

Minutes (unrestricted)

Meeting title: Senate

Date: Wednesday, 6 November 2013

Time: 2.15 pm

Location: The Senate Room, George Thomas Building, Highfield campus

Present: The Vice-Chancellor (*in the Chair*), Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor Wheeler, Pro Vice-Chancellor Neill, Pro Vice-Chancellor Nelson, Ms T Harrison (*Registrar*), Dr S ul Alam, Professor Y Baatz, Dr P di Bari, Dr A Barney, Professor H Biggs, Dr F Bishop, Dr G Brambilla, Dr F Cagampang, Dr M Carravetta, Dr A Channon, Professor S Cox, Dr S Demain, Dr A R Drummond, Dr H Eres, Professor J Falkingham, Professor K Fox, Dr J Gammon, Mr P Gibbs, Mr D Gilani*, Dr I Golosnoy, Dr A M Gravell, Dr H M Haitchi, Mr A L Hill, Professor S Hawkins, Mr G Hayward, Ms J Hjalmarsson, Dr C Holmes, Dr C W Jackson, Professor T G Leighton, Professor D P McGhee, Dr C Metcalf, Dr T Newman, Professor J Petts, Dr K Poore, Professor C Pope, Professor J Preston, Dr R Primorac, Dr D J Richards, Dr A Roghanian, Ms L Richard, Professor V Sassone, Ms J C Savidge, Ms K Spires*, Ms L Stobseth-Brown, Dr A Viens, Dr L Wahlgren-Smith, Dr M Weal, Professor R Werner, Professor N White and Mr E Zaluska

By invitation Mr S Chisnall, Director of Strategy and Planning (for item 11)

In attendance The Chief Operating Officer and Ms C J Gamble

(* Member of Senate not present for the restricted items.)

Welcome

The Vice-Chancellor welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular the new members of Senate.

Presentation: Education update

Pro Vice-Chancellor Neill gave a presentation on the Education Strategy, some of initiatives that were being developed, and a number of related matters. He highlighted:

- The fundamentals of the Education Strategy and the initiatives for transforming education which were part of the University's Strategy when it had been drawn up in 2010.
- The results of the National Student Survey (NSS) over the period 2010 to 2013, the ranking of the University in the sector and within the Russell Group, and the change over those years in the overall score an institution needed to achieve to be listed in the upper quartile of the table.
- Student recruitment for 2013/14, the planned numbers compared with the actual numbers as at 25 October 2013.

The approach the University planned to take to increase its student numbers without compromising quality, as part of its Strategy. There were opportunities to do this within the home/EU and the overseas markets, particularly in subjects where there was high demand from high quality students.

- The expected date of the Quality Assurance Agency's Higher Education Review, and the preparations for the Review. It was planned to present the draft Self-Evaluation Document to Senate at the end of the current academic year.

- The development of the planned MOOCs (Massive Online Open Courses), the first of which, Web Science, would be launched on 11 November 2013. He thanked the Centre for Innovative Technologies in Education (CITE) for its sterling work in this area.
- An overview of the Curriculum Innovation Programme and a profile of the numbers of students who had registered on the modules offered as part of the initiative.
- The programmes which would offer a minor subject during the first phase in 2013/14.
- Employability and 'Southampton Opportunity'.
- The involvement of the University in the pilot of a Grade Point Average experiment, organized by the Higher Education Academy.
- The areas of work that were currently under review, such as the fixed timetable, online module choice and e-assignment.

The Vice-Chancellor thanked Pro Vice-Chancellor Neill for his presentation.

[The PowerPoint slides are available on the SUSSED group site for members of Senate.]

1 **Obituaries**

The Vice-Chancellor announced with regret the deaths of:

Tekeste Hagos Tesfazion, Doctorate of Education: 2 February 2013; and
James Witham, Master of Mathematics: 21 June 2013.

He asked members of Senate to stand for a minute's silence as a mark of respect.

2 **Standing Orders**

Received A copy of the Standing Orders for the academic session 2013/14.

