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Minutes

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| **Meeting title:** | Senate | | |
| **Date:** | Wednesday 20th October 2021 | **Time:** | 2.15pm |
| **Location:** | Via Microsoft Teams | | |
| **Present:** | President & Vice-Chancellor  Senior Vice-President (Academic)  Vice-President (Education)  Vice-President (Operations)  Chief Operating Officer  Dean of the Faculty of Medicine  Dean of the Faculty of Environmental and Life Sciences (Interim)  Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences  Librarian  Chief Information Officer  Executive Director of Student Experience & Campus Life  Director of the Doctoral College  President of the Students’ Union  Dr N Alwan, Professor Y Baruch, Professor J Batchelor, Mrs A Bragg-Mollison, Professor J Brodzki, Professor R Carare, Dr V Cardo, Ms N Clarkson, Professor S Darby, Professor L Dominguez, Dr A G Dunn, Dr S Ganapathy, Dr J Gates, Professor S Gourvenec, Dr P Greulich, Dr I Haigh, Professor J Holloway, Ms L James, Professor A Kanaras, Dr E Kitson-Reynolds, Dr J Kreppner, Mr P Landells, Professor J Langley, Mr D Lurcock, Professor B Lwaleed, Mr Pascal Matthias, Dr K Morgan, Dr S Morton, Professor Niranjan, Dr A O’Bannon, Professor V O’Connor, Mr L Pearman, Professor P Reed, Dr S Roth, Professor m.c. Schraefel, Mr K Smith, Mr R-N Varodaria, Dr K Vithana, Dr C Voutsina, Mr S Wakeling, Ms L Watson, Dr E Wilkinson, Dr S Wilks | | |
| **In attendance** | Mr L Abraham - Clerk to the University Council and Senate | | |

**1 Chair’s Introductions**

Mr Kevin Smith (Technicians Representative) and Ms Wendy Appleby (Vice-President (Operations)) were welcomed to their first Senate meeting.

**2 Minutes**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 16th June 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed.

**3 Actions and Matters Arising**

None.

**4 President & Vice-Chancellor’s Update**

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

The President & Vice-Chancellor highlighted the following:

* Thanks to all colleagues for continued hard work preparing campus for the return of students
* Outlined plans for the Super Graduation Ceremony in July 2022 where students from 2020, 2021 and 2022 would celebrate their graduation
* The recipients of this year’s VC Awards
* Outlined the ministerial changes in Westminster that affected higher education and research
* The likelihood of no changes to the University tuition fees
* Progress of the Freedom of Speech Bill
* Thanks to colleagues for engagement with the University Strategy consultation with broad support for the direction of travel
* Student recruitment and the fact that the University only entered clearing for 1.5 days
* Strong outcome for the most recent National Student Survey – rising in general satisfaction with an indication of further signs of significant improvement
* Positive movement in the UK league tables

In further discussion regarding the University strategy it was noted that the consultation had shown that staff welcomed the direction and ambition, especially the commitment to recognise people at the heart of the strategy. The commitment to inclusivity and move towards a true egalitarian institution was supported. The triple helix approach had prompted much discussion and there had also been no push back on the international plans.

It was recognised that the University should be mindful of the student recruitment landscape in light of the enhanced A-level gradings used during the pandemic.

**RESOLVED** that the update be noted.

**5 Students’ Union Report**

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

Senate noted the following:

* Supporting students with understanding academic integrity
* Continuing work on liberating the curriculum
* The positive feedback from students following the reintroduction of face-to-face teaching
* Continued work to support students with mental health issues
* Activity to help promote the representation and engagement of all post graduate students, particularly on campuses away from Highfield, such as NOC.

The Students’ Union was congratulated in particular on their work to help student understand academic integrity, a complicated area. Pop-up areas around campus had proved successful in engaging with large numbers of students.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**6 Senate Question Time**

One question had been received from Professor Silke Roth.

