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Minutes

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| **Meeting title:** | Senate | | |
| **Date:** | Wednesday 9th February 2022 | **Time:** | 2.15pm |
| **Location:** | Via Microsoft Teams | | |
| **Present:** | President & Vice-Chancellor  Senior Vice-President (Academic)  Vice-President (Education)  Vice-President (Research & Enterprise)  Vice-President (Operations)  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 | | |

**17 Chair’s Introductions**

Professor Jo Swaffield, Professor Gareth Griffiths, Dr Claire Jackson and Ellie Atayee-Bennett were welcomed to their first Senate meeting.

**18 Minutes**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 20th October 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed.

**19 Actions and Matters Arising**

None.

**20 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 during the recent Omicron restrictions.
* January Exams and the request from SUSU for a hybrid set-up. This was considered extremely carefully by Silver Command and UEB. The impact of the final decision would be assessed
* Student recruitment – The University did well with a good uplift in the final numbers for the 21-22 year. The applications for 22-23 were looking very buoyant so the final number that would be admitted is being monitored very carefully to ensure that the University did not over recruit to an extent that created workload and student experience issues.
* Budget – The recommendations of the Augar Report were still to be addressed by central Government.
* Very significant OfS Consultations had been received and a report on this agenda would allow Senate to input.
* The University Strategy had been recently launched and the Vice-Chancellor was holding staff meetings with all parts of the University to introduce the strategy to staff members and take questions and comments.
* Professor Jonathan Bull (Interim Dean of Environmental and Life Sciences) and Professor Alex Neill (Vice-President (Education)) were both thanked for their hard work as they came to the end of their appointments in the coming months.

**RESOLVED** that the update be noted.

**21 Trans National Education**

Senate received a presentation from the Interim Vice-President (International) and Director of Global Recruitment and Admissions which provided an update on progress with transnational education (TNE).

TNE was defined and explained and then a comprehensive assessment framework was presented. The framework sought to assess any TNE opportunity against strategic fit, financial, reputational, academic enhancement and risk.

TNE aspirations were then clarified which sought to build the current portfolio over the next 5 years.

Each opportunity was subject to a number of gateways. These included a TNE Framework Steering Group, IEG, PRG and the University Council. These gateways, together with the assessment framework provided good governance and ensure due diligence was carried out.

Finally, Senate noted the steps from a Delivery Programme which sought to deliver three to four large-scale TNE operations in strategic locations around the globe. Senate would be kept informed of progress.

Turning to a recent opportunity in Dubai, Senate noted that once assessed, the opportunity was seen as not right for the University at the current time. Rather than waiting for any future opportunities, it was decided to proactively investigate the Middle East region for other opportunities that would have a better fit.

**RESOLVED** that the presentation be noted.

**22 Students’ Union Report**

Senate received the latest report from the Students’ Union.

Senate noted the following:

* Work to raise the profile of academic integrity and awareness of unintended collusion
* Support for students over the recent exam period
* Continuing work on liberating the curriculum
* Helping with analysis of the awarding gap
* Assessing digital capabilities of students
* Support specifically for PGR students
* The elections period soon to be underway

Work on the awarding gap and widening participation in particular was welcomed. The University regarded both issues as a priority and it was good to recognise the Union and the University working together.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**23 Senate Question Time**

The following questions were posed and answers given:

Q - The recently published University Strategy provides, possibly for the first time, a statement of the University’s mission. I welcome its focus on people, and the various contributions staff members make to the success of the University. If the new strategy is to succeed, it needs a unity of purpose and action. It is, however, a part of daily experience that such unity is perhaps not quite there. Instead, we frequently come up against divisions that create unnecessary friction and frustration, and much wasted energy. One such example is the not always harmonious relationship between academics and support staff, where in both groups we find dedicated but frustrated colleagues who feel that their time and effort is not always put to best use. Are there any plans to improve this situation? It is difficult to see how the strategy can succeed without a significant effort in this direction.

Furthermore, the people at the centre of our strategy need a modern, safe, accessible, stimulating working environment. Here, however, despite the visible investment and many improvements, the state of our campuses and the facilities they offer have fallen behind our competitors. Will there be a similar strategic vision for the improvement and development of the physical infrastructure of the University to support the implementation of the University Strategy?

