback and engagement

10.2.1 Student representatives affirmed their strong endorsement for the Curriculum for Change programme and that positive feedback had been received from across the student community regarding the co-created approach.

10.2.2 There had been strong levels of enthusiasm expressed by students in the focus groups and panels. The consultation process had enabled a wide range of feedback to be elicited from a diverse and representative group of students.

10.2.3 Reimbursing students for their involvement had helped to remove barriers to engagement and elicit feedback from students with diverse perspectives and backgrounds.

10.2.4 The students consulted had welcomed the proposed changes to the teaching and assessment design principles, which they recognised would improve the accessibility and inclusive nature of teaching delivery and curriculum design to ensure a more equitable approach for the benefit of a wide range of students from different demographics, including: mature students, international students, estranged students and care leavers.

10.2.5 Amongst the students engaged in the panels and focus groups there had been particular enthusiasm about the comprehensive application of the Exeter Skills Framework, future-careers focused minors, and improved placement opportunities and excitement surrounding the enhanced equity of opportunities to help increase the employability of the University's graduates.

10.2.6 The students involved in the initial pilots had been positive and enthused about the C4 programme and there was growing understanding of the wider benefits of smoothing workload across the curriculum throughout the existing three-term academic year.

10.2.7 Whilst students were typically attracted by the level of module choice in actuality many were often left disappointed when unable to study certain modules due to timetabling clashes or oversubscribed modules. It was noted that up to 25% of the student community did not currently get a module within

their top 3 choices which was a significant source of frustration.

10.3 In relation to the widespread levels of consultation and engagement:

10.3.1 A number of Senators affirmed the thoughtful and in-depth levels of discussion and engagement undertaken across the entire University community on Curriculum for Change over the course of the last Academic Year and highlighted the significant amount of consultation undertaken across all Faculties and the levels of co-creation with students.

10.3.2 It was recognised that Senate endorsement would continue to facilitate even more detailed discussion, thereby enabling Departments to engage in meaningful co-creation in the design and development of the programme.

10.3.3 That endorsing the proposed direction of travel would enable iterative design in partnership with students, staff in academic and professional services and informed by continued consultation with Schools, Further Education, employers and alumni.

10.3.4 The next stage would enable greater clarity and enhanced Departmental understanding and engagement in the design and implementation of the Curriculum for Change programme.

10.4 In relation to skills development and financial sustainability

10.4.1 A number of Senators noted that the Curriculum for Change programme would enable enhanced financial sustainability by increasing the time and capacity for academic staff to focus on enhancing income diversification, through generating additional research income and efficiently scaling teaching activity in Online, Executive Education and CPD, and Degree Apprenticeships.

10.4.2 That an efficient and highly attractive curricula would also help enhance the short, mid and long-term financial sustainability of the institution by ensuring the University continued to attract student applications.

10.5 In relation to Feedback from external businesses:

10.5.1 It was noted that external stakeholders, including businesses engaged in professional education, had provided favourable feedback on the C4C programme.

10.6 A small number of Senators raised concerns in relation to the following:

10.6.1 A Senator raised concerns about a number of actions agreed at a previous meeting of Senate on 13 November 2024 which they felt had not been appropriately responded to. For example, they highlighted that a finalised set of C4C course and assessment design principles had not yet been formally presented for endorsement by Senate.

10.6.2 Some Senators also affirmed that they felt that the issues identified in the November meeting had not yet been sufficiently resolved and that they felt the request for detailed engagement with Departments between November 2024 and June 2025 had been intended to facilitate further engagement, discussion and debate in consultation with Faculties and Departments to inform the ongoing development of the course and assessment principles prior to presenting these to Senate for endorsement in June.

10.6.3 In response to these above concerns it was noted that the principles had been revisited, updated and refreshed based on feedback at the November meeting of Senate and cascaded over recent months.

