

Minutes (unrestricted)

Meeting title: Senate

Date: Wednesday, 15 June 2011

Time: 2.15 pm

Location: Senate Room, George Thomas Building, Highfield campus

Present: The Vice-Chancellor (*in the Chair*), Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor Wheeler, Pro Vice-Chancellor Humphris, Pro Vice-Chancellor Nelson, Pro Vice-Chancellor Spearing, Dr J W Anderson, Professor R J Astley, Dr A Barney, Dr S Beers, Ms R Bell (*vice* Dr J H Rippon), Dr R Bentley, Dr S Bleeck, Dr M L Brown, Professor I T Cameron, Professor N Donnelly, Mr B Fitzjohn*, Professor K Fox, Professor J G Frey, Professor P Gale, Dr M Garner, Dr A M Gravell, Ms M Harrison, Dr N Harvey, Professor S Hawkins, Professor M Hill, Professor J Howells, Ms R Jowett, Professor M Kaczmarek, Dr G J Langley, Professor N Lee, Professor J Lumby, Professor J W McBride, Professor B M Margetts, Professor F C Mar-Molinero, Dr R Mills, Professor T Morris, Dr A D Neill, Dr D Nicole, Dr K Oliver, Dr J Parker, Professor J Petts, Dr A Pinnock, Professor A Russell, Dr C Smith, Dr P Smith, Professor P G R Smith, Mr R Stanning*, Mr R Stansbridge, Ms L Stobseth-Brown, Dr A Tavassoli, Ms P Usher, Professor J A Vickers, Dr C Voll, Ms K Walker, Dr T Waters, Mr S Watson*, Dr J Wharton, Dr P Whittaker and Mr E Zaluska

In attendance University Secretary and Ms C J Gamble

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

Welcome

The Vice-Chancellor welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Obituary

The Vice-Chancellor announced with regret the death of Mr Tony Harmsworth, the Director of Health and Safety, on 27 March 2011 and asked members of Senate to stand as a mark of respect:

Presentation

Professor McBride gave a presentation on the development of a campus in Malaysia. The focus of the project was to build educational and research links in South East Asia, and to establish a research base. During the initial phase (2012-2015), three undergraduate Master of Engineering degrees would be offered on a 2+2 basis to students who would spend the first two years studying in Malaysia, before moving to the University for two years to complete their studies. The opportunity existed to extend and broaden the range of academic activities following this initial phase. The University would take a view on the feasibility and desirability of expansion once the first set of programmes was operating successfully.

Professor McBride described the site that had been selected and outlined the work that had been undertaken to develop the project. He presented the figures for the student numbers that were planned, explained the fees model and summarized the main aspects of the student experience. Half of the academic staff involved in the programmes would be seconded from the University. All of the academic staff would be expected to be research active.

The Vice-Chancellor thanked Professor McBride for his comprehensive overview of the development. He emphasized that the initiative formed part of the internationalization strategy which aimed to extend the University's activities across the world and by doing so enhance the institution's standing in the sector. The

business plan had been carefully considered by the Council of the University during a series of meetings. It was expected that the project would run successfully. However, to protect the University's investment, provision had been made to exit from the development in the event that the plans did not reach fruition as intended.

The Vice-Chancellor invited questions and comments. The following points were noted:

- The four-year programme included accreditation by the UK-professional body.
- The staff recruited in Malaysia would be considered to be members of the University.
- The fees for years three and four of tuition at the University would be set at the level of international fees.
- In response to a question about the possibility of students choosing to study for the second part of one of the degree programmes at another European institution rather than at the University, the Vice-Chancellor said that that it was not expected that students would make such a choice.
- Regarding the forthcoming Research Excellence Framework, under the criteria of the exercise, the academic staff who worked in the Malaysian campus would be eligible to be considered for selection by the University.
- There were no current plans to extend the Foundation Year which would be offered from 2013 in conjunction with Electrical Engineering and Electro-Mechanical Engineering.

47 **Minutes**

The members approved the minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2011 for signing by the Vice-Chancellor.

48 **Matters arising**

Membership of Council under Class 3 (Minute 29) (*Update on Senate appointments to Council*)

(Professor Smith left the meeting while the item was under discussion. Professor Falkingham was not present at the meeting.)

