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Minutes

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| **Meeting title:** | Senate | | |
| **Date:** | Wednesday 21st October 2020 | **Time:** | 2.15pm |
| **Location:** | Via Microsoft Teams | | |
| **Present:** | President & Vice-Chancellor  Vice-President (Education)  Vice-President (Research & Enterprise)  Chief Operating Officer  Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences  Dean of the Faculty of Environmental and Life Sciences  Dean of the Faculty of Medicine  Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences  Librarian  Chief Information Officer  Academic Registrar  Director of Research & Innovation Services  Executive Director of Student Experience  Director of the Doctoral College  President of the Students’ Union  Dr N Alwan, Ms L Barnes, Professor Y Baruch, Professor J Batchelor, Mrs A Bragg-Mollison, Professor J Brodzki, Professor R Carare, Mr R Cartwright, Dr V Cardo, Ms A Chidume, Ms N Clarkson, Professor S Darby, Professor L Dominguez, Dr A Dunn, Ms S Fielding, Dr S Ganapathy, Dr J Gates, Professor S Gourvenec, Dr P Greulich, Dr I Haigh, Dr A Harrison, Professor J Holloway, Professor A Kanaras, Dr E Kitson-Reynolds, Dr J Kreppner, Professor J Langley, Mr D Lurcock, Professor B Lwaleed, Mr P Matthias, Dr K Morgan, Dr S Morton, Professor Niranjan, Dr A O’Bannon, Professor V O’Connor, Professor F Pierron, Professor P Reed, Dr S Roth, Professor M C Schraefel, Dr B Stuart, Dr K Vithana, Dr C Voutsina, Mr S Wakeling, Professor K Walker-Bone, Ms L Watson, Dr G Wheway, Dr E Wilkinson, Dr S Wilks | | |
| **In attendance** | Mr L Abraham - Clerk to the University Council and Senate | | |

**Welcome and Introduction**

The President & Vice-Chancellor welcomed all colleagues to the newly constituted Senate. He indicated that he looked forward to working with Senators to ensure a successful future for the University.

1 **Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 17th June 2020 be agreed as a correct record and signed.

**2 Actions and Matters Arising**

The Academic Registrar updated Senate on the action to bring a report detailing the diversity breakdown of the recent Senate elections. It was noted that the report would be compiled and presented at the February 2021 Senate.

3 **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 2020/21. An amendment to Standing Orders removing the “restricted items” facility was noted. Other minor changes to titles and text were noted.

RESOLVED that the changes be approved and documents be noted.

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

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

The President & Vice-Chancellor highlighted the following:

* Executive and university action as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic
* Recognised the very considerable effort to get ready for summer examinations season which included having to amend regulations. The tremendous effort of staff and their cooperation was acknowledged, especially given that for many it was under difficult circumstances for a range of reasons.
* The campus was now largely covid secure and buildings were opening for scaled back face to face teaching
* Continuing effort to support students living in university accommodation
* Recognised the efforts of all staff continuing to work from home, many in less than ideal circumstances
* The good financial position the University had created through the year due to immediate and prudent action taken by all staff
* The national A-Level situation over the summer months
* The continuation rates at the university so far in the autumn term
* The University was experiencing at this point some of the lowest levels of covid infections in the sector, whilst recognising this could change quickly
* The success of the blended teaching approach which generally had been very well received by students
* The Bridging Strategy developed by the executive and approved by Council and the positive reception this had received so far
* The great success by university colleagues in the recent Queen’s Birthday Honours
* The success of the covid testing programme run with University assistance
* The move to develop the testing to focus on staff and students who attend campus

In response to queries it was noted that the impact of the cost savings on education and research provision, IT provision for PGR students and the possibility of restarting promotions process were all being closely monitored.