- 10.6.4 In relation to concerns surrounding the progress with the Senate action to undertake further analysis on the interdependencies between the Curriculum for Change programme, timetabling and the supply and demand of teaching and learning spaces, it was highlighted that colleagues had been working in close consultation with Estates and Timetabling and the departments which had been advancing their programme review work to model and test how it would fit within the wider estate to ensure optimal use of the estate and reduce the redundant spaces.
- 10.6.5 The University's position on the uncapping of modules was also questioned by a number of Senators, which was considered an "arbitrary and inflexible" policy. It was highlighted that several departments had structured their academic offerings around capped modules and that they felt removing caps would have significant consequences, including reducing the breadth and depth of student choice and potentially leading to the withdrawal of popular module formats, such as the Year 3 Special Subject, in their current form.
- 10.7 In relation to Admissions, Recruitment and Marketing Communications to Prospective Students:
- 10.7.1 An individual Senator also raised concerns regarding recruitment and communication with prospective students. The Senate member noted that some academics felt uncertain about how to present the programme to applicants, as the current selling points—student choice, enhanced modularity, and research-led teaching—were perceived to be under threat under the Curriculum for Change framework.
- 10.7.2 A small number of members felt there was insufficient clarity regarding the structure, guiding principles and operation of the minors, which they felt made it challenging for Departments to progress with planning and develop programme designs in time for these to be advertised to prospective students.
- 10.7.3 In response to specific concerns that the central Admissions team were not suitably informed about the Curriculum for Change programme and the lack of targeted communications for open days, it was highlighted that specific marketing had not yet been developed as the proposals had not been fully implemented. However, discussions were ongoing with admissions and recruitment colleagues and an extensive piece of work was underway to inform how Curriculum for Change would be presented to prospective students. A large campaign around the launch of Curriculum for Change was due to be brought to schools and colleges and would be incorporated as part of the recruitment activities in the next academic year.
- 10.7.4 A Senate member from Physics and Astronomy noted their review of undergraduate programmes had emerged in tandem with the announcement of Curriculum for Change. The new programmes which were scheduled to commence in 2025/26 had gone out for external review by academics and internally by students and garnered positive feedback. There had been a convergence of principles within their own curriculum and the development of the Curriculum for Change programme, particularly around skills which was a new requirement from accrediting bodies. The new programmes had recently been advertised over the past year at open days and they had received the highest number of conditional offers for undergraduate programmes since 2018.
- 10.7.5 It was recognised that certain subject areas were seeing shrinking cohort sizes and there was a need to make strategic changes to attract more students in an increasingly competitive market. The need to move forward with the Curriculum for Change programme to enhance the appeal of the University's educational provision in an increasingly competitive student recruitment market was reaffirmed.
- 10.8 In relation to Financial Sustainability:
- 10.8.1 A Senator expressed a lack of clarity and understanding about the narrative of financial sustainability underpinning the programme and also raised concern about the anticipated increase in academic

workload.

10.8.2 In response to these concerns, the importance of situating Curriculum for Change's vision within the broader national context and ongoing discussions with Universities UK (UUK) concerning sector-wide changes was affirmed. It was highlighted that benchmarking exercises had been undertaken as part of the development of the new C4C programme that clearly indicated the considerable complexity of the University's current programme offerings in comparison to other peer institutions. It was noted that if this complexity was not effectively addressed it would continue to be a driver of increased academic workloads and would not address the current financial challenges.

10.8.3 The Senior Vice-President and Provost responded to queries about the need for long-term financial sustainability and noted the overall picture across the Higher education sector was that income was flat and costs were rising. The curriculum for change programme would enable the University to make more efficient use of the estate and enhance the design of curricular to enable teaching of larger cohorts of students without impacting on the overall student experience. The design of academic and education services would also need to be enhanced to optimise the levels of student support.

10.8.4 The Chief Financial Officer added that there was no specific amount of savings allocated to the Curriculum for Change programme, but that it would ensure a critical focus on adaptation and simplification of programmes at a time of declining income and increasing cost.

10.9 In relation to the smoothing of the Academic Year:

10.9.1 In response to concerns raised by some Senators surrounding a lack of clarity regarding the approach to the smoothing of the Academic Year and the specific implications for the design of programmes and credit modules, it was noted that the next phase would involve continued consultation and provide sufficient agency and autonomy for Departments to engage in the development and design of programmes in alignment with specific subject and discipline context and with a consistent focus on simplicity and efficiency.

