Report from the meeting of Senate held on 18th October 2023

1. **Chair's Opening Remarks**
    *   The Chair welcomed Professor Christine Horrocks who had recently joined the University as Dean, School of Computing Engineering and Built Environment on a temporary basis whilst recruitment for the Dean role was underway.
    *   Senate was informed that personal support had been offered to the small number of students from Gaza and Israel, and our support will be informed by various upcoming meetings including with the University Chaplains
    *   The Chair informed Senate that the Strategy 2030 was in the process of being reviewed. The Strategy had been launched in 2021, and it was considered that it was now appropriate to review it in in the post Covid context and light of the new University leadership team. The refresh would involve collaboration with staff, students and external stakeholders and it was proposed to organise a Senate Strategy session, and further information on this would be provided in due course. The Senate Strategy Session has since been arranged for 18th January 2024.
    *   The Academic Calendar would also be reviewed this academic year and further information on this would be provided in due course.

2   **Minutes and Matters Arising**
    Senate received the previously approved minutes of the meeting on 7th June 2023, and approved the minutes of 12th September 2023. It noted the Matters Arising report and the relevant actions taken since those meetings, and additionally the PVC Learning and Teaching gave a verbal update on the progress of the review on the Fit to Sit process. He reported that feedback was being sought from both staff and students, and Senators were encouraged to provide any feedback they had. It was noted that the review report, taking account of all feedback received, would be submitted to the December meeting of Senate.

3. **Principal's Report to Senate**
    Senate noted a report from the Principal and Vice Chancellor on matters and priorities relating to academic functions, teaching & learning and research. Principal highlighted the following matters:-
    *   The University's positive performance in recently published league tables;
    *   The potential for a shift in Scottish Government HE priorities and the need for the review of the Strategy 2030 to be mindful of this;
    *   The need for the University to consider how it could capitalise on the UK having re-joined Horizon UK;
    *   Ongoing discussions with the University of Glasgow on the joint delivery of a programme that would expand access to studying medicine, with the initial three years of study being undertaken at Glasgow Caledonian and the final three years at the University of Glasgow. The discussions also covered opportunities for inter-professional learning and complementary research and there was close alignment between the two Universities. An application to the Scottish Government was being prepared and Senate would be kept informed.

    In response to a question on resourcing, the Principal reported that some new posts had been released in areas of greatest need. Further analysis of current student numbers and corresponding income was being undertaken, and it was anticipated that there would be a clear picture of student enrolments by week five and that would then help inform discussions around staffing. Consideration of what the overall shape and size of the University should be would be a key focus of the Strategy 2030 review.

    In response to a question about the staff/student ratio and how this may impact on international student achievement, it was acknowledged that a number of factors impacted

on this including late registration and poor engagement with induction, increasing English language requirements, support for literacy and numeracy and all of these matters were being looked at.

4.   **Review of the impact of MAB on Student Decisions and Academic Quality – Interim Report**
Senate considered a report on the impact of the marking and assessment boycott (MAB) that took place between 20th April and 6th September 2023, on student decisions and academic quality. The report advised that a number of mitigating measures were put in place, including the review and refreshing of existing Senate approved guidelines (as considered at Senate on 5th May 2023) for handling situations where marks were missing due to industrial action. As a result of these measures, all assessments were available to students and all associated marking was completed, and there were no missing marks due to the MAB at the Progression and Assessment Boards (PAB). Therefore, all students considered at a PAB had decisions taken on their full set of available marks. In addition, all students eligible for a classified award received a final classification and therefore all those eligible to graduate in the summer were able to do so.

The PVC Learning and Teaching thanked all staff, and especially Heads of Department, who undertook additional work to ensure that no students were adversely impacted as a result of the MAB. Additionally, it was reported that External Examiner reports were being reviewed as these were received, and to date no concerns relating to the maintaining of academic standards or any of the mitigations that were in place had been raised. The PAB minutes had also been reviewed, and again no concerns had been raised. Senate noted the report and that a final update would be given at the next meeting, once all External Examiner report had been received.

A summary report on the MAB review is attached, for information, at **Appendix 1** to this report.

5.   **GCU Module Evaluations Summary – Closing the Feedback Loop**
Senate considered a report that proposed a streamlined approach for module enhancement and   module evaluations for immediate implementation. In discussion, concern was raised about the impact the proposals would have on staff workload in relation to the benefits they would bring. Further, it was commented that enhancement plans alone did not necessarily lead to increased transparency for students on changes that had been made to modules, and there were a number of factors that were beyond the control of staff, such as student engagement and late enrolment that needed to be taken into account. Accordingly, Senate requested that further work be done and reported back to Senate, and that the process for Trimester A be same as in 2022/23.

6.   **PVC Research: Research Report for 2022/2023 - Quarter 3**
The Deputy Vice Chancellor presented the research report for the third quarter of 2022/2023 that provided an update on the research activity including the relevant grants for that period.

7.   **Generative Artificial Intelligence and Education at Glasgow Caledonian University**
The PVC Learning and Teaching introduced a report that outlined the next stage in the University's developing approach to Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI). It was highlighted that it was a fast moving situation but it was important for the University to have a clear approach to AI in the context of ensuring Glasgow Caledonian students had appropriate awareness of and skills in AI, and that concerns relating to the use of AI in academic misconduct were appropriately signposted and addressed.   As such, the report proposed that the University adopt the recently published Russell Group Principles for AI and Education, adapted for the University's specific use, accompanied by a two-stage development and support programme for staff during this academic year. Additionally, two

short-life working groups would be established to develop guidance for staff and students on the acceptable use of AI.

