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Senate

Open Minutes

Date of meeting: **Wednesday, 05 June 2019**

Duration of meeting: **2.00pm to 4.45pm**

Location: **G5.05 High Wycombe Campus**

Attendance

Name	Faculty / Directorate	Category of membership
Nick Braisby	Vice-Chancellor's Office	Ex-officio (Chair)
Miriam Moir	Academic Registry	Secretary
John Brewer	Vice-Chancellor's Office	Ex-officio
Julie McLeod	Vice-Chancellor's Office	Ex-officio
Ellie Smith	Academic Registry	Ex-officio
Julie Irwin	Student Success	Ex-officio
Karen Buckwell-Nutt	Nursing & Allied Health	Ex-officio
Kevin Maher	Business, Law & Computing	Ex-officio
Lee Curtis	Health Care and Social Work	Ex-officio
Paul Morgan	Human and Social Sciences	Ex-officio
Phil Wood	Aviation & Security	Ex-officio
Sri-Kartini Leet	Art, Design & Performance	Ex-officio
Russel Stone	Media & Creative Industries	Ex-officio
Cass Davenport	Aviation & Security	Elected
Lauren Vincent	Art, Design and Performance	Elected
Daisy Toscano	Health Care and Social Work	Elected
Dearbhla Gallagher	Human and Social Sciences	Elected
John Hathaway	Business, Law & Computing	Elected
Richard Jones	Education Committee representative	Nominated
Rob Penhaligon	Media & Creative Industries	Elected
Lauren O'Shea	Students' Union President	Student Member
Georgia Nosal	Student's Union Vice-President	Student Member

Apologies

Name	School/Directorate	Category of membership
Helen Ayo-Ajayi	Nursing and Allied Health	Elected
Florin Ioras	Research	Ex-officio
Margaret Greenfields	Research & Enterprise Committee representative	Nominated
John Mariampillai	Partnerships Board representative	Nominated

Welcome / Apologies for absence

19.48 The Chair welcomed members to the Senate meeting, especially John Brewer, Daisy Toscano and Russel Stone who were all attending their first meeting. The SU President Elect (Tao Warburton) and SU VP Education Elect (Brooke Pilbeam) were welcomed as observers prior to their joining Senate from September. Apologies for absence were received.

Minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2019

19.49 The open minutes of the Senate meeting held on 13 March 2019 were approved as an accurate record with one addition under 19.37 regarding reviewing the format of the External Examiner Approval Panel Report.

19.50 The reserved minutes of the Senate meeting held on 13 March 2019 were approved as an accurate record.

Status of actions from the 5 December 2018 meeting

19.51 It was noted that all actions arising from the meeting held on 13 March 2019 had been completed.

Chair's Actions taken since the previous meeting

19.52 Two Chair's Actions had been taken since the last meeting and were reported to Senate.

Vice-Chancellor's Report to Senate

19.53 Senate was informed that a memorandum of understanding with Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust had been signed, enabling partnership working over the development of the Aylesbury Campus.

19.54 Attention was drawn to the Augar Report which had been recently published. Council had considered this in detail, and the University would be compiling a formal statement in response to the Report. The following points in the Report were highlighted:

- Proposal to redistribute funds from HE to FE to address the imbalance in funding, with additional funding for both from Government. Given the current uncertainty in Government this was not guaranteed.
- Commitment to greater flexibility in funding, a relaxation of the previous qualification rule, and the proposal for life-long learning funding for students
- Proposed re-introduction of maintenance grants

- Reduction of fees from £9,250 to £7,500: worrying for Universities that there was no guarantee the shortfall would be made up by the Treasury
- Extension of length of time to pay back loans – an analysis by UUK had noted that middle earners would end up paying back more than higher earners

Two areas were noted as being of particular concern to Bucks. First the proposal to cease funding Foundation Years as integral parts of degree programmes, which were seen by Augar as a recruitment device to increase a university's revenue. At Bucks the Foundation Years have grown as a reflection of demand: cessation of funding would result in a significant reduction in income. Secondly, the increasing concern in Government over perceived "low-value" courses and the numbers of students in HE: proposals to control these by limiting access to funding for students achieving a minimum of 3 x D or 2 x C + D grades. Both of these suggestions would affect student numbers at Bucks.