A – Vice-President (Operations). Yes, we recognise this and are addressing it as it is important to the delivery of our new University Strategy. We plan to look at how we get better alignment between academic and Professional Services (PS) staff. We will do this by looking at the staff experience of being on the end of various PS departments and processes to look for the pain points to address these and look for quick wins. Also, we plan to undertake a mapping of academic leadership roles to see how PS support them, in order to achieve this alignment. Key elements are to achieve a human face, improve alignment and be equipped to deliver our Strategy.

A – Senior Vice-President (Academic). Yes there is a plan for the improvement of our physical infrastructure and ensuring we have the appropriate resources and estate, master planning is key. We have engaged external help (CBRE) with this. Significant process of fact-finding and benchmarking is occurring now. We have a combination of documentation, including strategic business planning asks and stakeholder engagement. People, EDI and sustainability are core to this work and master planning will be reported in April/May.

Q - It would be helpful to have an update on the Future Ways of Working (FWOW) project and specifically the options that are being explored to consolidate teaching into fewer days, or to allow staff to be more flexible in how they deliver their modules (where hybrid delivery has been shown to be effective). How can we achieve an active campus while also helping to meet our sustainability targets and allow staff to enjoy the advantages in terms of improved work-life balance many have felt when remote working (particularly for those with caring responsibilities or health conditions)?

More specifically, there is widespread frustration with the timetabling process. On the one hand, timetabling teaching free days no longer seems to be possible in practice, while the very late release of the timetable also created huge challenges in terms of organising childcare and arranging other professional commitments. What steps will be taken in the future to ensure that the timetable will be finalised early enough for staff and students to arrange childcare next academic year?

A – Senior Vice-President (Academic) and Vice-President (Operations) - Hybrid and its benefits is very much a key principle in the FWOW work. Three PS pilots are well under way and a pilot in B46 with the School of Physics and Astronomy has just started. Much of this work is focussed on staff offices and space, rather than teaching space. In relation to the link to timetabling, the other elements that need to be factored in are the curriculum, students’ choices, and rooms so while it is a principle that we would look to achieve flexibility for staff it needs to be balanced against the other elements.

There are two lecture theatres that have had to be taken out of action due to problems with their roofs and this has led to some last minute changes that did impact on a number of colleagues. We would like to apologise for this.

A paper will be brought to the next Senate meeting on timetabling and communications thereof. **ACTION: Executive Director of Student Experience & Campus Life**

Q - On 17th January, all Level 7s received an email from their Dean, indicating that during the most recent Level 7 appraisal window UEB had approved changes to the approach to ERE Level 7 pay reviews. The changes mean that increments will be applied based on a new matrix, through discussion between the Dean and relevant HoS, alongside the line manager’s recommended score/appraisal rating.

My concerns over the new approach are:

1. The new matrix ultimately provides for the same or less increments for a given appraisal rating than in the previous approach to all Level 7 staff.

2. The new matrix indicates that even those staff fully meeting expectations could get zero increments for that year, rather than the single increment that has been applied in the past to meeting expectations.

3. After announcing abandonment of central moderation this year, it seems that increments are still being moderated post-appraisal, but by a different selection of people and by negotiating increments rather than appraisal ratings.

Given the frequently voiced dissatisfaction over a range of aspects of the pay and progression process in the University (at all levels), and which has been raised at Senate in the past, could Senators receive clarification about how this adjustment will achieve the stated purpose of “improving existing processes and promoting equality” and how the success of this new approach will be assessed.

A – Executive Director of HR - The outgoing pay review methodology and pay increment matrix were criticised for being heavily-prescriptive, with moderated appraisal ratings rigidly dictating the number of pay increments applicable, creating ‘cliff edges’ between pay review outcomes, often resulting from marginal differences in underlying performance levels. The rigidity of the outgoing methodology also precluded equal pay from being directly addressed through the pay review process.

The revised process allows for discretion and nuance to be applied by Deans in the application of increments, within defined boundaries, and backed up by safeguards to ensure that outcomes cannot lead to the widening of equal pay gaps.

Equity with the rest of the University is safeguarded by ensuring that aggregate outcomes (i.e. the growth of the professorial pay bill) are equivalent to the uplifts available to other employees below Level 7 through contractual incremental progression.

On top of this, a new mechanism has been added to the revised process which allows for increments to be awarded, over and above those available through the ‘main’ part of the process, specifically to close equal pay gaps where they exist.

We will be tracking the outcomes of the revised process, with a particular focus on the equality outcomes, and will use this to inform future amendments, where they may be appropriate.