**RESOLVED** that the update be noted.

5 **Students’ Union Report**

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

Senate noted the following:

* Efforts around the Welcome Week for new students
* The implementation of a new “buddy” system for new students which was regarded as more important than ever during the pandemic
* Work to encourage all students to get a covid test and to increase the testing numbers from 65% to a target of 80%
* Events around campus such as Black History Month

In response to a query it was noted that should students, particularly international students, need to quarantine in University accommodation over the Christmas break, both the University and SUSU had plans in place to provide quality support. It was further noted that ambassadors were on campus offering help and guidance on covid-secure measures in order to keep students safe as they moved around campus.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

6 **Senate Question Time**

One Senate member asked a question as follows:

*Q: Southampton has just announced an application fee for MSc programmes. Imperial College London announced this some time back, and it has lead to a lot of negative press and a call by many academics to remove this fee based on the grounds of equality, diversity and inclusion. What was our motivation for introducing this fee? Could the money from this fee be set aside to provide scholarships to promotor greater diversity (e.g. black lives matter) and inclusion (students from deprived areas)?*

A: Thank you for your question. In recent years there has been a significant rise in applications for PGT programmes. This rise has equated to a 30% increase in 2018/19 alone. It is clear that many are speculative applications that nonetheless require review and consideration by the University. The fee is in part intended to cut down the amount of speculative applications that are submitted. We have been working on developing processes to allow for exceptions. There has been no firm decision yet on how the funds raised will be used and the question has put forward some interesting suggestions that will be considered. The University will be keeping this policy under close review and monitoring the effects it may have on applications, particularly in light of our new Access and Participation Plan commitments. Monitoring will also include keeping a close watch on other institutions and any actions they may be taking in this area.

Senate noted the answer.

7 **Annual Academic Assurance**

Senate considered a report by the Academic Registrar 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 2019-20 academic year. It was written to inform Council of the University’s actions in this area. In previous years it allowed Council to sign the Annual Assurance Statements to the Office for Students.

**RESOLVED** that the report be endorsed.

8 **Delivering Education Update – 2020-21**

Senate considered a report by the Vice-President (Education). The plan for this academic year was to provide teaching and support for students that was as broadly equivalent as possible to the provision in a ‘normal’ year. To this end, guided by expert advice regarding how to keep our community safe, and keeping a close focus on the quality of the experience of our students, we have prepared as much face to face in-person teaching and other activity on our campuses as we safely can, and have combined this with online education as well as online social and support activity.

The report guided Senate on various aspects of the education delivery, focussing on (a) undergraduate education, and (b) education as opposed to broader student social and extra-curricular activity. It presented a snapshot based on where we are now: we are in a rapidly evolving landscape, and the snapshot presented here would evolve further over the next weeks and months.

It was noted in particular that examinations would be minimal. AQSC would monitoring this closely and carrying out all due diligence to ensure that assessment was fit for purpose and would not damage the credibility of any award made by the University.

Professional Bodies had set standards in some areas and this was understood. It was noted that any new standards set should be reasonable and flexible to allow for adjustments in teaching and assessment during the pandemic. The Secretary of State had offered support to the sector in this regard if any particularly Professional Body was not cooperating.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

9 **APAG Terms of Reference**

Senate considered a report by the President & Vice-Chancellor which set out changes made to the membership of the Academic Promotions Advisory Group (APAG). The changes ensured a broader and more consistent representation on APAG from each of the University’s five faculties.

Thanks were expressed to those who had assisted with APAG in the past.

**RESOLVED** that the amendments to the membership of APAG and the faculty representatives who will now sit on APAG be noted.

10 **Report from the Doctoral College Board**

Senate considered a report by the Director of the Doctoral College which set out activity within the Doctoral College since the last update in June.

With regard to PGT students it was noted that help was offered to those regarding information about funding extensions, using the campus safely by staggering their use of facilities, offering training and induction as appropriate. Where face to face interviews were required as part of research projects, there was much emphasis on encouraging the use of video calling to engage with participants, whilst recognising that not all participants would have access to the necessary IT equipment. It was reiterated that safety should come first at this current time and that both UKRI and National Centre for Research Methods offered much information on data collection during the pandemic, useful advice and guidance.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

Dr V. Cardo left the meeting for consideration of the next item.