19.55 Senate was asked for its reaction to the Augar Report and noted the following:

- In its response to the Report, the University could use the added value noted in the TEF Silver application as an argument as to why funding should not be restricted by Grades achieved at A' Level, and also feedback from those on Foundation Years as to why they chose to take the 4 year programme.
- It would be good practice to prepare for a potential dip in applications should the reduction in fees be brought in – applicants may wait a year before taking up their place in order to be eligible for the lower fees. The University needs to consider further diversifying its offer to future-proof against this potential dip in undergraduate demand.
- The University should be actively engaged in lobbying Government.
- With a General Election potentially on the horizon, the Government could use the proposal to reduce fees as a vote-winner.
- There is a shift in what is seen as the value of attending University – being seen in monetary terms and not as a means to improve social mobility.

Vice-Chancellor's Report from Council (SEN19.11)

19.56 The Vice-Chancellor had noted that according to its Terms of Reference, Senate should "receive regular reports from Council via the Vice-Chancellor. The paper SEN19.11 had therefore been provided to give Senate an overview of the areas Council had recently considered. Council gives the University assurance that it is managing its affairs appropriately and mitigating risk where necessary, and divides its meetings between business and strategy.

19.57 It was noted that Council was currently recruiting new members, and that they would serve for four years, renewable for a further four years, so Council members had long-standing input into the University.

19.58 Senate welcomed the report, but agreed that in future it could receive Council Minutes. This would be considered for the next meeting. **ACTION:** Academic Registrar/Secretary

Membership - Senate member on Council

19.59 It was noted that Senate has two members on Council, currently Phil Wood and Florin Ioras. Phil Wood's term of office will come to an end on 31 July, and this will leave an opening on Council for a member from Senate. Senate members will be asked to put

themselves forward if they are interested in taking on this role, with an election being held in September should it be needed.

19.60 The Chair thanked Phil Wood for his time as Senate representative on Council.

Debate – Senate remit and future business (SEN19.12)

19.61 Senate was asked for its views over how the meetings were run, and over how to stimulate more academic debate at the meetings.

19.62 Senate members noted that:

- Many of the documents seen by Senate have already been seen at other Committees and Senate appears only to endorse recommendations from other bodies
- In the Terms of Reference the section regarding “debate” is at point j. and needs moving up to make it more prominent.
- Members would like to be involved at an earlier stage in the shaping of plans for the University
- Senate agenda is too focused on approvals and endorsement: it was noted that under the Articles of Government Senate does have a duty to approve and endorse specific items of University business, but it was recognised that this needs to be balanced by other items for debate.
- Senate members on Council could speak to the future agenda item of Council Minutes
- An increase in debate would be welcomed, with less time spent on policy approval, especially where these had already been discussed at other Committees.
- Care needed to be taken not to duplicate subjects between committees.

19.63 It was agreed that the comments would be considered and proposals for a revised agenda for Senate be produced for the 2019-20 academic year.

ACTION: Chair/Secretary

SAMM 1 Marketing & Recruitment – Update from Schools

19.64 This was the first year that the Subject Annual Monitoring Meetings had been held at three points during the academic year. Heads of Schools were invited to give an update to Senate on the SAMM 1 meetings focused on Marketing and Recruitment which were held during March/April 2019. It was noted that:

- The meetings were more manageable now they were divided into three.
- Having the one meeting on Marketing and Recruitment meant that staff were able to focus on the one area, and gave colleagues the opportunity to discuss the area in depth
- Attendance by Marketing and Recruitment representatives was welcomed as being valuable in terms of mutual understanding and networking.
- The meetings had been well-attended, and there had been open and constructive debate, felt to be empowering and leading to identifiable outcomes.
- Positive ways forward were identified and are being actioned

- 19.65 Senate noted the very positive comments and appreciated the value of SAMM 1. It was noted that with the large number of validations for new courses this year, it would be useful for Schools to meet with Marketing to briefly update them on the content of the new programmes. **ACTION:** Heads of Schools

University Strategy - update (SEN 19.13)