Q - Given the scientific evidence of COVID-19 being an airborne disease and the fact that COVID-19 cases (infections, hospitalisations, deaths) are far higher and the vaccination rate (especially among younger age groups) is Iower in the UK than in other European countries, how does the University justify face-to- face rather than hybrid forms of teaching and the lack of requirements of mask-wearing and social distancing? Taking ED&I as well as health and safety into consideration, has the University assessed what risks these decisions pose to students, staff and the community, and to what extent different groups (age, gender, ethnicity, types of appointment) are differentially affected? When will the university carry out a survey among staff to assess what (mental) health impact the decision to return to face-to-face teaching (in contrast to other UK universities which have adopted hybrid models), while lacking mitigating measures such as mask-wearing and measuring the air quality in teaching spaces, is having on staff?

A – Vice-President (Education). A return to face-to-face teaching is what the great majority of our students have made clear that they want. The Government has asked us to provide it; it is worth noting that there was a fair amount of scrutiny by DfE of what were seen as methods to cut down in-person teaching, and that these were viewed in a dim light. Returning to face-to-face is what a considerable number of our members of staff want. I know that the return to in-person teaching has been a cause of concern and trepidation for some but for others it has been a relief and a source of genuine joy.

Finally, we are opting for a hybrid mode in one sense of that term as many programmes in-person teaching will be supplemented by online provision. We’re just not using hybrid to reduce in-person contact.

A – Vice-President (Operations). Risk assessments have been undertaken which include consideration of suitable ventilation, use of face coverings and requirements of those regarded as vulnerable. Colleagues in Estates are assessing each space around the University with a view to producing usage guidance. If you know of any spaces not yet assessed do please let us know. In the meantime, we will reiterate our strong advice about wearing face coverings when inside buildings, we will look to re-introduce one-way systems around the campus if required and also look at introducing a 15 minute buffer between teaching to ease crowded pinch-points around the University.

We will be expanding our services to offer much more help and guidance for those suffering mental health issues.

A – President & Vice-Chancellor. We will keep face-to-face teaching under close review and will consider the reinstatement of measures such as one-way systems and asking people to wear face coverings, should we decide there is a need.

**7 Annual Academic Assurance Report**

Senate considered a report by the Vice-President (Education), which contained a summary of the activity relating to the academic quality and standards of the University as considered through the Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC) and its sub-committees during the 2020-21 academic year.

It was provided as a mechanism by which Council could be assured that the University met Conditions B1- B5 of the Ongoing Conditions for Registration with the Office for Students

**RESOLVED** that the report be endorsed for submission to Council.

**8 Office for Students – Conditions of Ongoing Registration**

Senate received a report by the Vice-President (Education) which outlined the University’s compliance with the Office for Students (OfS) ongoing conditions of registration, for which Council were responsible. It provided details of the actions taken by the University to satisfy the ongoing conditions for academic year 2020/21 together with changes to some of the regulatory requirements.

The University continued to comply with the OfS ongoing conditions of registration, including temporary changes made in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. There were no current risks or issues which required highlighting.

**RESOLVED** that the report be endorsed for submission to Council.

**9 Review of AY20/21 Semester 1 Teaching & Assessment**

Senate considered a report by the Vice-President (Education) which outlined the University’s compliance with consumer law and the Office for Students (OfS) guidance for providers regarding student and consumer protection (published on 10 June 2020), which stated that all providers must be clear for new and returning students about how teaching and assessment would be delivered in 2020-21, and the circumstances in which changes might be necessary, against what was delivered in the Autumn term.

Following a thorough review the University has concluded that it was clear with new and continuing students about the fact that teaching and assessment would be delivered in different ways to those originally intended during 2020-21, also that changes may be made during the year, and what those changes may entail.

Some students, however, may have received teaching which did not match their expectations based on information communicated to them prior to the start of term. In particular, students may have received a greater proportion of online teaching, or entirely online provision, during Semester 1 of 2020-21.

Following assessment it has been concluded that the plans for the Spring and Summer terms ensured students received the teaching and assessment they were promised and might reasonably expect to receive based on the information provided.

**RESOLVED** that the report be endorsed for submission to Council.

**10 TNE Opportunity in Dubai**

Senate considered a report by the Senior Vice-President (Academic) which outlined an opportunity for the University to operate trans-national education (TNE) in Dubai. The report at this stage was to be considered commercial in confidence.

In line with strategic aims, the University was in consultation with an experienced international education company relating to the potential of further expanding existing TNE operations through the opening of a new branch campus in Dubai.