10.10 Chair's Concluding Summary and Senate Vote

10.10.1 The Chair thanked Senate members for a valuable discussion and summarised the key themes as detailed above, noting that whilst there had been strong concerns raised by some individual Senators there nevertheless appeared to be a clear sense of overall support and enthusiasm from Senate more widely to endorse the key principles and overall direction of travel of the programme. It was noted that the next phase of the programme would involve working closely with departments to discover what would work best for each department, guided by the overall framework.

10.10.2 It was noted that as with any major change initiative there may be initial challenges encountered but there would be opportunity to learn from experiences and utilise those insights to continue to evolve and develop the C4C programme over time.

10.10.3 The Chair called for a vote on the two main proposals to ensure clarity surrounding collective Senate endorsement and levels of support.

10.10.4 Senate members raised their hands via the Teams button as follows and the Divisional Director of Governance Services noted that there was a clear Senate majority voting in favour of the proposals as follows:

For	43
Against	4
Abstention	1*

There was 1 Abstention formally noted in the Teams meeting chat and has been captured as part of the formal record of the meeting.

10.10.5 The Senate members voting against the proposals requested to be recorded in the minutes as follows:

Professor Barrie Cooper (ESE)
Professor Brian Rappert (HASS)
Dr Daniel Fountain (HASS)
Dr Alex Fairfax-Cholmeley (HASS)

10.10.6 It was confirmed that this would be recorded along with an overview of the comments and concerns raised during discussion.

10.10.7 The vote was carried by a simple majority for endorsement by Senate to move progress as detailed below:

Senate **ENDORSED:** The next stages of the implementation of the Curriculum for Change Programme within Departments across Faculties, including:

- Progressing the next stages of implementation of C4C within departments (programme review, including; skills framework; belonging and transition; employability opportunities; smoothing of teaching and assessment across all 3 terms of the academic year) and across faculties (minors);
- Continued engagement of Senate in C4C through regular reporting at each Senate meeting during the next three years of implementation.

11 Early Career Researcher (ECR) - Strategy 2030 (SEN/61/24-25 Confidential)

11.1 The strategy enabled Early Career Researcher (ECR) strategic leadership to align more closely with the University's Research Culture Strategy. The paper represents the post-consultation version, incorporating feedback from ECRs, town hall discussions, and student representatives. Key revisions included a strengthened focus on the ECR contributions, enhanced emphasis on leadership development and

training, and increased support in areas such as mentoring, wellbeing, and fostering a sense of belonging.

- 11.2 A member of Senate highlighted the importance of maintaining a strategic focus on the broader research career pipeline, aligning with the principles set out in the Researcher Development Concordat.

Senate **APPROVED** the Early Career Researcher (ECR) Strategy.

12 Exe-Tech Strategy Update (including Technicians Commitment Action Plan) (SEN/82/24-25 Confidential)

- 12.1 The Chair welcomed Charlotte Murphy (Director of Technical Strategy and Services) to present the Exe-Tech Strategy and its three themes: innovate, sustain and nurture.
- 12.2 The Annual Report (included in Annex 1) highlighted key successes as well as environmental and financial gains achieved over the reporting period. In light of the increasingly challenging financial landscape, the report also identified areas for strategic refocus to ensure the University continued to prioritise activities that maximised efficiency in processes, structures, and ways of working. Additionally, the Digital Skills agenda was progressing, with workstreams beginning to take shape.
- 12.3 Annex Two outlined the action plan for the Technician Commitment, building on the significant work already undertaken and extending its scope beyond the technical community. The commitment now included Research Software Engineers (RSEs), IT, Library, Digital, and Digital Humanities staff. This expanded approach reflected a more inclusive and holistic view of the specialist support roles that underpin research and education across the University.

Senate **NOTED** the Exe-Tech Strategy Update.