- 19.66 The Vice-Chancellor introduced paper SEN19.13 “Impact 2022”. This document incorporated ideas and insights gained during a number of discussions, and had been seen and commented on by the University Management Group, the University Executive Team, Council Chairs of Committees and Council. It was presented in the same format to Senate for comment, following which it would be discussed with Schools and Directorates. The aim was to prepare a final version over the summer to be in place for September 2019.
- 19.67 Senate made a number of comments regarding the layout, picture relevance and ordering of the sections, and advised not starting the document with “Background” but to make the vision more prominent. The priorities required clarification in terms of number and timing, and the number of bullet points reduced. Senate would like to see more of a development plan and less of a prospectus.
- 19.68 It was noted that Senate strongly suggested that a wider audience across the University should be given the opportunity to have input. The Chair explained that there would be a Blackboard site and email address for comments, as well as discussions with Schools and Directorates. A Digest message would inform staff. **ACTION:** Chair
- 19.69 The Strategy would come back to Senate in September.

OIA Annual Statement (SEN19.14)

- 19.70 Senate’s attention was drawn to the Annual Statement for Bucks from the Office of the Independent Adjudicator. Points to note were that
- the University has very few cases escalated to the OIA and is well below the sector average
 - the OIA appreciates the timeliness of responses to its recommendations
 - the positive engagement of University staff with the OIA
- 19.71 Senate noted the Annual Statement.

Student Disciplinary Procedures (SEN19.16)

- 19.72 Senate considered revisions to the Student Disciplinary Procedures which incorporated changes to process, amendments to examples of misconduct, and reflections of the OIA Good Practice Framework.
- 19.73 Senate noted the work which had been undertaken, but was of the view that a wider review of the Procedure was required, including reconsideration of the document title. Once completed the document could be taken by Chair’s Action.
- ACTION:** Academic Registrar

APL Policy (SEN19.17)

- 19.74 The Accreditation of Prior Learning Policy had been amended in line with sector practice. The Policy had been discussed at Education Committee and a proposal to

include APL for direct entry and Level 6 had been rejected. This had subsequently been removed from the document which was then agreed by the Chair of the Education Committee by Chair's Action for recommendation to Senate.

19.75 Following discussion, clarification was sought as to whether the section rejected by Education Committee had been removed, and also whether any reference to apprenticeships had been added. It was agreed to discuss this outside the meeting, and for the document to be taken by Chair's Action.

ACTION: Academic Registrar

Calendar of Committees (SEN19.18)

19.76 Senate received and approved the Calendar of Committees proposed for 2019-20. It was noted that no committees would be held on Varsity day.

External Examiner Approval Panel Report (SEN19.19)

19.77 Senate received the update from the External Examiner Approval Panel and endorsed the decisions made in each instance. It was noted that Senate would benefit from additional information being made available on the report.

ACTION: Academic Registrar

Validation: recommendation of awards for approval (SEN19.20)

19.78 The report detailed recommendations to Senate of courses presented to Approval Panels and approved without conditions, and the dates of where courses approved with conditions had had those conditions met.

19.79 Senate noted that 8 programmes still had conditions outstanding, and that 5 programmes had been to validation events since the writing of the report.

19.80 Senate also noted one programme franchised to Mont Rose College, and one course title change approved by CAP.

19.81 Senate endorsed the recommendations made in the report and noted that programmes with outstanding conditions would have to be taken by Chair's Action over the summer ready for a September start.

Programme extension (Validated term) (Tabled paper)

19.82 A paper requesting the extension of validated term for the following programmes was tabled. Senate approved the extension of term to September 2020.

- BT1CWD1 BSc (Hons) Computing and Web Development
- BT1CWD4 BSc (Hons) Computing and Web Development with Foundation Year

Report from Education Committee 27 March and 15 May 2019 (Minutes)

19.83 The Minutes from the meetings held on 27 March and 15 May 2019 had been circulated. The business of the Committee included:

- Mapping against the revised QAA Quality Code
- February intakes – plan to enable progression
- Assessment and grading criteria pilot
- APL Policy discussion
- Placements Plus Framework

- Access and Participation Plan – agreed this should be distributed to Senate members **ACTION** Interim PVC Education

Report from Academic Planning Committee 14 March 2019 (Minutes)

19.84 The Minutes from the meeting held had been circulated.

19.85 Senate was reminded that the Minutes of these meetings were confidential and business sensitive.

Date of next meeting

19.86 The next meeting is on Wednesday 25 September 2019 at 2.00pm.