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## Senate

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### Open Minutes

Date of meeting: **Wednesday, 28 September 2016**

Duration of meeting: **2:00 PM to 4:45 PM**

Location: **G5.05, Gateway Building, High Wycombe Campus**

### Attendance

Name	Faculty / Directorate	Category of membership
<b>Rebecca Bunting</b>	Vice-Chancellor's Office	Ex-officio (Chair)
<b>Miriam Moir</b>	Academic Quality	Secretary
<b>Marcus Wood</b>	Academic Quality	Minute Secretary
<b>Ian Plover</b>	Vice-Chancellor's Office	Ex-officio
<b>Sean Mackney</b>	Vice-Chancellor's Office	Ex-officio
<b>Tim Middleton</b>	Vice-Chancellor's Office	Ex-officio
<b>Lorraine Watkins-Mathys</b>	Design, Media & Management	Ex-officio
<b>Sue West</b>	Society & Health	Ex-officio
<b>Ellie Smith</b>	Academic Quality	Ex-officio
<b>Ruth Gunstone</b>	Student Services	Ex-officio
<b>Julie Irwin</b>	Learning & Teaching	Ex-officio
<b>Frazer Mackenzie</b>	Design, Media & Management	Ex-officio
<b>Paul Morgan</b>	Society & Health	Ex-officio
<b>Carol Pook</b>	Society & Health	Ex-officio
<b>Jake Kaner</b>	Design, Media & Management	Ex-officio
<b>Tim Coole</b>	Design, Media & Management	Elected
<b>Nic Fryer</b>	Design, Media & Management	Elected
<b>Carlo Lusuardi</b>	Design, Media & Management	Elected
<b>Roland Radaelli</b>	Design, Media & Management	Elected
<b>Karen Harrison-White</b>	Society & Health	Elected
<b>Ciaran O'Keeffe</b>	Society & Health	Elected
<b>Joe Collins</b>	Students' Union	Student Member
<b>Jenny Wade</b>	Students' Union	Student Member

## Apologies

Name	Faculty / Directorate	Category of membership
Phil Wood	Design, Media & Management	Ex-officio
Colin Martin	Society & Health	Ex-officio
Lois Drawmer	Design, Media & Management	Elected
Allen Stroud	Design, Media & Management`	Elected
Nasreen Akhtar	Society & Health	Elected
Christine Brooks	Society & Health	Elected
Steven Pearce	Society & Health	Elected
Jo Rixon	Society & Health	Elected

## Absent

Name	Faculty / Directorate	Category of membership
None		

**Welcome / Apologies for absence**

16.129 The Chair welcomed members to the first Senate meeting of the academic year. New members were formally welcomed.

16.130 Apologies for absence were received. It was confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

**Minutes of the previous meeting (8 June 2016)**

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

**Status of actions from the previous meeting**

16.132 The Action Sheet was noted. One update was provided as follows:

- a) (Minute 16.89) HEFCE Revised operating model for quality assessment: To enable Council to fulfil its new responsibility to provide assurance on quality and standards, the annual Joint Meeting of Senate and Council has been brought forward to 21 November and will be refocused on the University's annual monitoring processes. Faculties and Directorates are working to a revised schedule for their annual reports in order to meet the earlier deadline and the following reports would be presented:

- External Examiners' Summary Report;
- Research Degree Summary Report;
- Achievement and Progression Statistics for the University;
- Directorate Overview Reports;
- Faculty Reports.

Report authors will be invited to present a brief summary of their report with actions identified. The PVC Education would also make an overall presentation on the fulfilment by the University on Quality and Standards.

Details of the process are being finalised and will be circulated to Senate members for further comment in due course.

**Action: Director of Academic Quality**

### **Chair's Actions taken since the previous meeting**

16.133 Senate endorsed the Chair's Actions taken since the meeting as noted on the summary sheet provided.

### **University Governance: Committee Constitutions and Terms of Reference (Paper SEN16.37)**

16.134 Amendments were presented for approval to the University committee constitutions document. As outlined in the paper, two main amendments were proposed to:

- a) Incorporate 'inclusion' into both the title and remit of the Equality and Diversity Committee;
- b) Effect changes to the constitution and membership of the Research & Enterprise Committee. The number of meetings would also increase to four per annum.

