

## Senate

### Minutes

**date:** Wednesday, 19 March 2014  
**time:** 1.30 p.m.  
**location:** G5.05, High Wycombe Campus

**14.01 Welcome / Apologies for absence**

Members were welcomed to the meeting by the Acting Chair. Apologies for Absence were noted separately.

The Acting Chair welcomed the two observers from the Students' Union following their successful election as Sabbatical Officers for 2014-2015. Senate offered its congratulations on their election.

**14.02 Minutes of the last meeting – 11 December 2013**

The minutes were approved as a true record.

**14.03 Matters Arising**  
(Action Sheet)

Actions were noted as per the status column on the Action Sheet. There were no further matters arising.

**14.04 Chair's Business**

[a] Chair's Actions  
(Paper SEN14.01)

The updated list of Chair's Actions were noted and formally endorsed.

[b] Vice Chancellor's Report to Senate  
(Paper SEN14.02)

The report was received. Attention was drawn to the following sections:

*2.3 QAA Advisory Committee on Degree Awarding Powers (ACDAP)*

AQD colleagues would be attending sector updates and be able to report on this in due course.

*2.4 Public Information*

Senate was advised that the University was currently undergoing an audit by HEFCE of its Key Information Set (KIS) submission. The audit would seek to ensure assurance on both data and the process involved, both of which would be needed for an overall judgement of assurance. AQD was co-ordinating the audit with HEFCE and was not aware of any issues with its processes. Some recommendations were anticipated, especially around the publication of Programme Specifications.

*3 Recent successes*

Further to the successes highlighted, it was noted that the Faculty of Society & Health had recently received an award of £200k for the development of its district nursing

provision.

The Faculty had also been approached by Imperial College to engage in a tri-partite relationship with Brunel University to form a Health Science Academy. A launch event was planned for 14 May 2014.

[c] Update on NSS Action Plan 2013-2014

The Acting Chair updated Senate. It was noted that the focus was on the overall completion rate for the current survey as to date only 57% of eligible students had participated which represented no change on the same stage in the previous survey. Accordingly the University was behind schedule to meet its overall target for participation with a number of courses below 50% completion. Overall, a further 350 students were needed to respond to the survey, although the NSS campaign group was also looking at specific areas to ensure publication thresholds were met. Events had been planned to publicise and raise awareness of the NSS, including a specific event on Tuesday 25 March.

**14.05 Report from QEC on Musical Theatre programmes at Amersham & Wycombe College**  
(Paper SEN14.03)

The Academic Dean (DMM) introduced the paper which related to an earlier paper considered by Senate to withdraw Musical Theatre provision at Amersham & Wycombe College unless certain conditions were met (Paper SEN13.21 and Minute 13.28 refers).

It was reported that a full review had been undertaken by QEC of the actions put in place by the College and noted that this was consistent with the outcome of a recent Collaborative Provision Review. QEC was recommending to Senate that the conditions had been met and that consequently students should continue to be admitted and enrolled on the programme. QEC was further recommending a review in January 2015 to ensure that progress continued to be made.

Senate approved both recommendations.

**14.06 University Research & Scholarship Strategy – Draft for Consultation**  
(Paper SEN14.04)

The Pro Vice Chancellor Learning and Teaching introduced the paper. Senate noted that the strategy related to 2015-2020 and was intentionally brief to focus on key goals to take forward. The strategy drew from the University's existing mission and vision and was intended to be interpreted at all levels of the University from individual staff performance development reviews to the overall University strategy.

Senate noted that RDAP was rightly identified as a key goal to be taken forward but suggested that a future REF submission in 2018 should also be specified. This will be considered although it was felt that REF could be exclusive as it involved a select group of researchers rather than the academic body as a whole. RDAP by contrast had set goals to involve a minimum of 50% of the academic population.

Other comments included:

- Making explicit the benefits of research on the student body. This was implied in goals 2 and 4 of the draft but could be strengthened.
- Building in Key Performance Indicators to measure implementation
- Including an explicit statement about the expectation of all teaching areas being research active, including a broadening of research to include scholarship – specifically retaining the existing appendix of RSKT activities which was considered to be useful.
- Reference to the capture and collation of data, e.g. an indication as to how the existing RASAD database would be developed.

It was noted that the draft will be presented for discussion at the Research Day on 20

March 2014. Afterwards it would need to be formally considered by Academic Faculty Management Teams to ensure that Faculty strategic plans could be aligned.

The final draft would be formally considered by Senate in June.

**14.07 Enhanced Student Experience Proposal**  
(Paper SEN14.05)

It was noted that the Resources Committee of Council had recently discussed the paper and would be recommending adoption for approval by a full meeting of Council.

It was noted that there were some outstanding actions relating to potential savings in the proposal, although it was confirmed that these would not affect the impact of the proposal. Savings related to updated expectations of sections of the proposal which had initially been overestimated. As a result of these savings it would be possible to reduce costs by £500k again without affecting the overall proposal itself.

Students' Union representatives welcomed the proposal and considered it to be very helpful and positive and would have a beneficial and positive impact for staff and students. It was noted that there needed to be a focus on communicating the benefits to students.

It was noted that the proposal seeks to improve student morale while focusing primarily on their academic development. As such the proposal linked with the research strategy and in particular provided funding for a series of annual research studentships. The proposal also supported the learning and teaching strategy through its promotion of employability and enterprise work.

Further work was needed to finalise the detail of the proposal, including additional course costs and precisely how these would be calculated and how specifically students would be supplied with their core texts. Further negotiation would take place on these specifics.

