

SENATE

Open Minutes (approved by Chair)

Of the meeting held on Wednesday, 25 September 2019 in G5.05.

Present:

Nick Braisby	Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
Miriam Moir	Head of Registry Services (Secretary)
John Brewer	Interim Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Julie McLeod	Interim Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education)
Ellie Smith	Academic Registrar and Secretary
Julie Irwin	Director of Student Success
Karen Buckwell-Nutt	Head of School, Nursing & Allied Health
Kevin Maher	Head of School, Business, Law & Computing
Paul Morgan	Head of School, Human and Social Sciences
Phil Wood	Head of School, Aviation & Security
Florin Ioras	Director of Enterprise and Research
Louisa Berry	Elected representative, Aviation & Security
Lauren Vincent	Elected representative, Art, Design and Performance
Daisy Toscano	Elected representative, Health Care and Social Work
Dearbhla Gallagher	Elected representative, Human and Social Sciences
John Hathaway	Elected representative, Business, Law & Computing
Sainey Faye	Nominated representative, University Partnerships Board
Tao Warburton	Students' Union President
Brooke Pilbeam	Student's Union Vice-President

Apologies:

Lee Curtis	Head of School, Health Care and Social Work
Sri-Kartini Leet	Head of School, Art, Design & Performance
Russel Stone	Head of School, Media & Creative Industries
Helen Ajyo-Ajayi	Elected representative, Nursing and Allied Health
Rob Penhaligon	Elected representative, Media & Creative Industries
Richard Jones	Nominated representative, Education Committee
Margaret Greenfields	Nominated representative, Research and Enterprise Committee

Welcome/Apologies for absence/ Conflicts of Interest

19.87 Senate members were welcomed to the first meeting of the 2019-20 academic year. The Chair gave a special welcome to new members Louisa Berry, Sainey Faye, Tao Warburton and Brooke Pilbeam who were all attending their first official meeting. Apologies for absence were received. No conflicts of interest were declared.

Minutes of the meeting held on 5 June 2019

19.88 The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 June 2019 were approved as an accurate record.

Matters arising/Status of Actions

19.89 The actions taken since the last meeting were noted. Under the action regarding the Access and Participation Plan it was further noted that three revisions had been requested by the OfS, challenging the University to be as ambitious as possible. Following these revisions, the Plan was approved and the latest version would be circulated to Senate members.

Action: Julie McLeod

Chair's Actions

19.90 Sixteen Chair's Actions had been taken since the last meeting of Senate, all but two for the approval of franchised programmes for Academic Partners. It was noted that the Chair's Action dated 30 July appeared to be a duplication of that dated 12 June – this would be reviewed outside the meeting.

19.91 It was noted that many of the franchises were being approved late in the academic year which caused issues in ensuring Schools were sufficiently prepared. Due to the number of franchises, it was noted that Senate needed to be mindful of the added complexity and resourcing of these programmes. It was agreed that a strategic approach to such expansion was needed, and that this, plus the consideration of resources, would be debated at University Partnerships Board again, alongside the forthcoming Partnership Strategy.

Action: Sainey Faye/Julie McLeod

Senate Terms of Reference 2019-20 (SEN19.21)

19.92 Senate considered the paper summarising the proposed changes to the Terms of Reference for Senate, following discussions at the meeting held on 5 June 2019 when Senate members expressed their wish for more time to be devoted to debating relevant topics. Greater prominence had therefore been given to this within the Terms of Reference and this was also reflected in the revised structure of the Agenda.

19.93 The proposals also included minor changes to the wording of the membership, but also included a new member "of the professoriate". Senate was asked to consider how such a member would be chosen, and it was agreed that the Professoriate Fora would nominate a member to serve for two years.

Action: Florin Ioras

19.94 Senate approved the Terms of Reference for 2019-20. These would be forwarded to Council for note.

Debating Topics for 2019-20 (SEN19.22)

19.95 Following the meeting on 5 June 2019, Senate members were asked by the Chair to provide ideas for topics for debate, and these had been collated in the paper provided to Senate.