16.135 In discussion, it was noted that Faculty representation on REC was not automatic as staff were nominated by the PVC Research and Enterprise. The PVC explained that the approach adopted was intended to ensure representation from researchers at various stages in their career. It was agreed to amend the terms of reference to ensure membership was 'drawn from both faculties' although it was accepted that there might still be some imbalance of representation.

**Action: PVC Research and Enterprise**

16.136 Subject to the change, the amendments were approved.

### **Senate Terms of Reference (Paper SEN16.37)**

16.137 The terms of reference as outlined in the paper were noted.

### **Committee Effectiveness Review 2015-2016 (Paper SEN16.38)**

16.138 Senate considered the outcomes of the Committee Effectiveness Review undertaken at the end of the academic year. This had been undertaken following the revised committee structure introduced in September 2015 and would become an annual exercise. Attention was drawn to the need for more work around the following areas:

- Members' skills and experiences;
- Induction and preparation of new members;
- Committee planning for the year;
- Communication of committee business across the University.

Some actions had already been taken. In particular, a committee website had been put in place during the year to improve communication, while all committees were working on annual business schedules and would provide a brief update later in the meeting.

16.139 Senate noted the following:

- The need for staff development for those attending meetings to determine their responsibilities;
- The need to decide whether members were 'representing' or rather intended to be 'representative of' colleagues. While members could give feedback on Committee discussions to their colleagues, it was felt that there was a danger of

misinterpretation, and that the formal record of decisions should be the primary source of information;

- Whether infographics could be used to deliver key messages from committees to stakeholders;
- The ability for staff to be able to feed in to items, through making agendas more widely accessible and visible;
- The possibility of committee papers being made available more widely, though it was accepted that papers were often presented in draft form, and could change following meetings.

16.140 The Director of Academic Quality noted that the University had developed a Committees Handbook which was made available, but that specific inductions or training for staff had not been organised.

16.141 The Chair noted that it would be useful for new members to receive a contextual background to the work of the committee to which they were elected or appointed, including a record of recent decisions from the committee, and suggested that Committee Chairs should be responsible for meeting with new members. It was agreed that the Chairs of University Committees and Faculty Boards would meet to develop a proposal for induction and communication.

**Action: Chair**

16.142 It was agreed that a committee bulletin would continue to be circulated on a termly basis to staff.

**Senate Effectiveness Review (Paper SEN16.38)**

16.143 Senate noted that in addition to the overall committee effectiveness review, survey results had been made available to individual committee Chairs and Officers for consideration. Senate noted the report of its own effectiveness and considered that this broadly matched the overall results as discussed.

**Strategic Planning of Committee Business 2016-2017**

16.144 The Chair noted that Chairs of sub-committees had been asked to provide a summary of activities to be undertaken during the year to support planning. These would be incorporated into an annual business schedule. More work would be identified during the course of the year and committees would need to be able to respond to initiatives and opportunities as they arose.

**Quality & Standards Committee (QSC)**

16.145 The PVC Education explained that the role of QSC was to look at control systems and processes in place to ensure standards were maintained. A primary area of business would be to support the integration of Council's quality assurance responsibility. The Committee would also be closely monitoring developments on the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and its impact on internal measures.

16.146 The following areas will also be considered during the year:

- Improvements to the National Student Survey (NSS) scores;
- Measures to understand and improve student retention;
- Work to develop Degree Apprenticeships and provide assurances over the systems in place;

- Development of a standardised approach to assessment in terms of the relationship between credit sizes and consistency over the volume of work required.

### **Education Committee (EDU)**

16.147 The PVC Education explained that the role of EDU was based around development and implementation of the themes from the Education strand of the University Strategic Plan.

16.148 Work for 2016-2017 would include the following areas:

- A new curriculum offer, including the addition of a Foundation year as an entry point for existing degree programmes;
- Development of a Student Engagement and Participation Policy to drive and underpin work on student retention;
- Measures to promote academic integrity through a strategic approach to instances of academic misconduct;
- Developing approaches to predictive analytics to understand the student journey;
- Consideration of the academic structure;
- Consideration of the impact on education issues of the strategic aims of the Bucks Academic Framework.

