



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
NEW UNIVERSITY
EST. 1891

Minutes for Senate

Open Minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2022 in G5.05 on the High Wycombe campus and on Microsoft Teams.

Present:

Professor Nick Braisby (Vice-Chancellor [Chair]);
Ms Ellie Smith (University Secretary and Clerk to Council);
Mr Ian Harper (Commercial and Business Development Director);
Professor Paul Morgan (Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience));
Ms Emma Binnie (Dean of Students);
Professor Florin Ioras (Director of Enterprise and Research);
Ms Miriam Moir (Academic Registrar)
Professor Sri-Kartini Leet (Head of School Art, Design and Performance);
Dr Ricardo Khine (Head of School Health Care and Social Work);
Mr Paul Maloret (Joint Interim Head of School Nursing Midwifery and Allied Health);
Dr Ciaran O'Keeffe (Head of School Human and Social Sciences);
Musa Mihsein (Head of School Aviation and Security);
Professor Karen Buckwell-Nutt (Director of Institute of Health and Social Care);
Ms Kirsteen Coupar (Interim Director of Student Success);
Ms Honor Fletcher (President of the Students' Union);
Ms Natasha Neal (Students' Union Vice-President Education and Welfare);
Dr Sainey Faye (Nominated representative, University Partnerships Board);
Dr Dearbhla Gallagher (Elected representative, Human & Social Sciences);
Dr Fiona McCormack (Nominated representative, Professoriate);
Ms Hilary Mullen (Elected representative, Creative and Digital Industries);
Ms Louisa Berry (Elected representative, Aviation & Security);
Ms Brigitte Stockton (Elected representative, Art, Design & Performance);
Professor David Warnock-Smith (Nominated representative, Research and Enterprise Committee)

In attendance:

Dr Emma Tomsett (Secretary)
Dr Kevin Maher (Associate Head of School Creative and Digital Industries)

Welcome / Apologies for Absence

22.59 The Chair, Vice-Chancellor Professor Nick Braisby, welcomed members to the meeting and noted four apologies:

- Pro Vice-Chancellor Education and Digital Professor Rachel Cragg
- Head of School Creative and Digital Industries Dr Russel Stone
- Joint Interim Head of School Nursing, Midwifery & Allied Health Ms Margaret Rioga
- Mr Ian Chisholm-Bunting (Elected representative, Nursing, Midwifery & Allied Health)

Declaration of conflicts of interest

22.60 There were no declarations of conflicts of interest.

Minutes of the previous meeting

22.61 The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record.

Matters Arising / Status of actions

22.62 Senate noted the updates to the actions as outlined on the action sheet.

22.63 The Secretary confirmed that a verbal update would be given during the meeting on action 22.30 It was agreed that the University Secretary should provide further clarification on point 7 of the Operational Procedure where it states that 'a member of UET may permit an event to proceed at short notice, even though these procedures may not have been completed, if they are satisfied that the University is able to comply with its legal duty'. The Secretary will update the action sheet.

Action: Dr Emma Tomsett

Chair's Action

22.64 Senate noted the chair's action dated 24 March 2022 approving the University's updated Admissions Policy.

Chair's Report

22.65 Senate received a verbal report from the Chair.

Thrive 28

22.66 The Chair advised Senate that there had been positive engagement with the consultation process, and comments on, the University's new strategy, Thrive 28.

22.67 Additional comments on the strategy were still welcome and could be emailed directly to the Chair.

22.68 The Chair thanked all staff for their participation, which had made the strategy stronger. Council will consider the strategy for final approval at its meeting in July.

Chancellor

22.69 The Chair had been delighted with the response to the appointment of Mr Jay Blades MBE as the University's first Chancellor. Mr Blades is an alumnus who is passionate about arts and crafts and is committed to High Wycombe as a centre for furniture design and production. Senate was advised that Mr Blades wishes to establish a long-lasting legacy for the University through his appointment.

REF 2021

22.70 The Chair noted the positive results from the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 that reflected the endeavour of the past seven years to improve BNU's outputs, their impact and the research environment. The University's profile had improved with 44% of its research judged to be of world-leading or internationally excellent quality.