19.96 It was noted that as well as deciding on topics for the next three meetings, Senate needed to consider how best to run the proceedings. Following a discussion, it was agreed that the proposer of the topic would provide a "position piece" in advance of the meeting around which Senate members could formulate their views. The debates would be scheduled for approximately 30 minutes.

19.97 It was further agreed that there should be an outcome from the debate – such as a requirement for the topic to be taken for wider consultation, or for the result of the debate to be published to all staff, possibly through the intranet.

19.98 Nine main topics had been proposed. It was agreed to delay the one on the PREVENT strategy as this was currently under review. Senate members would be asked by the Secretary to choose their preferred topic for the December meeting by email.

Action: Secretary

University Strategy (SEN19.23)

19.99 Senate noted the extensive consultation which had taken place through staff meetings and online. All feedback received had been taken into consideration, and all comments had been read and action taken to amend the text where possible. Comments had generally been positive, with staff particularly liking the focus of the strategy.

19.100 The main changes made to the strategy had been to its format (which had gained more consistency between sections), its length, and to some of the individual aims and priorities.

19.101 Senate made the following points:

- It welcomed the shorter, more succinct format
- It queried how staff would perceive how they could contribute to the strategy
- It noted that the University's contribution to the local industrial strategy could be made more visible, with more references to business support
- The section on environmental issues could be strengthened
- Under "Social Responsibility" wording on "value for money" could be added
- To make it clear that "Philanthropic" giving covered volunteering and not just monetary donations
- There was little mention of academic partnerships (link to the partnership strategy which should underpin this)
- Preparing students for the digital world/digital capabilities to be strengthened in the world of work section

19.102 Senate also considered ways in which the Strategy could become embedded in working life at Bucks, including using bitesize sections to link to University events throughout the year. It was noted that implementation plans would be devised for operational purposes.

19.103 Senate endorsed the University Strategy. The next stage would be for Council to sign off the Strategy at its meeting on 8 October, and for it to then be made accessible to all staff, to be part of their working experience at Bucks for the next three years.

Senate Member on Council

19.104 The Chair thanked those members who had put themselves forward to represent Senate on Council, and who had prepared a short piece about themselves and their reasons for wanting to take on the role. It was agreed that, as two of the candidates had had to send apologies for the meeting, written pieces from all four candidates would be circulated by the Secretary and a date set for return of Senate members' votes.

Action: Secretary

Professoriate (SEN19.24)

19.105 A paper regarding the establishment of a Professoriate Fora had been circulated giving details of the proposed membership, its purpose and activities. Also circulated were the Terms of Reference.

19.106 Senate agreed that the proposed Fora would provide a supportive community for researchers, that it would be beneficial in terms of the research environment for REF, and suggested that there should be a link to research students

19.107 However, Senate also had some reservations as follows:

- Some ambiguities existed over the Fora's exact purpose – Senate's view was that it should be to drive forward academic debate through, for example, public lectures
- There were concerns that a number of its proposed roles overlapped with both Research and Enterprise Committee and with Education Committee, which could lead to confusion as to where decisions could formally be made
- Similarly ToR number 10 regarding advising on the honorific titles process overlapped with the Honorary Awards Committee of Council
- Recognition of professional practice needed to be included
- Much more clarity was required over the reasons for members of the Fora meeting as a group, and as to the benefit of members attending meetings

19.108 While Senate was supportive of the idea, it did not approve the Terms of Reference and requested that these should be reconsidered so that they did not overlap or duplicate those of Senate's Committees, alongside clarification of the aims and objectives of the Fora.

19.109 Senate asked for revised Terms of Reference and membership to be brought back to the December meeting of Senate for further discussion.

Action: Florin Ioras

Update on Recommendations to Senate (SEN19.25)

19.110 The seven recommendations to Senate arising from the 2017-18 Annual Monitoring exercise to be actioned during 2018-19 (and which had been identified by Education Committee) had been updated for the March 2019 Senate meeting. Prior to the end of the 2018-19 Annual Monitoring cycle, updates to the recommendations had been requested for the September Senate meeting with the purpose of giving Senate assurance that the recommendations had been followed.