The Academic Registrar reported that no revisions were proposed and that the set of Standing Orders before Senate were unchanged from 2012/13.

Resolved That the Standing Orders for 2013/14 be approved.

3 **Statement of Primary Responsibilities and delegated and related matters**

Received A copy of the Statement of Primary Responsibilities and delegated and related matters for 2013/14.

The Academic Registrar outlined the proposed revisions which were explained in the covering note:

- Point i) described the straightforward substitution of 'Academic Quality and Standards Committee' (AQSC) for 'University Programme Committee' and a minor amendment to AQSC's terms of reference.
- Point ii) reflected the agreement that, within a Faculty, one Faculty Programme Committee would be the overarching committee for both taught and research programmes.
- Point iii) set out the amendments required in the Statement to the references to the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Review and Action Plan (LTERAP).

Resolved That the amendments to the Statement of Primary Responsibilities and delegated and related matters for 2013/14 be approved and the content of the document be noted.

4 **Senate membership**

Received A copy of the membership for the current academic year.

The Vice-Chancellor drew attention to the vacancies in categories (e) (representatives of academic staff).

The Vice-Chancellor invited the Faculties to appoint representatives to the vacancies as soon as possible, and to inform the working secretary of any errors in the names of the members listed in the document.

Noted The membership of Senate for 2013/14.

5 **Minutes of meeting held on 19 June 2013**

The Vice-Chancellor drew attention to Minute 52.2. The first point of the minute should read, '... *the Annual Report from the Senate Appeals Committee* would be presented to Senate at the beginning of the academic session.'

The members approved the minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2013 for signing by the Vice-Chancellor, subject to the amendment raised by the Vice-Chancellor being made to the document.

6 **Matters arising**

6.1 **Academic Reward and Recognition project** (Minute 50)

The Vice-Chancellor reported that the proposal to introduce the title 'Associate Professor' from 1 January 2014 had been approved by Council at its meeting on 10 July 2013. He added that the Provost would update Senators on the project under item 12.

6.2 **Revisions to Statutes and Ordinances related to new titles** (Minute 51)

The Vice-Chancellor reported that Council had approved the amendments to the Ordinances and Statute 4 at its meeting on 10 July 2013. The minor change to Statute 4 would be submitted to the Privy Council in due course.

6.3 **Vice-Chancellor's actions** (*Periods of appointment*) (Minute 53)

The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that a list of the periods of appointment of the Deans, Pro Vice-Chancellors and the Vice-Chancellor was available on the group site.

7 **Vice-Chancellor's report and University Executive Group (UEG) decision log**

Received The Vice-Chancellor's report on recent activities, together with a list of actions and decisions taken after consultation with University Executive Group (UEG) since the meeting of Senate in June 2013.

The Vice-Chancellor drew attention to a number of the items in his report, including:

- The implications of the Spending Review, covering the year 2015/16, which had been published in June 2013.
- The Witty Review and its recommendations. The Government's response to the Review was expected shortly before Christmas. The University had argued that funding should be routed through established mechanisms, such as the Higher Education Innovation Funding (HEIF), rather than new ones.
- The Government's International Education Strategy and the setting up of a Council to promote the Strategy.
- The Vice-Chancellor observed that since the financial crisis the world rankings of UK higher education institutions had slipped. In respect of the criteria that were used in the various tables, the University performed well on the basis of the academic metrics but needed to achieve greater international profile and reputation.
- The level of research grant income during the calendar year had surpassed £100 m for the first time in the University's history.
- A major, strategic partnership with Shell International Trading and Shipping had been agreed.
- The range of developments in Singapore, in particular the opening a joint laboratory in Maritime and Offshore Engineering which linked Southampton Maritime and Marine Institute

and A*STAR and the Centre for Disruptive Photonic Technologies, a joint photonics laboratory with Nanyang Technological University.