22.71 The Chair thanked Director of Enterprise and Research Professor Florin Ioras, Research Development Unit Manager Dr Melanie Nakisa, staff at BNU who had undertaken research, and those who had written and reviewed impact case studies for their hard work.

22.72 The University is awaiting the impact of the results on its league-table position.

High Wycombe Estates Development

22.73 The Chair assured Senate that the High Wycombe estates development was proceeding on time and on budget.

22.74 Work is ongoing to get the main construction contract signed.

22.75 Council members have oversight of the project as it is overseen by a sub-committee of the Council-led Resources Committee.

Office for Students Capital Bids

22.76 The Office for Students (OfS) had recently announced that providers must submit their capital bids for the next three years in six weeks. BNU can bid for a maximum of £6,000,000 and it can only be used for high-cost subjects such as Engineering and Computing.

22.77 The Chair anticipated that if the University's bid was unsuccessful it would not get any more capital from the OfS for three years.

22.78 The Chair has established a team to work on the bid.

UKVI Student Route Compliance Inspection

22.79 The Chair advised Senate that University Secretary and Clerk to Council Ms Ellie Smith was leading a cross-institutional group to correct any areas of compliance that the University feels are not right. The Chair thanked Ms Smith for her work.

22.80 The University had not received the outcome of the inspection, but United Kingdom Visas and Immigration (UKVI) had recently requested more information. This suggested that the UKVI was not currently intending to apply a sanction, and the University was working hard to provide the additional information.

Matters for Approval / Discussion

Degree classification algorithm

22.81 The Academic Registrar, Ms Miriam Moir, presented a report on the ongoing work on the degree classification algorithm for Senate to partly note and partly to consider.

22.82 The report detailed the response to a student survey regarding the proposed change to the algorithm through the introduction of a discounting mechanism and draft changes to the Academic Assessment Regulations to enable the change to be implemented.

22.83 Senate's attention was drawn to the following points:

- 12,000 students at BNU and its partners had been surveyed on whether they agreed with the discounting mechanism and had any other concerns about the change.
- 77% of those who responded supported the change
- the main reason given by those who were not supportive of the change was that they did not understand it
- Academic Registry was now undertaking work to help students better understand the degree classification algorithm
- The main changes to the Academic Assessment Regulations were in paragraphs 9-11 and 16 of the Regulations.
- Strategic Planning and Change have provided a spreadsheet for Academic Registry to use to test the new algorithm.

22.84 Senate agreed that the results of the survey meant work on changing the algorithm could continue.

22.85 Senate congratulated Academic Registry on this work, which will benefit students and bring the University into greater parity with the sector.

22.86 The outgoing President of the Students' Union (SU), Ms Honor Fletcher, and the outgoing SU Vice-President Education and Welfare, Ms Natasha Neal, reiterated the SU's support for the change.

22.87 Senate suggested various methods by which students could be helped to understand the algorithm, including:

- worked examples on the University's website
- a website video explaining the mechanism
- the introduction of an online calculator, although it was noted that this was complex and would require caveats.

22.88 The final version of the updated Academic Assessment Regulations would be considered by Senate in September.

22.89 The Research and Enterprise Committee representative Professor David Warnock-Smith queried whether the Regulations had any scope for statements of exception where necessary, for example where a classification was calculated on a 20%/80% weighting.

22.90 The Academic Registrar advised that exceptions were normally stated in programme specifications rather than the Academic Assessment Regulations, and that as the algorithm is being developed outside the student records system consideration would need to be made about how any exceptions are achieved, but Ms Moir will give further consideration to whether a statement of exceptions is needed in the Regulations.

Action: Ms Miriam Moir / Academic Registry

UKVI Student Route Compliance Inspection: Update

22.91 Senate received a report from the University Secretary and Clerk to Council Ms Smith on ongoing work following the UKVI inspection. Senate's attention was particularly drawn to the following:

- the report's action plan, which summarised the ongoing work to implement processes to ensure the University is fully compliant with UKVI requirements
- the University had ceased working with MKNCC and would be taking a decision on terminating the relationship shortly
- ongoing work to review the Attendance Monitoring System (AMS), which was only as good as the data inputted so it was essential that academic staff used the system correctly
- the introduction of a University Panel to review all recommendations to withdraw International students to ensure every effort had been made to re-engage a student, as withdrawing a student had an impact on the University's Basic Compliance Assessment (BCA)
- consideration regarding the organisation of International work across the institution as it was currently accommodated almost entirely within the Marketing and Student Recruitment (MSR) directorate
- full process guides and training were being developed as part of long-term planning around international recruitment; general training would be provided to all staff, with specialist training for those teams who worked directly with International students

- ongoing work to make the BNU website a full source of information for International students.