13 Revised University Intellectual Property (IP) Policy (SEN/62/24-25 Confidential)

- 13.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Business Engagement and Innovation) presented the revised University Intellectual Property (IP) Policy to Senate noting the proposed changes ensured alignment with the new University Digital Learning Resources Policy and the recommendations of the HM Treasury sponsored Independent Review of University Spin-outs. The most notable revision was the recommendation that equity stakes in life sciences spinouts fall within the 10–25% range, and for software and unregistered intellectual property, within 5–10%. While these ranges were already broadly reflected in the University's existing practice, they had not previously been formally codified. Additional amendments were also made following consultation and constructive feedback from the recognised trade unions.

Senate **ENDORSED** the Revised University Intellectual Property (IP) Policy for onward consideration at Council on 10 July 2025.

14 Student Wellbeing and Welfare Services Annual Report (SEN/63/24-25)

- 14.1 The Chair invited Clare Wydell (Divisional Director of Education and Academic Services) to introduce the Student Wellbeing and Welfare Services Annual Report to Senate noting the increase in demand against a backdrop of an increasing emphasis on community level of provision of wellbeing and welfare support.
- 14.2 The report highlighted how University services had responded to increasing demand by enhancing support for students across the full breadth of the academic portfolio. It also highlighted key developments introduced over the past year, including the implementation of pastoral mentors, ongoing system enhancements to improve student experience and deliver valuable data insights, and the strengthening of strategic partnerships with external collaborators such as the NHS.
- 14.3 A query was raised regarding the priorities for Student Wellbeing in the year ahead and how the University plans to maintain resourcing and staffing levels in the context of financial pressures across the higher education sector. The Divisional Director of Education and Academic Services outlined the large-scale system enhancement project currently underway in alignment with recommendations from Student Minds and the continued focus on reviewing and improving how wellbeing services were delivered across the institution. It was emphasised that the University considered Student Wellbeing a priority area of service provision and was committed to strengthening support in this space moving forward.
- 14.4 It was noted that there was continued focus on strengthening partnership working, with a focus on identifying and learning from areas where collaboration was already proving highly effective. The review would also incorporate insights from external colleagues to benchmark best practice in partnership and service delivery. Student support projects were regularly shared across a wide range of teams to ensure collective awareness of the available provision and to enable effective signposting for students.

Senate **ENDORSED** the Student Wellbeing and Welfare Services Annual Report for onward consideration at Council on 10 July 2025.

15 Items Brought Forward from Part II (SEN/64/24-25)

- 15.1 The University Terms and Academic Calendar (SEN/46/24-25) was endorsed, subject to final circulation of committee dates to Council via email for the Academic Year 2025-26.
- 15.2 The Chair noted that the following Part II items had been requested to brought forward within Part I by a Senate member and invited the Senior Vice-President and Registrar & Secretary to respond to the queries raised:
 - 15.2.1 In relation to the Review and Revision of Taught Student Attendance and Engagement (SEN/71/24-25) it was highlighted that the paper provided an overview of the revised Taught and Student Attendance and Engagement Policy which has already been endorsed by Education Board and the accompanying paper was shared principally for background information and context. Senate was not being asked to approve the policy, but the associated minor amendments to the General Regulations for Students and Ordinance 6, which was focused on minor and routine updates (including, for example, removing reference to iExeter and changing to MyExeter). As these changes were necessary and minor these had been placed in Part II. In relation to the DPIA, it was clarified that this was carried out in relation to access to student attendance data collected via the My Exeter App (rather than the policy itself) and that the DPIA for MyExeter/check-in was structured in this way to address student privacy, data governance issues and external thresholds