Reporting on the appointment of members of Senate to Council, the Vice-Chancellor said that Professor Jane Falkingham, Head, Social Sciences, and Professor Peter Smith, Associate Dean, Enterprise, in the Faculty of Physical and Applied Sciences, had been selected to serve until 31 July 2011 in the first instance. The Nominating Committee wished to recommend that both individuals should serve a full three-year term, provided they both remained members of Senate. The Vice-Chancellor invited Senate to endorse the recommendation.

Resolved That Professors Falkingham and Smith be appointed as Senate members on Council for a three-year term, provided their membership of Senate under its new composition continued.

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

Received The Vice-Chancellor's report, together with a list of decisions taken by UEG since the meeting of Senate in March 2011.

The Vice-Chancellor presented his report, highlighting the following items:

2011 student application numbers

The figures at the beginning of June indicated that there was a reduction in Home/EU applications of three per cent compared with last year. This was mainly as a consequence of a small fall in the number of applications from home students.

There was an error in the percentage change listed for postgraduate research applications: it should read, '41 per cent increase' in respect of international applications, rather than 138 per cent.

University League Tables

The ranking of the University in the *Guardian University Guide 2012* had dropped. This was a disappointing result overall, despite some pleasing performances in a number of areas across the disciplines. The Vice-Chancellor encouraged the Heads of academic units to examine the tables to see where improvements might be made.

Office of the Independent Adjudicator

The Annual Report of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) had listed two institutions which had not complied with its decisions. The University was one of institutions named. It concerned three formal student complaints from 2010. The University had taken immediate steps to resolve the cases, in addition to reviewing its complaints procedures in consultation with the Students' Union with a view to introducing the new processes by the beginning of the academic year 2011/12. The OIA had recognized the University's response and had highlighted it in a case study in its Annual Report.

Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE), national champions

Senators joined the Vice-Chancellor in congratulating the team of students from the University who had won the SIFE national competition. The team would compete in the world championship event later in the year in Malaysia.

Senior appointments

Helen Alexander, who would take on the role of Chancellor of the University from August 2011, had received the award of Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire for her services to business in the Queen's Birthday Honours.

The Vice-Chancellor drew attention to the appointments of Professor Spearing as Pro Vice-Chancellor (International), Mr Ace as Chief Operating Officer, and Ms Harrison as Registrar from 1 August 2011.

University Executive Group (UEG) decision log

The Vice-Chancellor highlighted the record of UEG's discussion in respect of double awards under D041. The decision had been included as a note in the report from the University Programme Committee (Agendum 10) for the sake of completeness.

[Post-meeting note: The date of the meeting of UEG referred to above should state 31 May 2011.]

Noted The Vice-Chancellor's report and UEG's decisions.

50 **Senate question time**

Received A report from the Vice-Chancellor, dated 6 June 2011, setting out responses to questions posed by members of Senate.

The Vice-Chancellor reminded Senators that the purpose of introducing a question-and-answer session was to encourage debate on topical, academic issues which fell within the responsibilities of Senate. A number of questions had been received which were not directly related to Senate's remit. Although the Vice-Chancellor had answered them on this occasion, he would, in future, direct such questions to the general point of contact for such queries. He invited Senators to raise further questions:

- Regarding the extended teaching day, would a system be introduced which would allow academic staff to express a preference about their working patterns? For example, lecturing in the early evening might not be possible for some staff because of family responsibilities or other commitments. The Vice-Chancellor stated that within the scope of an extended teaching day account should be taken of the varying needs of staff. A system that made unreasonable demands of staff would not be considered 'healthy' for individuals or in the interests of the institution.
- A general point about the process was raised. Although carefully prepared written answers were very helpful, it was possible that not all parts of a question were answered in the detail that was sought or that the question itself raised such fundamental or important issues which in themselves required further discussion. An example of this was the question about the setting

up of a Malaysian campus and the complex matter of ethical standards and education overseas, in particular the way in which the University engaged with cultures which directly challenged academic ideals.

The Vice-Chancellor said that the written questions and answers were a means of placing both formally on the record. It was not suggested that presenting the responses in this way should prevent further discussion of any points which might be raised in the process. On the contrary, the intention was to stimulate debate. The Vice-Chancellor wished only to reserve the option of taking questions on notice in case matters arose on which he needed to seek supporting information or take advice. Regarding the planned Malaysian campus, he underlined the closing statement in the response that wherever University staff or students were working or studying in the world they had to observe the national laws of the country in question.