22.92 Senate was assured that, following the submission of the most recent BCA, the University believed it was compliant with the three key metrics/thresholds, although the UKVI would also perform its own calculation.

22.93 The University had received a request from UKVI for additional information that must be submitted by 15 June and was working with legal firm Penningtons on this request.

22.94 The University was currently planning its application for its next year's Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) allocation.

22.95 BNU may request a smaller number of CAS this year to reflect awareness that its International student numbers had grown rapidly, and that it wishes to concentrate on refining its processes and supporting its current International students, but this was still to be agreed by the University Executive Team (UET).

22.96 Senate welcomed the work that was underway, and particularly the plan for staff training.

22.97 It was noted that Schools are planning teaching and timetabling for 2022-2023 and that an indication of what the University is planning for International recruitment would be helpful. It was agreed that the University Secretary will consider some guidance for Schools.

Action: Ms Ellie Smith

22.98 It was noted that Tableau showed a large number of applications for 2022-2023 for some courses from International students. Staff could contact MSR for information about past conversion rates if they wish to get an initial indication of how many of those applicants may enrol at BNU.

Chancellor: Plans for Investiture

22.99 Senate noted a report outlining initial plans for the University's first Chancellor. The University Secretary drew Senate's attention to the following points:

- Mr Blade's investiture would be on 9 September and all staff were encouraged to be on campus as it would be a day of celebration
- Senate was encouraged to submit ideas to Ms Smith on how BNU can best draw on Mr Blades' expertise, without overcommitting him
- Mr Blades was coming onto campus shortly to record some short video clips on Clearing and to promote BNU surveys

22.100 A Chancellor's Day is being planned, which could include such events as a masterclass from Mr Blades; inviting staff, students and local schools onto campus to meet him; and a dinner with local High Wycombe VIPs with a ballot for some students to attend.

22.101 Mr Blades' appointment offered an excellent opportunity to restore furniture design and production to the heart of High Wycombe.

22.102 Senate also acknowledged the excellent support given to Mr Blades by the Criminology team, and particularly Senior Lecturer Anne Chappell, when he was a student on the Criminology programme.

Freedom of Speech Policy and Procedures - update

22.103 The University Secretary informed Senate that the Higher Education Freedom of Speech Act is now back on the Parliamentary agenda so the BNU policy and procedures are being reconsidered in the context of the Bill.

Library Collection Management Policy

22.104 The Interim Director for Student Success, Ms Kirsteen Coupar, advised Senate that the new policy was an attempt to simplify and update an existing policy so that BNU could more easily meet student needs.

22.105 The Equality Impact Assessment indicated there was no negative impact on students.

22.106 The Chair noted that the main changes appeared to be removing items that did not belong in the policy.

22.107 Director of Enterprise and Research Professor Ioras requested that the Research team were informed of any items removed from the library. Ms Coupar confirmed she will ensure the Research Development Unit is included in discussions with Academic Liaison Librarians regarding changes to the library collection.

22.108 The policy had been recommended to Senate for approval by Education Committee on 11 May.

22.109 Senate approved the policy for immediate use.

Maintaining Academic Confidentiality Policy

22.110 The Interim Director for Student Success advised Senate that the changes Senate had requested to paragraph 16 and the context of the policy at its meeting in March 2022 had been made.

22.111 The policy set standards and expectations of staff and students regarding maintaining academic confidentiality. It replaced the Confidentiality Policy (Society and Health) from 2016 which was for the former Faculty of Society and Health and had a very narrow focus.

22.112 Senate agreed that the new iteration of the policy was much clearer and will help all staff and students with their understanding of confidentiality and what they need to do to maintain it.