- The success of the Enactus Southampton student enterprise team in reaching the World Cup event in Mexico where it had represented the UK. The team were runners-up.
- The UEG decision log. The Vice-Chancellor reminded members that the agendas, papers and meetings notes of UEG's meetings were available on a SharePoint site (http://sharepoint.soton.ac.uk/sites/ueg_updates/default.aspx).

Noted The report and the UEG decision log.

8 **Report from the President of the Students' Union**

Received A report from the President of the Students' Union on the Union's recent activities.

Mr Gilani, the President of the Union, presented his first report to Senate, drawing attention to:

- The key priorities for improving the student experience over the next few years in the areas of feedback and academic support, communicating with students, developing the central facilities, 'Southampton Opportunity', and building and recognizing community.
- A sample of the range of activities being undertaken in developing the Union, such as strengthening its representation, supporting various aspects of student life from social and recreational interests to extra-curricular skills training.
- The community projects for which funding had been raised through a Sports Relief Mile, and the volunteering work on a section of the Dorset coast.
- The continuing success of Surge Radio in the National Student Radio nominations and the achievements of the sailing team in the World Championships.

Noted The report from the President of the Students' Union.

9 **Senate question time**

The Vice-Chancellor explained the purpose of the question time session, which he had introduced over a year ago, to stimulate debate and discussion on issues which fell under Senate's remit and on topical academic matters. For the benefit of the new Senators, he outlined the process for lodging questions and relaying answers.

The Vice-Chancellor reported that he had received two questions: one on the potential across the disciplines for increasing student numbers in the years ahead; and a detailed query about student recruitment in 2013/14 and the impact on the University. The Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor would respond to that question, a copy of which would be circulated with the minutes of the meeting, together with a written reply from the Provost. Regarding the first question on growth, the Vice-Chancellor stated that the presentation that would be given by the Director of Strategy and Planning under Agendum 11 should cover the points raised.

The Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor outlined the thrust of the first part of the question which concerned the recruitment of students under the institution's quota for applicants offering 'A'-level grades below ABB or equivalent qualifications. He outlined the background to the matter and the position of the University in 2012/13, when tuition fees had been raised to £9 k. For 2013/14, the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) had stated that financial penalties might be imposed if institutions exceeded the upper limits of their student number quotas, depending on the overall picture in the sector. The University was clear that it wanted to extend its offer to students who could benefit from the academic programmes. The recruitment efforts for the year had been successful and the intake had exceeded the quota by around 350 students. HEFCE had not yet announced whether it intended to apply financial penalties. The University had made provision in the budget for the eventuality.

Regarding the potential impact of the increase in student numbers, which were slightly above the previously highest number achieved in 2011, on the student experience and how this might be reflected in the National Student Survey (NSS), the Provost said that there had been a concomitant uplift in the number of academic staff. Furthermore, resources were available to enhance the student experience.

All the students who had been recruited had been assessed by the Admissions Tutors as having the ability to succeed academically. The University had recovered well from the recruitment position in 2012/13.

The Vice-Chancellor invited questions on his report and the President's report.

The following points were raised:

- Regarding the increase in research grant income, a great deal of work had been done on the part of academic and Professional Services staff to achieve this.
- Professor Pope raised questions about the involvement of the University in activities in a country which did not respect basic human rights and stated that she would like the University to take a stand on such matters, citing its core values.

The Vice-Chancellor drew attention to the policy that the university had adopted on developing international relationships and collaborations which built in provision to review any potential partnership. However, looking at the issue pragmatically, he viewed it as delicate balancing act primarily because it was difficult to succeed as an institution without engaging globally and without engaging with a range of political systems and countries.

Turning to the specific developments in Singapore, the Vice-Chancellor explained that they had grown from grass root collaborations between academic staff, subsequently supported at an institutional level. Regarding the position of staff working overseas, they had volunteered to take up those positions and were not assigned to work abroad. This was an important principle.

In discussion, a number of examples were given of the benefit of the process of engagement, on the one hand, and the barriers which hindered or stopped some in pursuing their career or studies in particular countries, on the other.

