

Key Messages from the Meeting of Senate on 1 May 2024

Strategic Item

Enhancing Student Inclusion and Belonging	Senate received a presentation on promoting student inclusion and the complexities involved in the international student experience. Complicated language, unconscious bias, and the idiosyncrasies of assessment procedures and other aspects of academic culture had been identified as potential barriers to belonging and inclusion. Fostering a sense of belonging for international students required time and effort. The removal of biases and labels, underpinned by a positive culture and commitment to closing the feedback loop, were felt to be crucial for belonging. The University's recent improvements made towards enhancing student systems, the student journey and campus culture were highlighted, including the implementation of a new student registration portal, plans for a new reception desk with a student-facing focus in King's Gate and the diversification of services provided across University units and schools which were aimed at removing barriers where ever possible.
NUShape	Senate were advised that the University had been moving away from an annual short term 'strategic planning' cycle in favour of five-year strategic delivery plans, developed through a programme called NUShape, or 'Shaping Newcastle to 2030'. NUShape was now moving into the Planning Phase which involved identifying the topics in which the University was aiming to grow, keep on track or sustain and asking each Faculty and academic unit to commit to a small number of the highest priority objectives against which progress can be monitored over five years, starting in September 2024.

Monitoring of Academic Performance

Access and Participation Plan	Senate received the draft Access and Participation Plan 2025-26 to 2028-29, the submission of which was a regulatory requirement of the conditions of registration set by the Office for Students (OfS). Senate approved the Access and Participation Plan for submission to Council and the OfS with approval of the final version to be provided by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education.
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Reports

Senate received updates from:	<p>Vice-Chancellor's Business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Free Speech and the Conflict in the Middle East ▪ Newcastle University Students' Union Sustainability Week ▪ Colleague and Student Successes ▪ Appointment of a Deputy Vice-Chancellor ▪ Late News – Health Innovation Neighborhood Planning Permission ▪ Late News – Disability Confident Status
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Approvals

Academic Distinctions	Senate approved the conferment of the title of Emeritus or Emerita Professor on: Professor Carlo Barenghi, with effect from 1 September 2024 Professor Patrick Briddon, with effect from 1 September 2024 Professor Zofia Chrzanowska-Lightowlers, with effect from 1 June 2024 Professor Chris Kilsby, with effect from 1 May 2024 Professor Bob Lightowlers, with effect from 1 June 2024 Professor Karen Ross, with effect from 1 August 2024
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