22.113 The Chair noted this showed the effectiveness of the committee structure: a committee had raised legitimate concerns which had been successfully addressed.

22.114 The policy in its revised form had been recommended to Senate for approval by Education Committee on 11 May.

22.115 Senate approved the policy for immediate use.

Degree Outcome Statement

22.116 The Academic Registrar advised Senate that the Statement contained data on degree outcomes for all students over the past five years.

22.117 Wording had been updated in some areas and reference had also been made to the University's work on academic integrity, including noting that BNU had signed up to the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Academic Integrity Charter for Higher Education.

22.118 A brief reference had also been added regarding the initial work on updating the degree classification algorithm.

22.119 It was noted that there had been a slight overall decline in the numbers of good honours degrees (firsts and upper seconds) awarded over the past two years, which it was believed was partly due to the revised No Detriment Policy being less advantageous in its second year. It was noted that use of the alternative Overall Weighted Average algorithm for awards students had been extended into 2021-2022.

22.120 It was noted that the lower attainment of good honours awards by students at partner institutions had also negatively impacted the institutional position. This would be discussed at University Partnerships Board and actions identified on how to improve attainment at partner institutions.

22.121 The Chair noted that the wording of the third paragraph on the second page of the statement needed reviewing as the reference to changing the degree algorithm suggested that BNU actually did not believe it "compares very favourably to the sector".

22.122 The Chair thanked Ms Moir for a very clear paper.

22.123 Senate recommended the Degree Outcome Statement to Council for approval.

TEF 2022: Plan for Submission

22.124 Senate considered a report on the University's plan for its submission for TEF 2022. The Chair advised Senate that the outcome of the OfS consultation on the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) was due in the autumn, but that the submission date for providers had now been delayed to 2023.

22.125 Senate's attention was drawn to the following changes to the TEF proposed in the consultation:

- the focus would now be on attainment above the baseline
- the introduction of a 'Requires Improvement' outcome
- the introduction of a student submission alongside the provider submission
- it would be a provider-level submission but it would consider aspects of subject-level provision.

22.126 The University argued in its response to the consultation that as the outcomes of the B3 Conditions of Registration established that a provider met all baselines, there was no basis for a 'Requires Improvement' outcome.

22.127 The University also expressed concern about the use of statistical comparisons without adjustment for confidence intervals, which it argued was statistically invalid.

22.128 Initial analysis suggested that the University might not achieve a Gold award. The University was aiming for an outcome of Silver and would expect to avoid Bronze.

22.129 The TEF would also consider indicators based on aspects of the NSS and the B3 Condition of Registration metrics. The report contained early analysis of BNU's strengths and weaknesses and how each School currently performed against the B3 metrics. Areas of weakness for BNU could be student voice and learning resources.

22.130 The TEF Working Group was meeting regularly and would be asking Schools and Directorates for examples of excellence as the focus of the BNU submission would be on where the University went above and beyond.

22.131 Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience) Professor Paul Morgan advised Senate that BNU is looking closely at learning resources. The approach being taken was that where an issue was identified, prompt action was required. Work was underway to improve communication and better co-operation between Schools and Directorates as often what initially appeared to be a learning resources issue transpired to be a communication issue. It was noted that the University also planned to share feedback raised by students at programme committee meetings more widely.

22.132 The Chair noted that few capital bids that address student satisfaction issues are received during the capital planning rounds. While the University could be financially reckless, colleagues were encouraged to bring proposals forward if they believed more learning resources were needed.

Antigypsyism Definition

22.133 The Chair noted that consideration of the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA)'s definition of antigypsyism aligned with the University's adoption of the IHRA definition of antisemitism in 2020 and its launch of the GTRSB (Gypsy, Traveller, Roma, Showmen, Boater) Into Higher Education Pledge in 2021.