Pro Vice-Chancellor Spearing commented that as the University pursued its ambitions internationally decisions would have to be taken about where best to develop academic activities. A set of principles to guide international partnerships and engagement had been drawn up which would help inform discussions in this area. Advice from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office would be sought as a matter of course in respect of any venture overseas. Regarding the Malaysian campus, a risk assessment had been undertaken. The academic staff at the University involved in the project would work in Malaysia of their own volition; it would not be compulsory. Dr Strike added that, as a private institution operating in Malaysia, the University would not be obliged to discriminate in favour of employing Malaysians.

The Vice-Chancellor said that he believed that running a campus in Malaysia in the way that was planned would not lead to difficulties for the institution. Nevertheless, he acknowledged that, as with all new ventures, there were always unanticipated challenges and opportunities. Each initiative had to be assessed within the wider political and economic context of the country concerned. Hence the need for a framework to guide thinking and decision making. He would arrange for the set of guiding principles to be circulated to Senators for information, once considered and approved by Council.

- In response to a question about the timing of discussions at Senate about overseas initiatives, the Vice-Chancellor stated that Senate would be properly consulted on the academic issues.

Resolved That the Vice-Chancellor should arrange for the document on international partnerships and engagement to be circulated to members of Senate after it had been considered and approved by Council.

Noted The report from the Vice-Chancellor and the answers provided.

51 **Transforming education: update**

Received An update on the Education Strategic Plan, the Curriculum Innovation Programme, the Institutional Review in 2012/13, and Key Information Sets, prepared by Pro Vice-Chancellor Humphris, dated 9 June 2011.

Pro Vice-Chancellor Humphris drew attention to the following items:

Access Agreement

The Office of Fair Access (OFFA) had requested more details about the University's outreach activities and some of the targets set for students from the different groups listed in the Access Agreement. OFFA would notify institutions on 12 July 2011 whether their submissions had been approved. If OFFA withheld approval, an institution would not be in a position to charge the level of fees requested.

In response to a question about entry grades, Pro Vice-Chancellor Humphris said that there were mechanisms in place through Access2Southampton to provide a route for students with lower grades from particular socio-economic groups to matriculate, provided the required standards were met. However, it was not University policy to lower entry grades for applicants from these groups. She updated Senate on the work that was directed at establishing stronger relationships with secondary schools in the suburbs of London, a new development in the area of outreach activities.

Preparing for Institutional Review, 2012/13

Pro Vice-Chancellor Humphris outlined the preparation that would be required for the Institutional Review, and summarized the timetable for the following two years. As part of the plans, a group of senior staff, drawn from the membership of Senate, would form a critical reading group to scrutinize the Self-Evaluation Document.

Public Information: Key Information Sets

Professor Vickers pointed out that some of the information that appeared on the open data site (www.data.southampton.ac.uk) was incorrect. He had reported where he believed the mistakes were. In the light of the HEFCE consultation on Key Information Sets, it was vital that the accuracy of any data about the institution was verified. Pro Vice-Chancellor Humphris stated that the arrangements for a strengthened planning function within the University should ensure that all data was up to date and correct. The Vice-Chancellor encouraged members of Senate to let his office know if there were any errors in the data which appeared on the site.

Noted The content of the report from Pro Vice-Chancellor Humphris.

52 **Academic reward and recognition project: update**

The Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor reported that it had been the intention of the Steering Group, involved in the Academic Reward and Recognition Project, to start a consultation process in June 2011 on the proposals it was bringing forward. However, it had been concluded, after discussion with the University Executive Group, that more time was required to complete the work because of its complexity. Furthermore, a new Director of Human Resources had recently been appointed and her expertise in this area would be invaluable. The Provost stated that the consultation process should begin in the Autumn. The Vice-Chancellor underlined the importance of ensuring that every aspect of this very complex programme of work was fully developed before the consultation began. The Group had made outstanding progress on the project, but required a little more time.

Noted The update from the Provost and the stated intention to postpone the consultation process until the Autumn.

53 **Revisions to Ordinances to reflect new academic structures**

Received A report from the University Secretary on the revisions required to the University's Ordinances, together with a copy of the Ordinances, excluding Part 3 (Dismissal, Discipline, Grievance Procedures and related matters), in which the amendments were highlighted.

The University Secretary presented the report which explained the amendments to the Ordinances that were required as a result of the setting up of the new academic structures.

Resolved That the amendments to the Ordinances, as listed in the report and set out in detail in the Appendix, be endorsed and submitted to Council for approval at its meeting on 7 July 2011 and to come into effect on 1 August 2011.

