Key Messages from the Meeting of Senate on 23 September 2026

Strategic Items

Academic Shape: Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences	Senate received a strategic case proposing a transformational restructure of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (HaSS), replacing the current ten-School model with four Schools and an Interdisciplinary Commons. It was noted that a clear academic vision for sustainable growth was required, which would integrate academic ambition with operational efficiency and financial sustainability, without compromising academic integrity. Senate supported in principle the proposed direction of travel for HaSS Academic Vision, and endorsed the proposed academic unit reorganisation and future school structure for Council consideration. Senate also endorsed the proposed School names, pending further discussion regarding one of the proposed school names; the recruitment of future Heads of School, subject to Council approval; and the proposed implementation approach, timeline, and engagement activities.

Monitoring of Academic Performance

Minutes from Committees of Senate	Senate received updates from Committee Chairs and Senate representatives from the below sub-committees of Senate: University Education Committee: 13 May and 1 July 2026 University Research and Innovation Committee: 12 May and 23 June 2026
National Student Survey Results	The University had experienced a sustained decline in student satisfaction reported in the National Student Survey (NSS) across multiple areas of student experience over the last ten years, but the NSS 2026 results provided support for cautious optimism that efforts to enhance the student experience had resulted improvements in positivity measure and in relative benchmarking across all NSS themes.
Leading Edge Curriculum	Senate received a progress update regarding the Leading Edge Curriculum implantation. Learning from Phase 1 had informed the approach to the Phase 2 implementation and included the introduction of a six-week readiness phase, an extended eight-week design phase, and the introduction of a fully-resourced Curriculum Transformation Team.

Reports

Senate Effectiveness	Senate received the results from the annual Senate effectiveness survey.
Senate received updates from:	Vice-Chancellor's Business: ▪ Student Minds University Mental Health Charter Award ▪ New Government and Devolution ▪ University Rankings ▪ Defence Universities Alliance ▪ Higher Education Student Outcomes and Quality ▪ Institute of Devolution Senate endorsed the creation of an Institute of Devolution for approval by Council, pending submission of a full business case to Senate for consideration. ▪ Senate Membership Senate approved the appointment of Sam Ryan as the co-opted member of Senate for a term of three years.
Annual Report from Research Ethics Committee	Senate received the annual report.
Research Culture Programme Annual Review	Senate received the annual review.

Approvals

Academic Distinctions	Senate approved the conferment of the title of Emeritus/Emerita Professor on: ***Professor Charles Harvey effective from 1 January 2027*** ***Professor Sue Farran effective from 1 February 2027***

Heidi Shultz
24 September 2026