22.134 Senate unanimously welcomed and approved the University's adoption of the IHRA definition of antigypsyism:

“Antigypsyism/anti-Roma discrimination is a manifestation of individual expressions and acts as well as institutional policies and practices of marginalization, exclusion, physical violence, devaluation of Roma cultures and lifestyles, and hate speech directed at Roma as well as other individuals and groups perceived, stigmatized, or persecuted during the Nazi era, and still today, as “Gypsies.” This leads to the treatment of Roma as an alleged alien group and associates them with a series of pejorative stereotypes and distorted images that represent a specific form of racism. To guide the IHRA in its work, the following is being recognized:

Antigypsyism/anti-Roma discrimination has existed for centuries. It was an essential element in the persecution and annihilation policies against Roma as perpetrated by Nazi Germany, and those fascist and extreme nationalist partners and other collaborators who participated in these crimes.

Antigypsyism/anti-Roma discrimination did not start with or end after the Nazi era but continues to be a central element in crimes perpetrated against Roma. In spite of the important work done by the United Nations, the European Union, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and other international bodies, the stereotypes and prejudices about Roma have not been delegitimized or discredited vigorously enough so that they continue to persist and can be deployed largely unchallenged.

Antigypsyism/anti-Roma discrimination is a multi-faceted phenomenon that has widespread social and political acceptance. It is a critical obstacle to the inclusion of Roma in broader society, and it acts to prevent Roma from enjoying equal rights, opportunities, and gainful social-economic participation.

Many examples may be given to illustrate antigypsyism/anti-Roma discrimination. Contemporary manifestations of antigypsyism/anti-Roma discrimination could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Distorting or denying persecution of Roma or the genocide of the Roma.
- Glorifying the genocide of the Roma.
- Inciting, justifying, and perpetrating violence against Roma communities, their property, and individual Roma.
- Forced and coercive sterilizations as well as other physically and psychologically abusive treatment of Roma.
- Perpetuating and affirming discriminatory stereotypes of and against Roma.
- Blaming Roma, using hate speech, for real or perceived social, political, cultural, economic and public health problems.
- Stereotyping Roma as persons who engage in criminal behavior.
- Using the term “Gypsy” as a slur.
- Approving or encouraging exclusionary mechanisms directed against Roma on the basis of racially discriminatory assumptions, such as the exclusion from regular schools and institutional procedures or policies that lead to the segregation of Roma communities.

- Enacting policies without legal basis or establishing the conditions that allow for the arbitrary or discriminatory displacement of Roma communities and individuals.
- Holding Roma collectively responsible for the real or perceived actions of individual members of Roma communities.
- Spreading hate speech against Roma communities in whatever form, for example in media, including on the internet and on social networks.

The use of the national equivalent of the term is recommended, Canada and the United States use the term anti-Roma racism” (IHRA, 2020).

22.135 The Chair expressed his pleasure at the decision and noted that the definition now needed to be embedded in other policies as the definition of antisemitism had been.

Matters to note

Calendar of Committees 2022-2023

- 22.136 Senate noted the calendar of deliberative committee meetings for 2022-2023.
- 22.137 Senate discussed whether meetings should return to fully in-person meetings only, be hybrid only or be a mixture of in-person and hybrid. It was noted that hybrid meetings are inclusive.
- 22.138 It was agreed that the University Secretariat cross-check the dynamic working policy to see if any particular aspect of this policy needed to be considered in relation to the attendance arrangements for these meetings.

Action: Senior Committees Officer Dr Emma Tomsett

22.139 Senate recommended that there should be no return to fully in-person meetings only. It recommended that each committee should have one in-person only meeting during the year, with the remainder of the meetings being hybrid.

Office of Independent Adjudicator Annual Statement

- 22.140 Senate noted the Office of Independent Adjudicator (OIA) Annual Statement 2021.
- 22.141 The Academic Registrar informed Senate that no analysis of the statement had yet been done as this would be undertaken as part of annual monitoring for 2021-2022 in the 22-23 autumn term.
- 22.142 It was noted that there had been an increase in the number of complaints from BNU students received by the OIA, which was partly due to the large and complex CMS complaints.
- 22.143 Many of the complaints related to service issues, and a theme regarding programme resilience had also emerged.

22.144 The Chair noted that BNU appeared to be out of kilter with the Band E median. This was again largely due to the two very large CMS complaints.

22.145 It was agreed that Academic Registry would analyse the OIA Annual Statement results with the CMS complaints discounted against the Band E median.