54 **University Programme Committee: report from meeting held on 25 May 2011**

Received A report from the meeting of the University Programme Committee (UPC), held on 25 May 2011, together with appendices on the Committee's terms of reference and membership (Appendix 1), a summary of the revisions to the Regulations in Parts IV and V of the *Calendar* (Appendix 2), extracts from the *Calendar* (Appendices 2A and 2B), and a briefing note on collaborative awards (Appendix 3).

In the absence of the Chair of UPC, Professor Curry, Dr Smith presented the report, drawing attention to the items which required Senate's approval:

Terms of reference and membership

The Committee wished to amend paragraph (i) of its terms of reference, adding the following words: 'To maintain, subject to the approval of Senate where applicable, the University's regulatory framework (including regulations for admissions, *recruitment and outreach*) for all taught and research degree

programmes ...' It was also recommending a small change to the composition of its membership, at the request of the Students' Union. The membership list should no longer specify that there would be one undergraduate and one postgraduate taught representative on the Committee, but instead should state simply 'Two representatives of the Students' Union'.

Amendments to parts of Section IV and V of the Calendar for 2011/12

Dr Smith stated that the revisions which were set out in Appendices 2A and 2B to the Committee's report were required in order to reflect the new organizational structure of the institution. It was, in essence, a translational exercise, substituting the new titles for the old nomenclature. He wished to thank Dr Barney and Ms Sweetman for the work they had undertaken in this area. The Committee planned to meet again in July to consider what further changes might be necessary to the Admissions Regulations as a result of UKBA and UCAS requirements. For these amendments, UPC was requesting that Senate agree that the Vice-Chancellor, as Chair of Senate, be authorized to take Chair's action later in the summer.

Winchester School of Art/Dalian Polytechnic University, China, collaborative agreements

[Note: The date given in the UEG note in the report is incorrect. It should read 31 May 2011 rather than 31 March 2011.]

Dr Smith explained the background to the academic development in China at Dalian Polytechnic University (DPU). The discussion at the meeting had focused on collaborative arrangements in which the University and DPU would both grant degrees (double awards) in respect of the programmes of study under discussion (BA (Hons) Graphic Arts and BA (Hons) Fashion Design). If adopted, it would represent a new development for the University.

The Vice-Chancellor clarified that the principle of delivering academic programme overseas was not the issue in this particular case; it was the question of awarding double degrees. He highlighted the summary of the discussion, held at a meeting of the University Executive Group, when it had been underlined that the University must retain the ability to award a University of Southampton degree, exclusively on the basis of the institution's requirements, and that the award could be made regardless of the requirements of a partner university for the award of a degree. In the specific circumstances of the agreement with DPU, the University would have no objection to DPU awarding its own degree, crediting students with work completed as part of a University of Southampton degree as a large part of the requirements for a separate, independent award from DPU. Responding to a query about the possible risk to the University's reputation if the advertising of the degree programmes by DPU was ambiguous, the Vice-Chancellor said that such matters would be carefully considered before the programmes were publicized, and, in any event, all publicity material would be under the control of the Winchester School of Art.

Turning to the quality assurance arrangements and questions raised by Professional Services - matters recorded in the report - the Vice-Chancellor said that these would be considered by the Chair of the Committee. The recommendation before Senate was that he take Chair's action to approve the proposal to offer a BA (Hons) Graphic Art and a BA (Hons) Fashion Design in collaboration with DPU, subject to having received confirmation of Professor Curry's satisfaction with the responses provided in respect of the queries that had been raised. The members of Senate were content to endorse that proposal.

Regulations and Procedures Governing Student Complaints

Dr Smith summarized the main points that had been made by the Committee in respect of the revised Regulations and Procedures Governing Student Complaints, submitted by the Complaints Review Group. The Group had concluded that there was insufficient time to make the further refinements to the document before Senate's meeting in June, but would complete its work as soon as possible. Dr Smith drew attention to the recommendation that Senate endorse the proposal that the Vice-Chancellor take Chair's action to approve the final document. The members of Senate endorsed the proposal.

- Resolved**
- (i) That the proposed changes to the terms of reference and membership of the University Programme Committee, as set out in Appendix 1, be approved.
 - (ii) That the proposed changes to Sections IV and V of the *Calendar*, as set out in Appendices 2A and 2B, be approved.