The Vice-Chancellor would arrange for the policy document on international relationships to be circulated again to members of Senate for consideration.

- On the subject of the strategy for growth, it was queried whether this would be taken forward on the basis of the numbers planned for 2013/14 or on the basis of the actual number of students recruited, which in some areas had been higher than anticipated owing to particular circumstances which might not be repeated in the future.

The Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor stated that the intention was to continue to build on the progress achieved this year. An analysis had been done on how the University had performed by subject discipline and market opportunities had been identified. Based on that information, discussions would take place within the Faculties, taking account of the limitations of the Estate. The Chief Operating Officer outlined the plans for developing the provision of student accommodation and other aspects of the infrastructure, such as the transport links.

The Vice-Chancellor commented that in the future better use needed to be made of the market intelligence that was available to identify where best to recruit. The sector had become markedly more competitive.

Resolved That the policy document entitled 'Principles to guide international partnerships and engagement' be circulated with the minutes to Senators.

Noted The answers given during Senate question time.

10 **University Strategy**

Received A presentation given by the Director of Strategy and Planning on the University Strategy.

Mr Chisnall presented his overview under the following headings:

- The Strategy map, 'Changing the world for the better'.
- The mission, vision and principles and the inter-relationship of the aims of distinction, globalisation and growth.

- A financial profile (turnover) of universities, listed in the 2012 QS Ranking, illustrating that the income and expenditure of the top 20 institutions exceeded £800 m *per annum*.
- Details of the plan and priorities for 2013/14 onwards.
- The next steps to embed the mission, vision and values across the University and to deliver refreshed Education, Research and Enterprise strategies.

The Vice-Chancellor thanked Mr Chisnall for his presentation.

A number of comments and questions were offered:

- Professor Petts, who was leading the work on 'investing and disinvesting strategically', one of the areas identified in the Strategy map, outlined the approach that was being adopted by the group. It was focusing on sharpening and crystallizing the processes in place for taking decisions about the University's development. The Vice-Chancellor commented that it was inevitable that an academic portfolio of an institution had to change over time in response to developments in research and demand for particular subjects. Similarly, the supporting services had to refocus their priorities over time. What was important in this process was the quality of the information that was provided and the transparency of decision-making.
- It was observed that not all institutions with turnovers over and above £800 m derived their income from student recruitment. What areas other than recruitment would the University concentrate on to increase its income? In response Mr Chisnall highlighted the development of partnerships with other institutions in and outside the sector, for example the collaboration with Lloyd's Register, and the area of enterprise. It was acknowledged that the presentation should have given a stronger emphasis to enterprise, alongside research and education.
- The Vice-Chancellor explained the intention behind the use of the words 'distinction' and 'distinctive'; the former was used to describe the academic excellence of the University while the latter was used to portray how the institution distinguished itself from its peers in an increasingly competitive sector.
- How could Senate become more involved in the decision-making around strategic priorities? The Vice-Chancellor stated that it was entirely appropriate for members of Senate to be involved in the process and there were a number of routes established to achieve this.

The Vice-Chancellor thanked Senators for their contribution to the discussion.

Noted The content of the presentation and the comments and points made during discussion.

[A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is available on the SUSSED group site for members of Senate.]

11 Academic Reward and Recognition project

Received An oral update from the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor on the progress made by the five work streams that had been established to carry out the project's different initiatives.

The Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor summarized the work being undertaken in the following areas:

- The principles for appraisal for the Education, Research and Enterprise (ERE) job family, levels 4 to 6, and the band descriptors for those pathways.
- The proposals and principles for ERE level 7 in respect of moving the existing zones to three bands. There was further work to be done on pay modelling and progression which would be discussed by the University Executive Group and with the Joint Negotiating Committee in the new year.
- Periods of probation and associated training.
- The introduction of the title 'Associate Professor' from 1 January 2014 which had been discussed at Senate's meeting in June 2013.