Action: Academic Registry / Ms Miriam Moir

22.146 The Statement will be presented to Council at its next meeting.

Ofsted Preparation

22.147 Senate considered a report on preparation for an Ofsted inspection. Commercial and Business Development Director Mr Ian Harper assured Senate that the University's preparations were in a much improved position compared to 12 months ago.

22.148 Senate's attention was drawn to the following points:

- Ofsted would only give 48 hours' notice of an inspection and it remains possible that an inspection could be imminent. Ofsted would probably inspect the University's largest, best (in BNU's view) and weakest programme(s)
- the University's degree apprenticeship offering had grown very quickly to approximately 1,000 learners in 3.5 years
- all level 6 and 7 apprenticeship provision was under Ofsted's remit along with the Level 3 Diploma in Foundation Studies in Art, Design and Media
- the outcomes of an inspection were fairly binary: if a provider received a rating of 'Outstanding' or 'Good', apprenticeship work could continue as before and Ofsted would not carry out an inspection again for several years; if a provider received a rating of 'Requires Improvement' or 'Inadequate', Ofsted would place a freeze on recruitment and had the power to transfer learners to another institution.

22.149 The University completed an annual Self-Assessment Report (SAR) which offered an honest assessment of BNU's apprenticeships provision. The most recent SAR graded our provision as 'Good'.

22.150 The University also maintained its Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), which identifies 39 RAG-rated actions BNU could take to improve its programmes. Twenty-six of these were currently rated Green and 13 were Amber. None were Red.

22.151 Substantial improvements had been made in the recent QIP cycle including:

- Good use of learner and employer feedback
- Safeguarding and Prevent integrated into the curricula
- Observations of learning to check the learners' experience had occurred
- Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSBs) were integrated into the curriculum, clearly identifiable in lesson plans and evident in tri-partite reviews.

22.152 Senate was advised that more work needed to be undertaken to improve areas including:

- updating of Programme Handbooks
- pre-programme information, advice and guidance
- assessment regimes needed to be clearer
- curriculum design needed to take account of employer and learner feedback
- learners' English and Maths must be developed and improved throughout their programmes.

22.153 Senate held a robust discussion of the report. It noted that where QIP actions were rated amber, there was a pattern of inconsistency across the University: all staff must follow their role descriptors and fulfil their job descriptions, and again must undertake attendance monitoring.

22.154 Senate was advised that safeguarding across the University was being reviewed by a safeguarding consultant who had Ofsted experience. The Director of Interim Success would ensure the consultant spoke to the Apprenticeship Hub.

22.155 The Chair was highly concerned about the actions that remained amber, and particularly that some updated Programme Handbooks had still not been received when the original deadline was December 2021.

22.156 Aviation and Security Teaching Representative Ms Louisa Berry offered to share her checklist for updating handbooks with the Apprenticeship Hub to support colleagues in completing this task.

22.157 University Partnerships Board representative Dr Sainey Faye queried what standard a Programme Handbook should be based on if a standard was being updated after a programme bid had been won.

22.158 Mr Harper advised there should always be a handbook for the standard that the learner signed up to as learners remained on that standard even if a new standard emerged.

22.159 Senate was advised that Human Resources still needed to link observation outcomes, staff appraisals and CPD.

22.160 The Chair noted that it may be necessary to bring the Apprenticeships Hub together with other parts of the University in a different way to ensure that amber actions were completed and became green.

OFS Tracker

22.161 Senate noted the latest OfS Ongoing Conditions Tracker which showed the University was currently compliant with all ongoing conditions of registration. The University Secretary advised Senate that the Tracker was reviewed on a monthly basis by UET.