This opportunity was currently being scoped with an initial business case due to be discussed at the November Council meeting.

Senate raised a number of issues and highlighted points as follows:

* Was there sufficient market demand in that region
* Would a risk register be produced
* Was there an opportunity to talk to other providers who operated in the region
* The region did not have a good record on human rights, free speech, equality etc.
* The potential damage to the University reputation considering the regions values to human rights and equality
* Was staff travel to and from the region sustainable

Senate noted that a comprehensive risk register was in production and each of the risks, including the ones highlighted by Senate, would be thoroughly considered on an individual basis. With regard to travel, teaching would largely be delivered either remotely from the UK or by using teachers already based in the region, with close oversight from the University.

It was agreed that the reputation of the University was of vital importance and this would be considered extremely carefully. Decision milestones would be in place throughout the process with close scrutiny from both the Executive and Council.

**RESOLVED** that

1. the recommendation that, subject to business approval at University Council, academic approval of a potential partnership should follow the standard routes of the University’s academic governance framework be endorsed. (This would include and make provision for detailed scrutiny of the academic elements of the proposal through Collaborative Provision Subcommittee (CPSC) and Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC), with the final approval of the academic matters of the partnership by Senate.)
2. oversight and approval of the business case for a partnership being a decision of University Council be noted.

**11 Doctoral College Board**

Senate received a report from the Director of the Doctoral College. The Director highlighted the following:

* Approximately 400 students supported this year
* “Welcome” documents and guidance had been well received
* Thanks were expressed to colleagues in aiding the College with its online resources

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**12 Senate Annual Review of Primary Responsibilities, Standing Orders and Membership**

Senate received a report which set out the primary responsibilities, standing orders and membership for Senate for 2021/22. An amendment to Standing Orders setting out the Chairing hierarchy was noted. Other minor changes to titles and text were noted.

RESOLVED that the changes be approved and documents be noted.

**47 Chair’s Actions**

The following chair’s actions were noted:

(i) 6 Sept 2021 - Extension of appointment of Professor Laura Costanzo as Head of Southampton Business School

(ii) 6 Sept 2021 - Termination of enrolment due to failure to pay tuition fees in respect of 2016/17 and 2017/18 academic years

(iii) 6 Sept 2021 - Termination of enrolment due to failure to undertake the expected responsibilities of a PGR student.

(iv) 5 Aug 2021 - Promotion to Level 6, Dr PK Senyo, from Southampton Business School, within the Faculty of Social Sciences.

(v) Pathway move from Research to Education for Dr Bernadette O Fernandez

(vi) 28th July 2021 – Changes to Academic Regulations as recommended by AQSC:

Section IV: General Information and Regulations

• Progression, Determination and Classification of Results

• Postgraduate Master's Programmes

• Enrolment Declaration

Section V: Higher Degree Regulations

• Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidature and Supervision

Section VI: Academic Regulations

• DClinPsych and DEdPsych regulations for 2021-22

iPhD Education

• to remove the Dissertation as a requirement to progress from the taught phase to the research phase of the programme. This is to bring the iPhD Education in line with other iPhD programmes in the Faculty.

• to allow students a second opportunity to meet the progression requirement in a similar way to that allowed in the Integrated Masters programmes.

(vii) 14 July 2021 - posthumous award Bachelor of Science (Hons) Politics First Class for Darcy Coomber

**14 Emeritus Professors and Fellows**

Senate considered a report by the President and Vice-Chancellor which set out a list of those persons being recommended for the conferment of the title of Emeritus Professor or Fellow. The list was presented for endorsement prior to final approval by Council.

**RESOLVED** that the list be endorsed for onward submission to Council.

**15 Extension to Associate Vice-President – International Projects**

Senate considered a report by the President and Vice-Chancellor which set out the re-appointment to role of Associate Vice-President – International Projects. The re-appointment was presented for endorsement prior to final approval by Council.

**RESOLVED** that the re-appointment be endorsed for onward submission to Council.

**16 AOB - Council Paper on Modernising Governance**

Senate noted a report by the Chief Operating Officer which provided an update on the Modernising Governance project.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**The meeting concluded at 4.09pm**