**14.08 Equality Statistics 2012-2013 – Brief for Senate**  
(Paper SEN14.06)

The paper was received following earlier consideration by the Equality & Diversity Committee.

It was noted that the University is working to develop an Information Hub which can store data and establish patterns which can help improve student achievement.

**14.09 Extensions to Validation Term: Musical Theatre courses at Amersham & Wycombe College**  
(Paper SEN14.16)

The Academic Dean (DMM) noted that this request follows on from minute 14.05. The Faculty was requesting an extension to the validated term of the FDA and BA (Hons) Musical Theatre courses at Amersham and Wycombe College to cover a September 2014 intake. The course would be presented for validation (subject to approval of a Business Case for revalidation) for a subsequent intake in September 2015.

It was noted that the College would be undertaking their Higher Education Review in 2014-2015 and validation should be sought prior to the HER itself. A business case should be presented by May 2014 to ensure the courses could be included on UCAS and the Unistats website.

The extension was approved.

**14.10 Extensions to Validation Term: FDA Animal Welfare and Behaviour and FDA Sports Coaching and Performance at Berkshire College of Agriculture**  
(Paper SEN14.07)

The Academic Dean (DMM) noted that the Faculty had received a request from the College to revalidate its Foundation Degrees, while wishing to develop top-up programmes. The Faculty wished to delay the revalidation by one year to allow the courses to be taken together as a strategic decision.

The extension was approved.

**14.11 Amendment: Fitness to Practise procedure**  
(Paper SEN14.08)

Further to recent panels held, AQD were proposing some changes to the Fitness to Practise Procedure as outlined in the paper.

Senate asked about recent incidences where students found themselves 'locked into' a fitness to practise/appeals 'cycle'. The Director of Academic Quality noted that this related to the previous process which had been rescinded. The current process needed to be reviewed to see how similar situations were resolved.

The amendments were approved.

It was noted that a meeting would be taking place in due course with health authority representatives to review the sanctions for a student deemed unfit to practise at the end of their final year as the sanctions listed could not currently be applied and this had led to the expulsion of students. The meeting would review whether additional sanctions could be applied and what the implications would be. As such the procedure would remain under review.

It was noted that the procedure can often be lengthy given students are seeking every opportunity available to save their chosen career. While a shorter process was beneficial, this might not be possible.

**14.12 External Examiner Update**  
(Paper SEN14.09)

The update was noted. In particular attention was drawn to the need for an appointment offer to be rescinded following a lack of acceptance and contact by the external examiner.

In terms of new nominations and extensions, Senate endorsed the 7 nominations and 3 extensions to remit approved under Chair's Action as noted in the report.

Senate also approved the following nominations following consideration and recommendation by the DMM Faculty Quality & Enhancement Committee:

- David Wheeler for BA (Hons) Film and TV Production for four years from 1 October 2014 to 30 September 2018
- Idil Ersoy for Business Management modules for four years from 10 March 2014 to 30 September 2017 (as immediate replacement for the rescinded appointment)

The External Examiner coverage report was available for note, but there were no specific and urgent issues to be considered.

**14.13 Validation: Recommendation of awards for approval**  
(Paper SEN14.10)

Senate noted the recommendations of QEC sub-groups held since the previous meeting as identified in the report. Conditions had been completed for the following courses which were formally approved:

FS2ATM9 BSc (Hons) Air Transport Management with Airline Pilot Training  
BB1BAM1HO BA (Hons) Business Management – to be delivered by Horizon  
BB1BAM1EE BA (Hons) Business Management – to be delivered by East End Computing & Business College  
MB1MBI1EE MBA International – to be delivered by East End Computing & Business College  
BB1AAF1HO BSc (Hons) Accounting and Finance – to be delivered by Horizon  
BT1CTG1HO BSc (Hons) Computing – to be delivered by Horizon  
ML1LLM1HO LLM Law – to be delivered by Horizon  
MB3ITM1HO MBA IT – to be delivered by Horizon

Courses with outstanding conditions would be approved by Chair's Action. A query was raised as to the outstanding conditions for Sports programmes in DMM which dated from December 2013. It was noted that the Chair was currently reviewing the course team response following a request for some additional changes.

**14.14 Quality & Enhancement Committee Report (19-Feb-2014)**

The Executive Summary was received.

**14.15 Student Experience Committee Report (11-Feb-2014)**

The Executive Summary was received.

Senate noted the recent decision to remove the Head Tenancy Scheme at High Wycombe. The Students' Union had arranged a meeting on housing following the decision and would wish to retain details of landlords for students to make contact. It was noted that the removal of the scheme allowed for more direct support for students, including housing fairs which were being planned by the Student Services Directorate.

**14.16 University Research Committee Report (28-Feb-2014)**

The Executive Summary was received.

**14.17 Equality & Diversity Committee Report (21-Jan-2014)**

The Executive Summary was received.

**14.18 Learning & Teaching Committee Report (4-Dec-2013 & 5-Feb-2014)**

The Executive Summary was received.

**14.19 Date of next meeting**

The next meeting of Senate would be on Wednesday 11 June 2014 at 1.30pm in G5.05, High Wycombe.

**RESERVED BUSINESS**

There was one item of reserved business. Student representatives and observers were asked to leave for this section of the meeting.

**14.20 Honorary Awards**

The minutes from the outcome of the Honorary Awards Committee, 4 February 2014, were tabled for consideration. Senate formally approved the recommendations from the committee. The list will be published once recipients have been contacted and formally accepted the offer of an award.

Following this item, the Secretary collected the papers back from members.

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Professor Shân Wareing  
Acting Chair of Senate