22.162 The following key points were highlighted to Senate:

- the OfS had recently confirmed that all changes/suspension of guidance issued during the COVID-19 pandemic had now been rescinded
- BNU was required to submit a variation to its Access and Participation Plan (APP) for the 2023-2024 year by the end of July to make the APP more understandable/accessible to students and stakeholders; outline how BNU would partner with local schools; and address how BNU would create more routes into higher education through degree apprenticeships and flexible level 4/5 qualifications
- Regarding the B6 condition, work had already begun on the next TEF
- The new Conditions B7 and B8 that had come into force on 1 May 2022 did not apply to BNU as it was already a registered provider and so were not detailed on the Tracker
- the University was awaiting further guidance from the OfS about what its Student Protection Plan (C3 Condition) should contain, and would then update its current Plan
- the University had submitted its Financial Statements and remained compliant with the D Conditions
- the Student Return had been submitted to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) to remain compliant with the F4 Condition. The University had been informed that the 18/19 HESA Reconciliation Exercise had been closed
- the Education Committee had reviewed BNU's practice with regard to assessment of students' technical proficiency in English in response to the OfS report *Assessment practices in English higher education providers: Spelling, punctuation and grammar*.

22.163 Senate was also advised that BNU was required to report events to the OfS that could, in the judgement of the OfS, negatively affect the University's eligibility for registration with the OfS, compliance with their conditions of registration, eligibility for degree awarding powers or eligibility for the university title.

22.164 Senate noted the OfS Reportable Events Tracker as updated in March 2022 and the Reportable Events Procedure.

22.165 Senate was informed of the following events that were deemed not reportable to the OfS, but noted that a record of these decisions, and how they were reached, had to be kept in case the OfS performed an independent review and queried them:

- recent changes to UET
- changes to the 2021/2022 financial forecast
- suspension of the British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies accreditation.

22.166 The outcome of the UKVI inspection may need to be reported to the OfS dependent on what, if any, recommendations or actions they make..

22.167 The University Secretary reiterated that all BNU staff had a responsibility to help maintain OfS compliance. If any staff member had any concerns on any area, they should contact the University Secretary, UET or their line manager.

22.168 The Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor, reflecting on programme handbooks, assessment scrutiny and matrices, noted that if there was ongoing scholarly/skills work that the University needed to improve, this should also be flagged by colleagues.

University Secretariat

22.169 Senate noted the establishment of the new University Secretariat, which serviced Council and its standing committees as well as some of BNU's deliberative committees and managed the BNU Policies and Procedure Framework (its policies, regulations and related procedures). The Secretariat formed part of the University Secretary's Office.

22.170 The University Secretary noted the team was new and very small, but would evolve.

22.171 The Chair noted the support for deliberative committees and Council had been excellent so far and thanked the Senior Committees Officer Dr Emma Tomsett, Committees Officer Shilpa Manek and Ms Smith.

Reports to receive

22.172 The following items had been deemed starred items and would not be discussed at the meeting unless any member had raised an issue with any of the items in advance of the meeting.

*Council Report

22.173 No issues had been raised with the Secretary prior to the meeting so this item was not discussed.

*Academic Planning Committee

22.174 No issues had been raised with the Secretary prior to the meeting so this item was not discussed.

*Education Committee

22.175 No issues had been raised with the Secretary prior to the meeting so this item was not discussed.

*Research and Enterprise Committee

22.176 No issues had been raised with the Secretary prior to the meeting so this item was not discussed.

Matters for endorsement

External Examiner Approval Panel Report (June 2022)

22.177 The Academic Registrar presented the report of external examiner appointments made since the previous meeting of Senate, some of which had been approved by chair's action.

22.178 Heads of School were asked to note where external examiner roles were vacant and to ensure the Panel received nominations as soon as possible so that new examiners could be appointed quickly.

22.179 The University Secretary noted that two external examiners seemed to have resigned because of poor communication from BNU staff. The Academic Registrar believed this was partly due to the COVID-19 pandemic and changes to staff, but agreed this needed to be improved.

22.180 Senate endorsed the report.

Validation / Revalidation Report (June 2022)

22.181 The Academic Registrar advised Senate that the MSc Aviation Operations Management programme had now been withdrawn and would be taken through the Curriculum 23 programme with the agreement of Pro Vice-Chancellor Education and Digital Professor Rachel Cragg.

22.182 Senate endorsed the report.

Partnerships Report: franchised programmes 2021-2022

22.183 Senate noted that this was a new report that might require revision as the Academic Registrar advised that the report needed to show which BNU programmes had been franchised to other partners, but the Chair was pleased to receive the report.

22.184 Senate endorsed the report.

Date of next meeting

22.185 The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 21 September 2022.