



SENATE

Open Minutes

Of the meeting held on Wednesday, 15 December 2021 at MSTeams.

Present:

Professor Nick Braisby	Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
Professor Gavin Brooks	Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Professor Rachel Cragg	Pro Vice-Chancellor Education & Digital
Professor Paul Morgan	Associate Pro-Vice Chancellor, Student Experience
Ms Ellie Smith	University Secretary and Clerk to Council
Professor Florin Ioras	Director of Enterprise and Research
Ms Miriam Moir	Academic Registrar
Professor Karen Buckwell-Nutt	Director of the Institute for Health and Social Care
Ms Emma Binnie	Dean of Students
Dr Russel Stone	Head of School, Creative & Digital Industries
Dr Simon Jones	Head of School, Business & Law
Dr Ricardo Khine	Head of School, Health Care & Social Work
Dr Ciaran O'Keeffe	Interim Head of School, Human and Social Sciences
Ms Margaret Rioga	Acting Head of School, Nursing, Midwifery & Allied Health
Professor Musa Mihsein	Head of School, Aviation & Security
Professor Sri-Kartini Leet	Head of School, Art, Design & Performance
Ms Hilary Mullen	Elected representative, Creative & Digital Industries
Ms Louisa Berry	Elected representative, Aviation & Security
Dr Dearbhla Gallagher	Elected representative, Human & Social Sciences
Mr Ian Chisholm-Bunting	Elected representative, Nursing, Midwifery & Allied Health
Dr Sainey Faye	Nominated representative, University Partnerships Board
Ms Sarah Wilson-Medhurst	Nominated representative, Education Committee
Professor David Warnock-Smith	Nominated representative, Research & Enterprise Committee
Mrs Leah Hill	Senior Registry Officer: Governance and Quality (Secretary)

Apologies:

Ms Julie Irwin, Director of Student Success
Ms Pia Carnegie, Elected representative, Business & Law
Ms Honor Fletcher, Students' Union President
Ms Natasha Neal, Students' Union Vice-President- Education & Welfare
Ms Brigitte Stockton, Elected representative, Art, Design & Performance
Ms Daisy Toscano, Elected representative, Health Care & Social Work
Mr Paul Maloret, Interim Head of School, Nursing, Midwifery & Allied Health
Dr Lisa Reynolds, Head of School, Nursing, Midwifery & Allied Health

Matters Arising / Status of Actions

21.94 It was noted that all outstanding actions were complete.

Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd September 2021

21.95 The Minutes were approved as an accurate record.

Chair's Report

21.96 A report document had been circulated to members in advance of this meeting and the following points were highlighted by the Chair:

- University financial statements for 2020/21 - financial and strategic performance for the University has been strong, with the statements documenting continued strong performance against Impact 2022's key performance indicators. Financial performance continues to be strong so far in 2021/22
- Applications for February entry in 2021/22 have very nearly trebled from the numbers seen in 2020/21, with demand particularly strong for full-time study, on both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Areas with particularly significant growth include business and management, and computing and software engineering
- The University's position on COVID mitigations continues closely to track the sector and government guidance. Case numbers are currently low, however, the emergence of the new omicron variant threatens to change matters significantly. The University continues to direct effort to our public health campaigns in favour of vaccination and mask-wearing as effective mitigations, and we have been successful in attracting a 'vaccine bus' to the High Wycombe campus on a number of occasions
- The University has been notified that its bid for funds to create three new Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs) was successful. This marks the University's first foray into the area of level 4/5, higher technical qualifications, and we are delighted to be successful in receiving funding
- The University recently submitted a successful bid for an OfS teaching capital grant and were awarded the maximum grant of £2m.

21.97 In addition, the compulsory vaccination (by April 2022), in line with NHS staff requirements, of students on Nursing / Health programmes was discussed. It was confirmed that ensuring compliance was regularly discussed at Gold meetings and communications had been sent to students and placement areas. Senate members also noted that work was underway to revisit exit awards associated with these programmes to ensure an academic award is available, based on credits achieved, to all students who are unable to complete the programme for which they are registered due to this.

Matters for Approval / Discussion

University Quality and Standards Report 2020/21

21.98 The University Quality and Standards Report for 2020/21 had been circulated to Senate in advance of this meeting.

21.99 The report covered eight themes, including Academic Integrity and Misconduct; Academic Partnerships; Application of Standards Report; Apprenticeship and FE Provision; Programme Approval and Review; External Examining; Student Achievement; and Student Casework. Areas of good practice highlighted included the appointment of

School Directors of Education to lead on Quality, the benefits of 'Keep in touch' events for Partners and the ongoing work to revise the University's academic portfolio through the Curriculum 2023 Change Programme as well as ongoing approval activity.

21.100 It was acknowledged that prioritising Covid-19 activities resulted in some ambitious actions not being met, however some key achievements were noted including the creation and implementation of a new Academic Integrity Policy.

21.101 Senate noted that the number of OIA complaint cases remains above the median for the University's band. However, good practice regarding the emphasis on early resolution was noted. In addition, with the appointment of the Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience and the Dean of Students, a review of the University's complaints process is planned.

