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Minutes

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| **Meeting title:** | Senate | | |
| **Date:** | Wednesday 12 February 2020 | **Time:** | 2.15pm |
| **Location:** | The Senate Room, George Thomas Building, Highfield Campus | | |
| **Present:** | President & Vice-Chancellor  Vice-President (Education)  Vice-President (Research & Enterprise)  Chief Operating Officer (Interim)  Mr M Allerton, Professor J Anderson, Dr R Baird, Professor G Brambrilla, Mr K Broadhead, Dr L Brown, Professor M Butler, Mr R Cartwright, Dr D Carugo, Dr J Cheer, Ms N Clarkson, Dr M Donovan-Hall, Dr S Elias, Professor S Ennis, Professor J Falkingham, Dr S Fielding, Ms E Harrison, Professor M Hill, Dr K Hislop-Lennie, Dr J Hjalmarsson, Dr C Holmes, Dr F Houghton, Dr Y Howard, Professor C Howls, Professor A Kemp, Dr E Kitson-Reynolds, Ms A Krishnan, Professor G J Langley, Ms J Lisney, Dr C Mafra, Dr M Mavrogordato, Professor R Mills, Dr M Ng, Professor Niranjan, Dr B Oliver, Ms A O’Neil, Ms V Perisic, Professor F Pierron, Dr E Plum, Dr J Price, Dr R Rauxloh, Professor P Reed, Dr Silke Roth, Dr R Sanchez-Garcia, Dr Sengers, Dr Radan Slavik, Professor P G R Smith, Professor Fraser Sturt, Professor D Wheatley, Professor I D Williams and Professor M Zwolinski. | | |
| **In attendance** | Mr L Abraham - Clerk to the University Council and Senate | | |

20 **Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2019 be agreed as a correct record and signed.

21 **Actions and Matters Arising**

The list was noted.

22 **President and Vice Chancellor’s Report**

Senate received a verbal update from the President & Vice-Chancellor.

The President & Vice-Chancellor highlighted the following:

* Forthcoming industrial action
* An update on the University action in response to the coronavirus
* The December general election and subsequent Brexit progress; it was noted that the Government had promised continued support for research and innovation
* Proposed changes to the University senior Executive team
* Interim arrangements for the Dean of FEPS
* A reminder to all to respond to the strategy refresh
* The formation of a group tasked with identifying and removing administrative burden from University processes

The following questions were raised:

* Will the working group looking at administrative burden encompass PGR activity. The VC undertook to confirm this
* As the Government moved towards less support for more niche degrees, would the smaller students numbers in some of the Arts and Humanities degrees result in loss of programmes. The VC stated that it was too early to say but the University should be vigilant of the ever-changing environment.

**RESOLVED** that the update be noted.

23 **Students’ Union Report**

Senate considered the latest report from the President of the Students’ Union.

Senate noted that the SUSU elections were now underway.

With regard to the survey on Lecture Capture, it was queried as to the overall voting population and response rate. It was agreed that this information would be circulated after the meeting.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

24 **Senate Question Time**

One Senate member asked a question as follows:

*Q: Student-Staff Ratio being a widely used KPI, what is a reasonable SSR as seen from the point of view of a research active lecturer?*

*Context:*

*Over the last few years Computer Science has seen substantial increase in student numbers, with no increase in staffing. The variation in teaching load within the subject has also increased dramatically.*

*With the University SSR at 14:1 and the CS SSR well over 20:1, my personal SSR is at 40:1.*

*I am aware that the Vice Chancellor is beginning to get informed about this local difficulty, but I put this question to emphasise and record the urgency of it.*

*I do think this anomaly is a matter of academic governance and Senate should be aware and be concerned.*

A: Thank you for your question. The University Executive does recognize workload as an issue. While we do pay attention to SSR at University level, SSR tends not to be meaningful at an individual level. Individual workloads are best measured against an equitable local allocation model, though these do not provide a complete solution.