19.111 It was noted that not all Schools had made additions to the update given in March. This was attributed either to no new actions having been taken or that the March update still applied. Due to this it was noted that Senate could not be completely assured that the recommendations had been addressed in full.

19.112 It was noted, however, that a great deal of excellent work had been going on in the Schools to address the recommendations and to take forward related actions.

19.113 It was noted that there was a need for such recommendations to be approached in a different way in the 2018-19 Annual Monitoring cycle. The process as it stood was considered by some as repetitive, and duplicated action plans elsewhere. Smarter and more measurable objectives were needed.

19.114 Senate requested that Education Committee should consider different ways in which University-wide themes arising from Annual Monitoring could be identified and any actions arising could be monitored.

Action: Julie McLeod

Vice -Chancellor's Report (SEN19.26)

19.115 Senate received the Vice-Chancellor's report on recent developments within the University and the sector as a whole.

19.116 In addition to the items in the report, the Vice-Chancellor noted that the University had moved up four places in the *Sunday Times Good University Guide*, and that Bucks scored well for social inclusion, BAME attainment and student satisfaction. However, the University did poorly in its attainment of good honours, and work was being undertaken to ascertain the cause. It was noted that achievement of students at academic partners had an impact on good honours.

University Council Report (Minutes 8 July 2019)

19.117 Minutes of the last Council meeting had been made available to Senate. The Senate representative on Council noted that the Council members were dedicated people who had the best interests of the University at heart.

19.118 Thanks were given to Phil Wood who was stepping down as the second Senate representative on Council after four years.

19.119 It was noted that Council members were becoming more visible around the University, attending a number of events. Council members will be linked to the academic Schools to enable them to gain a better understanding of work undertaken.

Students' Union Report (SEN19.27)

19.120 Senate welcomed the report from the Students' Union which covered the Leadership Academy, the Bucks Award and Programme level co-curricular activities.

19.121 Attention was especially drawn to the launch of the Leadership Academy, a new initiative to enable 25 students to benefit from tailored sessions designed to develop their leadership skills. It was noted that discussions had taken place between the SU and the Directorate of Student Success regarding the link between the Leadership Academy and Placements Plus.

19.122 While the Students' Union planned to open the Leadership Academy to all Levels, Senate recommended that it be limited to Level 5, focusing on students who have not benefitted from other similar opportunities. Senate members were asked to encourage colleagues to nominate potential candidates.

Reports to Receive:

Education Committee (15 July 2019)

19.123 The Minutes from the extraordinary meeting held on 15 July 2019 had been circulated. There had been only one item of business – Placements Plus.

Academic Planning Committee (13 June 2019 and 11 July 2019)

19.124 The Minutes from two meetings -13 June and 11 July 2019 – had been circulated.

19.125 Senate was reminded that the Minutes of these meetings were confidential and business sensitive.

Matters for Endorsement:

External Examiner Approval Panel (SEN19.28)

19.126 Senate received the update from the External Examiner Approval Panel and endorsed the decisions made in each instance.

19.127 One query was raised about the appointment from University Centre Weston (Weston College) as to its status as regards degree level qualifications. It was agreed to check that

the appointee had the correct qualifications and sufficient support from the programme team in place.

Action: Ellie Smith

New Programmes of Study and Revalidations (SEN19.29)

19.128 The report detailed recommendations to Senate of programmes presented to Approval Panels where conditions had been signed off and Chair's Action of Senate taken during June, July and August 2019 to enable the programmes to be set up ready for September 2019.

19.129 It was noted that BA (Hons) Sports Studies was to be resubmitted as part of a wider review of the sports area.

19.130 It was further noted that the conditions for BA (Hons) Politics and International Relations, concerning staffing and library resources, had not yet been met.

19.131 Senate noted the programmes approved by Chair's Action and agreed that the one outstanding programme where conditions had not been met could be approved by Chair's Action.

Dates of the next meetings

19.132 The next meeting is the joint meeting with Council on Monday 18 November 2019 at 4.00pm. The next meeting of Senate is on Wednesday 18 December 2019 at 2.00pm.