

Key Messages from the Meeting of Senate on 13 November 2024

Strategic Items

NUCoRE Behaviour	Senate was invited to consider for approval a proposed NU Centre of Research Excellence in Behaviour (FMS-led). Responding to high-profile calls for more unified approaches in behavioural sciences, this NUCoRE would connect and platform the behavioural research community across Newcastle University and beyond by uniting existing, but still siloed, structures and areas of excellence. Senate approved the proposed NUCoRE Behaviour.
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Monitoring of Academic Performance

Academic Calendar	Amendments to the academic calendar were proposed to address challenges in the current calendar that impact upon the student and colleague experience, and to futureproof the calendar in the context of the new Education Strategy. Challenges identified relating to the current calendar included semester start dates that caused difficulties for some international students who needed to secure visas, the challenge of an 11-week semester structure, a lack of time post-assessment for marking, feedback and exam administration and a lack of protected research time. Senate approved the new model for the academic calendar commencing 2026.
National Student Survey Report	Senate received the annual summary of results for two of the University core student experience surveys: the National Student Survey (NSS) and the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES). Across all themes and questions the University's NSS positivity score had increased, though performance was still below benchmark for five themes, indicating room for improvement. There was an improving trend across most PTES question groups, with particularly encouraging trend in key areas of Teaching and Assessment and feedback, noting still weaker performance in engagement and community.

Reports

Senate received updates from:	<p>Vice-Chancellor's Business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deaths of Derek Nicholson and Mike Davison ▪ A Blueprint for Change UUK ▪ University of Sanctuary Re-accreditation ▪ Knowledge Exchange Framework 4 Update ▪ Colleague and Student Success ▪ Universities for North East England <p>In response to an email from Senators, the Vice-Chancellor reported on University finances with emphasis given to the impact on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Academic integrity ▪ The continuation and delivery of NUShape programmes, and; ▪ Equality, diversity and inclusion endeavours.
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Approvals

Academic Distinctions	Senate approved the conferment of the title of Emeritus/Emerita Professor on: <i>Professor Brian Morgan with effect from 1 January 2025</i> <i>Professor Thomas Scharf with effect from 1 January 2025</i>
Honorary Bachelor of Education Awards	Senate approved the award of Honorary Bachelor of Education degrees to eligible alumni.