Q - Could Senate be informed of the rationale for AQSC's decision to stop running end of semester module evaluations?

A – Vice-President (Education) - AQSC determined that end of semester module evaluation should be suspended (more accurate than ‘stopped’) during 2019-20 and 2020-21 given (a) the imperative to minimise staff time spent on all but essential QA processes during that difficult period, and (b) the fact that in that extraordinary period the results of end of semester module surveys were likely to be significantly distorted.

At its meeting on 1st December 2021, AQSC determined that the suspension of end of semester module evaluation would continue for this year. The rationale was as follows: (a) the need to minimise staff time spent on all but essential QA processes persists, and (b) concerns relating to the impact on ED&I of end of semester module evaluation in the form that the University has been using. In light of these two points AQSC resolved that a piece of work should be commissioned to explore the issues and develop proposals for module evaluation in the future. This work is being led by AQSC’s Annual Monitoring Scrutiny Group. Provision was made to allow the continuation of end of semester module evaluation in the meantime where there is a clear need due to quality concerns or commitments previously made to PSRBs.

**24 Knowledge Exchange & Enterprise Strategic Plan Consultation**

Senate considered a report by the Vice-President (Research and Enterprise) which was presented to Senate prior to launching the final consultation in line with the other Strategic Plans under the University Strategy.

The KEE Strategic Plan was developed by Southampton Enterprise Board (SEB) during Q1 2021 and consulted on July-November 2021.

**RESOLVED** that the revised draft of the KEE Strategic Plan and the opening of the final consultation be noted.

**25 Office for Students – Consultations**

Senate received a report by the Vice-President (Education) which outlined three OfS consultations:

i) Teaching Excellence Framework

ii) New approach to regulating student outcomes

iii) Constructing student outcome and experience indicators for use in OfS regulation

Given the significance and size of the consultations, Working Groups were proposed to draft the University’s responses. These responses would be reviewed by the Education Committee, Senate and the University Executive Board prior to submission to the OfS on 17th March 2022. It was noted that due to the complexity of the consultations, there maybe changes to the timescales.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

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

Senate considered a report by the Vice-President (Research and Enterprise) which set out key areas of work that the University had undertaken to progress against The Strategic Plan for EDI.

In March 2021 UEB agreed four equality objectives. The emerging University Strategy had a strong focus on EDI and further work was underway to identify more detailed equality objectives and associated KPIs.

The University continued to be committed to several equality charters that focussed on specific areas of EDI. The work involved in delivering our charter commitments was significant, and in April 2021 PRG approved funding for an expanded, unified EDI team to put the University in a position to work more effectively within these frameworks, and on the wider EDI agenda.

Key priorities for 2022 are to: strengthen how EDI is consciously considered in university decision-making processes; work with Faculty, School and Professional Services EDI leads to align EDI work to the strategic plan for EDI; and, create a series of opportunities for the wider University community to engage and shape the EDI agenda.

**RESOLVED** that Senate

(i) note the content of this report, which will then be presented at Council on 8th March 2022.

(ii) continue to actively advocate equality, diversity and inclusion and deliberately draw links between other strategic plans and policy development and the Strategic Plan for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

(ii) note and support the Key priorities for 2022.

1. **Research Integrity, Ethics and Governance update and Research Integrity Statement 2020-2021**

Senate considered a report by the Vice-President (Research and Enterprise) which provided an update on the main activities of the Research Integrity and Governance (RIG) team for note and was accompanied by the latest Annual Research Integrity (RI) Statement 2020-2021 in line with the requirements of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity (‘the Concordat’).

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**28 Student Non-Academic Misconduct 2020-21**

Senate considered a report by the Vice-President (Research and Enterprise) which provided an update on the work of Student Non-Academic Misconduct during the 2020-2021academic year.

The total number of serious cases reported for 2020-21 remained relatively small at 37, and many of these reports had not led to full investigations.

The report also provided details of the cases managed by the Halls of Residence Misconduct process.

It was queried whether under-reporting may be keeping the case numbers low, with actual cases being higher. It was noted that the recently launched “Support and Report” tool would make reporting incidents easier and provide more confidence to victims that they would be protected and that cases would be fully investigated.

A further query was raised about the recording and usage of EDI data in cases. It was agreed that this would be clarified and report back to Senate under matters arising at the next meeting. **ACTION: Vice-President (Research & Enterprise)**

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**29 Faculty of Medicine – Additional Senate Representative**

Senate considered a report by the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine. On 1st February 2022, The Wessex Institute, would be formally constituted as the New School of Healthcare Enterprise and Innovation (SHEI) within the Faculty of Medicine (FMED).