11 **Senate Nominating Committee**

Senate considered a report by the Chair of the Senate Nominating Committee which set out the recent activity to put forward a preferred candidate to be appointed to the vacant Senate position on Council.

The Chair of the Nominating Committee presented the report outlining the process followed and the deliberations of the Committee on the six applications that had been received. The unanimous view of the Committee was that Dr Valentina Cardo be recommended to Senate for appointment to Council.

**RESOLVED** that Dr Valentina Cardo be appointed to Council from 21 October 2020 until 31 July 2023.

12 **Chair’s Actions**

The following chair’s actions were noted:

1. 6 July 2020 – Amendments to Regulations:

Section IV: General Information and Regulations

Temporary Regulations: Progression, Determination and Classification of Results: Undergraduate and Integrated Masters Programmes

Temporary Regulations: Progression, Determination and Classification of Results: Postgraduate Master’s Programmes

Section VI: Academic Regulations

New Regulations:

Definitions applying to UG Harbin programmes

Regulations applying to UG Harbin programmes

Amendments to Existing Regulations:

Regulations for Masters programmes in the School of Education

Regulations for Undergraduate programmes in the School of Chemistry

Regulations for Engineering undergraduate programmes to add Harbin programmes

(ii) 10 July 2020 – Posthumous Award – Daniel Colmer BEng

(iii) 14 July 2020 - Revised Term and Semester dates for 2020/21

(iv) 29 July 2020 – Regulations Amendments

Section IV: General Information and Regulations

• Enrolment Declaration

• Examination Policy for Disabled and Dyslexic Students

• Regulations Governing Students Sponsored by the University under Tier 4 of the Points Based System

• Fees, Charges and Expenses

• Regulations and Definitions Applying to Progression, Determination and Classification of Results for all Pre-sessional Programmes

Section V: Regulations for Research Degrees and Higher Doctorates

• Regulations for Research Degrees

• Regulations for Members of Staff in Candidature for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

• Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidature and Supervision

• Guidance for Examiners of Postgraduate Research Awards (sections 8, 9 and 10)

Section VI: Academic Regulations

• iPhD Clinical and Health Research

• Doctorate in Clinical Practice

(v) 30 July 2020 – Various Regulations Changes:

Fees, Charges and Expenses

Student Non-academic Misconduct Committee

Affiliated & Accredited Institutions

Fitness to Practice Regulations

(vi) 31 July 2020 – Regulations for Health Sciences Programmes – Amendments

(vii) 21 September 2020 - Professor Brenda Hannigan – Interim Head of School (Law)

13 **Emeritus Professors and Fellows**

Senate considered a report by the President & Vice-Chancellor which set out for endorsement a list of those recommended to Council for conferment of the title of Emeritus Professor or Fellow.

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

The Chair then sought approval from Senate that a late item be added to the agenda and considered. Senate agreed.

14 **Level 7 Promotions**

Senate considered a report by the President and Vice-Chancellor which set out for endorsement a list of those recommended to Council for the 2019/2020 Level 7 ERE promotion round.

The lack of female promotions was noted and raised as an issue by Senate. Firstly, questions were raised as to whether it was a lack of successful female candidates or that the criteria and promotions process were not sufficiently inclusive. It was clear that data on stage 1 applications was required against successes to assess the situation. If there were any barriers to female applications, these needed to be exposed and removed. It was suggested that there should be close monitoring of the career pathway for females within the University and support and mentoring offered to all who expressed interest together with a clear statement of how future leadership of the University should be positioned. It was suggested that those females who had progressed through the promotions system should be consulted for their views as to how the process can be improved and if barriers exist at any stage, how they can be removed. **ACTION: Executive Director of HR**

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

15 **Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 10th February 2021

**The meeting concluded at 4.16pm**