In discussion, Senators raised a number of points which included:

- There were marked differences between the approach to promotion in the higher education sector and in the private sector. The Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor acknowledged that the appraisal process, a key part of the system in place to support the promotion procedures, had not been as robust as it should have. Improvements to this process would be made.

- The promotion interview training that was offered might appear rather daunting to the more junior members of staff. It was pointed out that the training was not a compulsory step on the way to applying for promotion. It had been introduced to support and advise those who were preparing for the next stage in their careers. It was suggested that it should be opened up to everyone irrespective of whether they had applied for promotion. It was an excellent course.

Resolved That the Provost and Vice-Chancellor arrange for Human Resources to take forward the proposal to offer the interview training course to all academic staff.

Noted The update from the Provost and Vice-Chancellor.

[Post-meeting note: On 4 December 2013, it was announced that the title 'Associate Professor' would be introduced from 1 October 2014.]

12 Academic Integrity

Received A progress report from the Head of Academic Appeals and Student Complaints, on the Academic Integrity Network, dated 23 October 2013, presented by the Academic Registrar.

The Academic Registrar highlighted the four areas of work being progressed since the initial developments, dating from 2009: regulatory matters, policy and guidance; staff development; student development; and communication and resources. On that latter aspect, the Academic Registrar drew attention to the new system for recording academic integrity cases which, it was anticipated, would assist with the analysis of cases and contribute to the enhancement of the support given to students, leading to a more robust framework all round. She reported the planned timetable for presenting changes to the Academic Integrity Regulations and the cycle of meetings of the individual working groups and the wider network.

Noted The report setting out the working being undertaken in the area of academic integrity.

13 University Programme Committee/Academic Quality and Standards Committee

13.1 Report from the meeting held on 3 July 2013

Received A report from the meeting of the University Programme Committee, held on 3 July 2013, presented by the Chair of the Committee, Pro Vice-Chancellor Neill.

Resolved The discussions, and decisions, recorded in the report from the last meeting of the University Programme Committee.

13.2 Report from the meeting held on 24 September 2013

Received A report from the meeting of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee, held on 24 September 2013, presented by Pro Vice-Chancellor Neill.

Resolved The discussions, and decisions, recorded in the report from the meeting of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee.

13.3 Report from the meeting held on 23 October 2013

Received A report from the meeting of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee, held on 23 October 2013, presented by Pro Vice-Chancellor Neill.

Resolved The discussions, and decisions, recorded in the report from the meeting of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee.

14 Vice-Chancellor's action(s) as Chair of Senate

Received A report prepared on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor on the matters he had approved as Chair of Senate since the meeting of Senate on 19 June 2013.

Noted

The minor amendments to various Regulations, set out in the report, and the amendments to the Appeals and Complaints Regulations that had been approved after a consultation with the Senate.

15 **Selection of Senate Nominating Committee members for 2013/14**

The Vice-Chancellor invited Senators to put themselves forward to form a Nominating Committee for the year to deal with any casual vacancies which might arise in the class of Senate membership on Council. The aim was to select individuals from a range of academic disciplines and arrive at a balance of genders. The invitation was open to the current members of the Committee, provided they remained on Senate during the year. A reminder would be sent to Senators when the minutes of the meeting were circulated.

Resolved That members of Senate should inform the Vice-Chancellor or the working secretary of their willingness to become a member of the Nominating Committee for the year.

16 **Assistant Pro Vice-Chancellor role**

Received A report entitled 'Creation of the role of Assistant Pro Vice-Chancellor', dated 28 October 2013.

The Vice-Chancellor summarized the background to the matter and explained that what was proposed would create a formal framework for appointing individuals to support the senior management team and would recognize the work undertaken by them. It offered flexibility too to appoint to such roles.

Resolved That the introduction of the new role of Assistant Pro Vice-Chancellor under the provisional terms be endorsed and submitted to Council.

Noted The intention to carry out a wider review of leadership roles and their reward and recognition in due course.

17 **Date of next meeting**

The Vice-Chancellor confirmed the date of the next scheduled meeting of Senate: 26 February 2014.

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