Senate then discussed the matter more widely, noting that workload modelling only worked with staff numbers that were actually in place, rather than numbers that should be in place. It was suggested that the modelling be improved to react in real time, and that attention to SSRs in business planning could be emphasised. Joining up of faculty resources was suggested as a partial solution together with reducing the administrative burden on academic staff.

25 **Senate Effectiveness Review**

Senate considered a report by the President and Vice-Chancellor which outlined how thinking over a review of Senate Effectiveness was developing and a proposed prioritisation of issues that are being raised. Further, the Report also addressed the urgent need to resolve the membership of Senate as many members of the current Senate were due to retire in summer 2020 and the membership currently did not map onto the actual university structure.

Senate was reminded of the sequence of events that had led to the current situation; the approval of new terms of reference and membership in June 2017 followed by the suspension of implementing the new membership due to the faculty reorganisation that took place in August 2018.

It was noted that the Senate should undergo an effectiveness review that would examine all aspects of both operation and constitution, including size and shape of the membership. In the meantime, new membership arrangements were proposed in the report which better reflected both the original intention of the 2017 review and the reduction of eight faculties to five. Senate agreed that the new membership and effectiveness review be implemented. It was suggested that a Council lay member could add valuable input to the review.

It was further agreed that the Director of the Doctoral College be added to the ex-officio members of Senate.

Following a vote, there was over-whelming support for the proposal, and it was

**RESOLVED** that

(i) the non-elected membership of Senate agreed as part of the June 2017 resolution be implemented from 1 August 2020 with the addition of the Director of the Doctoral College and academic staff standing for election on the following basis:

FAH 2 from each School (Humanities and WSA), 1 × Level 6 and above, 1 × 4/5, plus two others (1 × Level 6 and above, 1 × 4/5)

FM 1 from each School (4) plus 4 others (2 × Level 6 and above, 2 × 4/5)

FELS 1 from each School (5) plus 3 others (at least 1 × Level 6 and above, at least 1 × 4/5)

FEPS 3 from Engineering, 2 from ECS, 1 from each other School (3) plus 4 others (2 × Level 6 and above, 2 × 4/5)

FSS 1 from each School (5) plus 3 others (at least 1 × Level 6 and above, at least 1 × 4/5); and

(ii) the Senate Effectiveness Review be undertaken on terms as set out in the report.

26 **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report**

Senate considered a report by the University Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Champion which reported highlights on the progress on ED&I in the University.

Senate noted that the E, D & I Committee had been recast to make it more effective. It was highlighted that unconscious bias around the academic appointing and promotions process remained an issue and the Committee would be issuing policy and guidance to address it. It was offered that many promotions were stopped prior to the formal panel process, at faculty level, and that any policy should encompass the entire process from origin within the faculties.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

27 **Annual Research Integrity Statement & Research Policy, Governance and Ethics Update**

Senate considered a report from the Research Integrity Officer which provided an annual update on Research Integrity in accordance with the requirements of the revised Concordat to Support Research Integrity (‘the Concordat’, October 2019), included the latest Annual Research Integrity Statement and the most recent version of our internal Research Policies Action Plan.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

28 **Doctoral College Board**

Senate considered a report by the Director of the Doctoral College, which provided an update on the work of the Doctoral College.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

29 **Student Discipline – Annual Report**

Senate considered a report by the Vice-President (Research and Enterprise) which provided information regarding breaches of the University Discipline regulations that occurred in the Academic Year 2018-19.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

30 **Chair’s Actions**

The following chair’s actions were noted:

(i) 16th January 2020 – Approved List – HR Hearings

31 **Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 17th June 2020.

RESTRICTED ITEMS

Senate then moved to the restricted items on the agenda and the Student representatives left the meeting.

32 **Annual Report from the Senate Appeals Committee**

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

33 **Senior Appointments**

**RESOLVED** that the report be endorsed for Council approval.

34 **Recommendations for Academic Promotion**

Senate considered a report by the Executive Director of HR which set out a list of level 6 academic promotions.

**RESOLVED** That the list of Academic Promotions be approved.

**The meeting concluded at 4.46pm**