In discussion, it was acknowledged the University needed to embrace the appropriate use of AI and it would become more prevalent in everyday, academic and professional life. It was accepted that staff would have varying degrees of comfort around using it, so it was important that there was support and guidance. It was noted that there were implications for research and research students too and this needed to be reflected in the University's approach. Senate endorsed
a) the recently published Russell Group principles for AI and Education to be adapted the University's specific context; and
b) the proposed training and development priorities for staff.

8. **NSS Outcomes 2023 Results Overview**
Senate received a report that provided an update on the National Student Survey (NSS) 2023 results. The paper provided an overview of the results, and outlined a high-level summary of performance at institution, sector, School, and programme level. Analysis of the quantitative data had been shared with Schools and Departments, and the open comments would be shared with each School to support their analysis of the programme level results. Senate welcomed the overall positive results of the NSS survey and noted the report.

9. **NSS Outcomes 2023 – Areas for University-wide enhancement**
Senate noted a report summarising the systemic priority areas for enhancement following analysis of the NSS Outcomes 2023. There were three common areas for enhancement across the Schools:- Assessment and Feedback, Student Voice and Organisation and Management. For each of these themes, there was significant work in progress, at both a local level, as evidenced by School action plans which were appended to the report, and at University level. Senate was reassured that the actions would be closely monitored and student feedback responded to.

10. **Student Recruitment**
Senate noted a report that provided an early overview of student recruitment for Trimester A 2023-24, at undergraduate and postgraduate taught levels, at early October 2023. It was highlighted that home undergraduate student recruitment had been a priority focus for the University in recent months. As a result of this focussed approach, the SFC full-time non-controlled intake was above target. Further, the VP Strategy and Planning reported that there had been very strong results in recruiting to SFC controlled nursing places, Graduate Apprenticeships and from SMID 20 areas. There remained challenges in RUK and home taught postgraduate numbers, although numbers were up on the previous year. Data relating to international students remained subject to confirmation, however challenges relating to payments from a key market and changes in UK student immigration rules had impacted on overall international student numbers.

11. **Graduate Outcomes 2020/21**
Senate noted a report on Graduate Outcomes for 2020/2021. The paper provided a summary of the 2020/21 graduate cohort outcomes for the Scottish sector by activity, including Standard Occupational Classification, salary bands and graduate reflections. It also included Glasgow Caledonian institutional and School level information. Overall the results were strong, with 91% of Glasgow Caledonian graduates in employment and/or further study and the University was ahead of the Scottish sector by +1pp, and was 6th equal in Scotland for this measure. The percentage of Glasgow Caledonian graduates in employment in highly skilled occupations was 83%, a +4pp improvement compared to the previous year and +3pp ahead of the Scottish sector. Glasgow Caledonian had the highest proportion of graduates in highly skilled occupations of a Scottish modern university.

12. **Research Report Trimester C**
This report provided a summary of the quarterly and annual applications, awards, annual research income and trajectory and REF related activity, including benchmarking against the wider sector, together with summaries of research income and research degree completions. The Chair reported that there had been an external review of the University's research over the summer and a report on this would be submitted to the University Research Committee then Senate. Senate noted the Research Report for Trimester C.

13. **Standing Committee and School Board Summary Reports**
The following reports from the following standing committees and School Boards were noted:-

- Education Committee held on 13th September 2023
- University Research Committee held on 30th August 2023
- International Committee held on 14th September 2023
- The Glasgow School for Business and Society held on 12th April 2023

14. **Research Degrees Committee**
Senate approved the award of 22 PhDs, 1 PhD by previous publication and 2 Prof. Ds

15. **Senate Composition and Membership 2023/24**
A paper that proposed amending the Senate composition to include the Director of GCU London as a Non Voting Advisor, and informing of changes in membership to take account of changes to the nominated Heads of Academic Departments for SCEBE, and elected academic staff members for GSBS and SHLS, was approved.

16. **Senate Standing Committee Composition, Membership and Terms of Reference 2023/24**
Senate approved the Terms of Reference, Composition, and Membership for Session 2023/24 of the following Standing Committees.

- Education Committee
- University Research Committee
- The International Committee

It was highlighted that the Terms of Reference for all Committees were unchanged from the previous year, and the only amendments to the Compositions were to reflect changes in role titles.

17. **Senate Chair's Action**
Senate homologated a Chair's Action to approve changes to the English Language Requirements for International Students at PGT level for 2024/2025 entry.

18. **Editorial changes to the Code of Student Conduct Relating to plagiarism**
Senate considered a repot proposing editorial changes to the Code of Student Conduct, to provide clarity for both staff and students. The changes

- Simplified the language around the definition of plagiarism;
- Included the inappropriate use of AI as an explicit breach of the Code to provide clarity to both staff and students;
- Provided further information, reflecting advice and guidance already in place, on how to conduct a ghostwriting investigation;
- Included a new section on how to conduct an investigation into inappropriate use of AI, to reflect the current approach and guidance to staff;
- Clarified that Heads of Departments could delegate plagiarism investigations to appropriate members of staff; and

- Proposed revisions to a form to streamline the outcome process of a first offence of minor plagiarism to help reduce the workload associated with these investigations.

Senate approved the proposed revisions subject to finding alternative terminology to "viva" in the context of an academic misconduct investigation.

19. **Other Matters Approved/Noted/Received for Information.**

- Senate programme of work for 2023/24
- Honorary academic appointments.
- Recent academic staff appointments.
- Summary reports of the meetings of the University Court held on 15th June and 21st September 2023
- Senate and Standing Committee Calendar of Meetings 2023/24.

The next scheduled meeting of Senate will be held on Wednesday 13th December 2023.