- (iii) That the proposal that the Vice-Chancellor take Chair's action, as granted under Standing Order 14, to approve further revisions that might be necessary to the Admissions Regulations, as explained in Appendix 2 of the report, be endorsed.
- (iv) That the proposal that the Vice-Chancellor take Chair's action, as granted under Standing Order 14, to approve the Regulations and Procedures Governing Student Complaints, when finalized, in readiness for the 2011/12 academic session be endorsed.
- (v) That, subject to confirmation from the Chair of the University Programme Committee that she was satisfied with the responses received in respect of the matters raised in relation to the degree programmes to be offered in Dalian, China, as detailed above, the Vice-Chancellor take Chair's action to approve the delivery of a BA (Hons) Graphic Art and a BA (Hons) Fashion Design in collaboration with Dalian Polytechnic University; and that the Vice-Chancellor report back to Senate on his actions.
- (vi) That the other items in the report from the University Programme Committee be noted.

[Post-meeting note: Professor Curry, Chair of the University Programme Committee, confirmed on the 23 June 2011 that she was satisfied with the responses received in respect of (v) above. Subsequently, the Vice-Chancellor took Chair's action on behalf of Senate to approve the delivery of a BA (Hons) Graphic Art and a BA (Hons) Fashion Design in collaboration with Dalian Polytechnic University.]

55 **Optoelectronics Research Centre: report from Graduate Student Board**

Received A report from the Graduate Student Board of the Optoelectronics Research Centre (ORC) on extending an embargo, first approved in November 2005, on the publication of a doctoral thesis of a former student in the ORC.

The University Secretary stated that although the item had been included in the unrestricted agenda, the paper itself had been marked in error as a restricted item. The postgraduate who was the author of the thesis was no longer a student at the University and therefore the paper was deemed to be unrestricted business.

Noted The extension of the embargo in respect of the thesis *Distributed optical fibre sensors for monitoring mechanical strain and disturbance* until 31 March 2014.

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

The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that there were no items on which he had taken Chair's action on behalf of Senate that he should report.

57 **Review of functions and functioning of Senate**

The Vice-Chancellor asked whether members of Senate were content with the way Senate functioned. Should a review be held to consider how the arrangements might be improved upon, bearing in mind the guidance of the Committee of University Chairs on period reviews of institutional performance and the work Council undertook to assess its effectiveness? In response to the question, Senators raised the following points:

- The current year had been one of restructuring. If a review was to be worthwhile, it might be preferable to hold it after the process of reorganization had been completed.
- The composition of Senate's membership had recently been revised to reflect the new academic groupings. This change would take effect from 2011/12. The timing of a review should wait at least until the next academic session when the new membership of Senate was established.
- Would the remit of a review cover the cycle of meetings that used to be held for senior academic managers (Senior Managers' Meetings and drop-in meetings)? The Vice-Chancellor responded that it was not planned to abandon those wider forums. The Provost stated that consideration was being given to supporting academic leaders in a more concerted way. Funding had been made available for a leadership and management development programme.

- Exploring the level of debate that was encouraged and the authority of Senate to carry out its functions, as set out in the Ordinances, would be worthwhile.

The Vice-Chancellor concluded that the timing of a review should be postponed until the next academic session.

Resolved That Senate should consider at the end of the 2011/12 academic session the timing of a review.

58 **Release of examination marks**

Dr Gravell drew attention to an inconsistency in the dates for the release of examination marks that were given in the University Quality Assurance (QA) handbook and those that were recorded in the *Almanac*. In the QA Handbook, in the section on examination structure and operation, it was stated that the results for finalists should be notified to them on the last day of term. The *Almanac* listed that date a week later for finalists – a week after the end of the term and semester – and the week thereafter for continuing students. The results were available via the Banner system a further week later. The Vice-Chancellor agreed that such inconsistencies should be rectified as soon as possible but in any event before the next academic session.

Resolved That the Director of Student and Academic Administration should investigate the matter and arrange to rectify the inconsistencies.

59 **Date of meetings during 2011-2012**

The Vice-Chancellor reminded members of the schedule of meetings during the next academic year: 16 November 2011; 29 February 2012; and 13 June 2012.

60 **Valediction**

The Vice-Chancellor thanked the student members who were leaving the University for their valued contributions to the meetings of Senate during the year. He wished them well in their future careers.

+++++

CS3/3

J:\Secretariat\Senate\Senate 2010-11\15 June 2011\Senateminjune2011-unrestricted-unconfirmed.doc