21.102 Senate confirmed confidence in the maintenance of Quality and Standards at the University.

Curriculum 23 Update

21.103 The Pro Vice-Chancellor Education and Digital gave a verbal update on the progress of the Curriculum 23 Change Programme and the following points were noted:

- A project delivery date of September 2023 was confirmed
- Further detailed communication around TOp modules would be provided to Schools in due course
- Consideration of PSRB approval timelines and further work on integration of placements was noted as ongoing
- A paper around the configuration of subject clusters had been presented to University Executive Team and further work was ongoing to review and revise these
- Work on a Curriculum 23 'blueprint' was underway and would be presented to Education Committee for approval
- A number of Curriculum 23 information roadshows were being scheduled for Schools and Directorates in early 2022. Invitations would be circulated in due course.

Degree Algorithms

21.104 A paper providing an update on the progress made in relation to the proposal to change the University's Degree Algorithm was circulated in advance of the meeting.

21.105 At the previous meeting of Senate it was agreed that work on a revised algorithm "should progress at pace with the aim of introducing any changes to the existing policy by the end of this academic year, if possible". The paper set out the context for such change, the proposal for further consultation and the timescale for implementation.

21.106 Senate approved the further development of the proposal through consultation with stakeholders and testing of systems to enable introduction from 2022-23. A fully developed algorithm would be presented to Senate for approval by June 2022.

New University Strategy

21.107 A presentation regarding the new University Strategy was given to Senate which highlighted the following:

- The new University Strategy should be continuous with and build on Impact 2022
- Four broad strategic areas highlighted: Supporting Places and Partners (our environment); Fit and Agile Organisation (our people); Delivering Knowledge and Skills (our products); Supporting Students to Succeed (our customers)
- Highlighted themes included: understanding our customers and our markets; relational rather than transactional; and effective working.

21.108 The draft strategy was positively received and comments from Senate members included:

- Pleased to see nurturing innovation and staff wellbeing as important parts of the way we create and sustain our future. In relation to this, members emphasised the importance of having a robust support structure in place.
- Ethical responsibility should be moved further into the foreground
- Increased community involvement was highlighted as positive
- The relational rather than transactional approach to interacting with students should also be extended to staff

21.109 Senate's comments will feed into further iterations of the strategy and its likely strategic commitments. Following Senate's discussion there will be further consultations. Council will discuss the drafted strategy at its meeting in February, and this will be followed by widespread consultation across the University.

Estates Development

21.110 A presentation showing a visual representation of the Estates Development Plans was positively received by Senate. It was noted that wider consultation on the proposed plans was underway alongside more detailed discussions with the areas most affected.

Terms of Reference 2021-22

21.111 The Terms of Reference had been circulated with minor changes to the ex-officio membership and were approved by Senate members.

Response to the OfS statement of expectations for preventing and addressing harassment and sexual misconduct.

21.112 A paper outlining the University's response to the request to review and update systems, policies and procedures in line with the OfS statement of expectations was circulated. Senate noted the review identified that the University approach is aligned to the expectation of the OfS. The associated action plan for further enhancements was positively received.

Reports to receive

Council Report

21.113 The Minutes from the meetings held on 5 October and 23 November 2021 had been circulated and were received.

SU Report

21.114 The Report submitted by the President and Vice-President of the Students' Union had been circulated and was received. Matthew Kitching, Students' Union, attended for this item in place of the SU President and Vice-President.

21.115 The following points were noted:

- The successful recruitment and training of Student Representatives with 93% of positions filled
- A successful 6th Annual Representative Conference was held in a hybrid format on 24th November 2021
- Full support was given for the Curriculum 23 project and the consultation on proposed changes to the University's degree algorithm
- Customer Service issues impacting the student experience were noted. However, it was reported that the Students' Union were encouraged by the appointment of an Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience) and a Dean of Students, which was already having a positive impact on some service issues.

Academic Planning Committee

21.33 The Minutes from the meetings held on 16 September and 28 October 2021 had been circulated and were received.

Education Committee

21.116 The Minutes from the meeting held on 13 October 2021 had been circulated and were received.

Research and Enterprise Committee

21.117 The Research Degrees Annual Report 2020/21 and the University Ethics Panel Report 2020/21 had been circulated and were received.

External Examining Annual Monitoring Report 2020/21

21.118 The External Examining Annual Report 2020/21 had been circulated and was received.

Student Achievement Report 2020/21

21.119 The Student Achievement Report had been circulated and was received. It was noted that previous consideration of this report had taken place at both Education Committee and Quality Enhancement Committee where it was acknowledged that further work was required relating to the creation of an action plan, which would be reported to Senate in due course.

Matters for endorsement

External Examiner Approval Panel

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

New Programmes of Study and Revalidations

21.34 The report detailed recommendations to Senate of programmes presented to Approval Panels where conditions had been signed off. The programmes were presented to Senate and endorsed.

Date of the next meeting

The next meeting of Senate is on Wednesday 23 March 2022 at 2.00pm.