- 15.2.2 In relation to the General Regulations for Students and the Learning, Teaching and Support Handbook relating to Student Registration (SEN/72/24-25): Following earlier discussion and scrutiny by Education Board and Postgraduate Research Board, it was clarified that the changes to the general regulations of students and learning, teaching and support handbook were not requiring further discussion by Senate and had been presented for information and assurance. The changes incorporated were designed to ensure consistent provision of information regarding student registration and withdrawal.
- 15.3 In relation to the Ill health and Incapacity (Sickness absence) procedure (SEN/70/24-25), the Deputy Registrar and Executive Divisional Director of Human Resources clarified that (the revised procedure replaced the separate formal procedures for “Recurrent Short-term Sickness Absence” and “Long Term Sickness Absence or Medical Incapacity” with a single formal procedure which was designed to make the process more easily understandable for colleagues. The review points (previously “triggers”) were to be applied at an earlier stage, prior to the formal procedure. As detailed in paragraph 16.2, the review points would inform what steps should be taken under the Informal Consideration section in paragraph 17 of the procedure. While 16.2(e) covers a continuous, extended period of absence, 16.2(b) covers absence which is intermittent. The response and support which was appropriate at this point will depend on the circumstances and are likely to differ between recurrent short-term absences and long-term absences. The purpose of these early and informal steps is to support the employee as set out in the aims of the procedure so that application of the formal procedures is not necessary. Where it does become necessary to apply the formal procedure (paragraph 19), the revised procedure sets out a single procedure which mirrors the 3 stages in other procedures. The Deputy Registrar and Executive Divisional Director of Human Resources indicated that they would be happy to provide further clarification offline.
- 15.4 On a related procedural point, Senate members were advised that access could be provided with access to Education Board papers upon request by contacting the Education policy Team. Relevant Papers would continued to be provided in Part II for background context and to inform final Senate approval as appropriate.
- 15.5 In relation to Honorary Graduate approval a Senate member noted that there were no current LGBTQ+ nominees. The Vice President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (People and Culture) clarified that whilst there were no LGBTQ+ nominations to receive Honorary Degrees during the 2026 degree congregations, there had been diverse nominations in the previously approved 2024 nomination process and those scheduled to be approached in 2025, which it was hoped would result in a diverse cohort of Honorary Graduates for 2025. The Executive Director of External Engagement encouraged all staff to consider nominating diverse candidates to help ensure an inclusive list of individuals that represented the wider University community

16 Chair's Closing Remarks

16.1 The Chair thanked all Senate members for their input and engagement.

Part II - Papers to Endorse**Academic Assurance**

Assurance Report on Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) accreditation (**SEN/65/24-25**)

Student Cases Annual Report (including academic misconduct, academic appeals, complaints, sexual misconduct) (**SEN/66/24-25**)

Research

TRAC Data and Research Cost Recovery (**SEN/67/24-25**)

Governance

Honorary Graduate Approval for 2025 Graduation Ceremonies (**SEN/68/24-25**)

Re-appointment of Dean for Online and Postgraduate Taught Education (**SEN/69/24-25**)

Amendments to Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations**Papers to Endorse**

Amendments to Ordinance 34: Ill Health/Incapacity Procedure (**SEN/70/24-25**)

Papers to Approve

Amendments to Regulations Governing Academic Programmes (**SEN/71/24-25**)

Amendments to the General Regulations for Students and the Learning, Teaching and Support Handbook relating to Student Registration (**SEN/72/24-25**)

Amendment to PGR by Publication Regulations (**SEN/80/24-25**)

Amendments to Regulations for Higher Doctorate Degrees (**SEN/81/24-25**)

Papers to note

In year amendments to the Student Complaints Procedure and the Procedures Relating to Student Academic Appeals by Chair's Action (**SEN/73/24-25**)

Part II - Papers to Note

Senate Appeals Report (**SEN/74/24-25**)

People and Culture Report (**SEN/75/24-25**)

Council Minutes: February 2025 (**SEN/76/24-25**)

Education Board Minutes (**SEN/77/24-25**)

Postgraduate Research Board Minutes (**SEN/78/24-25**)

Health and Safety Committee Minutes (**SEN/79/24-25**)

Awards of Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates and Conferment of Degrees in Absentia: The award lists, approved by the Vice-Chancellor on behalf of Senate, since the last meeting may be inspected by contacting Student Records.

Dates of meetings for 2025/26

5 November May 2025

11 March 2026

29 April 2026

17 June 2026