The report set out a request that the new school formally have representation on Senate from this date to align with other Schools currently within the Faculty of Medicine.

Senate considered the various options which were detailed in the report, namely:

a) Appoint a new representative from SHEI with immediate effect (via By-election), making no changes to Faculty representation.

b) Appoint a new representative from SHEI with immediate effect (via By-election), changing Faculty representation by not electing a new Faculty Senator when the next vacancy arises.

c) Delay the appointment of a Senator from the new School and allocate the next available Faculty Senator vacancy to SHEI, noting that the new School would have no Senate representation before the Autumn term.

It was noted that the Faculty preferred option a). Following discussion it was agreed that faculty representation should not be reduced in order to allow representation of the new school and the new school should be allowed to appoint a new representative which had the overall effect of increasing Senate membership by one.

**RESOLVED** that option a) set out above be agreed and implemented.

**30 Doctoral College Board**

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

* Professional Development, Training and Induction
* Review of Orientation to Teaching and Demonstrating (OTD)
* Doctoral College Events Programme
* COVID Extensions
* Wellbeing
* Presidential Scholarships
* Doctoral College role in the University Strategic Plan

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**31 Annual Report from the Senate Appeals Panel**

Senate received a report by the Vice-President (Education) which provided information to Senate about the decisions made by the Partial and Full Senate Appeals Panel at Stage 3 of the appeal process.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**32 Chair’s Actions**

The following chair’s actions were noted:

(i) 10th Nov 2021 – Endorsement of appointment of Dr Cheryl Metcalf as Head of School – Healthcare Enterprise and Innovation in the Faculty of Medicine, for an initial period of three years, with effect from 1st January 2022.

(ii) 21st December 2021 - Approval of the following changes recommended by AQSC:

Progression, Determination and Classification of Results:

Undergraduate and Integrated Masters Programmes

1. Recommendations for in-year changes to the Progression, Determination and Classification of Results: Undergraduate and Integrated Masters Programmes to manage the recently identified inconsistency in interpretation and practice when considering compensation. It had been identified that the current Regulations were not clear regarding passing by compensation for students where the average mark for the Part is higher than the University standard Average Mark for the Part (40).

UG Programme Regulations – School of Engineering

2. Subject to the approval of recommendation 1 above, this would prompt urgent amendment of the progression requirements for integrated masters students on UG Engineering Programmes. The amendment would require students to achieve a Part average of 58% in parts II and III of the programme (as opposed to only part III) so bringing the decision made by the Board of Examiners in line with the existing harmonised classification scheme.

Programme Regulations for the iPhD in Defence, Security and Mobility

3. New Programme Regulations for a new iPhD in Defence, Security and Mobility programme, which although there are no students on this programme in 2021-22, the School has requested that these be made available immediately.

(iii) 31st Jan 2022 – Endorsement of appointment of Professor Mark Sullivan as Head of School of Physics and Astronomy with in the Faculty of Physical Sciences and Engineering, for a further period of 1.5 years, with effect from 1st February 2022.

**33 Conferring Emeritus Title**

Senate considered a report by the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine which set out a revised process for conferring Emeritus titles upon retirement, acknowledging those who have made a significant contribution to the University, based on a set of criteria.

These process revisions were designed to ensure consistency and fairness in the conferment of Emeritus titles, addressing unconscious bias and the under-representation of women and ethnic minorities in this cohort. The proposals also reduced the administrative burden on nominators and nominees: in lieu of a nomination form, Faculties would be notified twice a year of staff prima facie eligible for Emeritus Professor titles and required to validate or justify a rejection. The current nomination process would remain for the conferment of the Emeritus Fellow titles, as well as all stages of ratification.

**RESOLVED** that the proposals set out in the report be approved.

**34 Academic Promotions and In-level Transfer**

Senate considered a report which set out level 6 promotions and proposed in-level transfers. The confidentiality of the report was clarified to Senate and that it should be kept confidential until Council approval had been agreed.

**RESOLVED** that the promotions and in-levels transfers be endorsed for onward submission to Council.

**35 Modernising Governance - Update**

Senate noted a report by the Vice-President (Operations) which provided an update on the Modernising Governance project.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**The meeting concluded at 5.20pm**