16.149 Senate also considered the following areas for inclusion:

- The need to support and provide resource for distance and online learning;
- Integration of the TEF;
- The need for the committee to recognise work previously undertaken by the Student Access and Success Working Group on student retention and widening participation issues.

It was agreed that these areas would be included. The committee would also have an opportunity to further enhance the list of activities at its first meeting.

### **Research & Enterprise Committee (REC)**

16.150 The PVC Research & Enterprise noted that work for the committee was split between REC itself as well as the Research Degrees Committee (RDC) and the Ethics Panel subcommittees.

16.151 Work at RDC would focus on:

- Further development work with Staffordshire University to progress a framework and programme for the Professional Doctorate;
- Monitoring of the implementation of the Code of Practice for research degrees undertaken with Staffordshire University;
- Development of the research environment to support research students, including a refreshed approach to both research groupings and professorial appointments;
- Update work on the Bucks Knowledge Archive;
- Development of an Academic Misconduct Policy for research undertaken by both research staff and students which was a requirement for a number of funding bodies.

16.152 Work at REC would focus on:

- Collation of evidence for a dry run for the next Research Excellence Framework (REF) submission;
- An audit of the University's readiness for a submission for Research Degree Awarding Powers (RDAP), including a data collection round to be undertaken by the end of December 2016;
- A commitment to progress an application for Athena Swan accreditation during the next two years, including mapping this year for readiness for a future application;
- Accreditation for research and enterprise staff under the HR Excellence Scheme
- A refresh of existing policies on Intellectual Property and Consultancy;
- Alignment of the Bucks Academic Framework;
- Bringing forward proposals for an approach to public engagement work.

A standing item on all REC meetings was the tracking of bids won and those being progressed

16.153 Senate also noted the need for examples of achievement and how to capture and communicate these to support the work on public engagement. The Chair noted that the University would be publishing an annual report which would include reference to the University's engagement activities.

#### **Academic Planning Committee (APC) (Paper SEN16.40)**

16.154 The Chair noted that the majority of APC's work was driven by course development activities derived from Faculty Plans. The paper listed the courses currently scheduled for approval and reapproval during the academic year. APC had also asked Deans of Faculties to present portfolio plans through to 2020.

16.155 Attention was drawn to the development of higher level and degree apprenticeships. The University had secured funding of £147k to support ten new apprenticeships for September 2017. It was likely that Foundation Degrees would increasingly be discontinued in favour of apprenticeships following the introduction by the Government of the Apprenticeship Levy. The University had subscribed to the Universities Vocational Awards Council (UVAC) which is advising the Minister for Higher Education, the Skills Agency and HEFCE on the introduction of HE apprenticeships; this would help ensure that the apprenticeship model developed is in keeping with the approach adopted by Bucks.

#### **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee (EDC)**

16.156 The PVC Education noted that an annual plan had been drawn up for the committee with a number of milestones to achieve. These included:

- Approval of a Transgender Policy, which was currently under consultation;
- Approval of a Disability Policy, which would be forthcoming;
- Use of data (analytics) to produce actionable insights to ensure all students achieve, regardless of any specific or protected characteristics.

#### **Formal Documents Update (Paper SEN16.41)**

16.157 Senate noted the list of formal documents for development and review during the year. This had been derived from committee plans and a central tracker that had been developed by AQD. In each case the Reviewing Committee and the Document Owner had been identified.

16.158 The SU representatives asked about student involvement in the process for approving documents. The Director of Academic Quality explained that consultation groups would be set up where relevant stakeholders would be involved. The composition and extent of the consultation undertaken would be a matter for discussion by the relevant committee.

### **Vice-Chancellor's Report to Senate**

16.159 The Vice-Chancellor presented a verbal report to Senate. This focused on the following two areas:

- a) An update on activities from Council;
- b) The impact of 'Brexit'.

### **Update on Council activities**

16.160 An update was provided from the July meeting of Council. The following areas were discussed:

- The HE White Paper and introduction of the TEF – specifically helping Council members to understand their impact and implications for the University.
- The agreement of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the University to align to the new Strategic Plan, including measures to monitor recruitment, income, financial sustainability and academic quality.
- The SU Annual Report and Strategy for 2017-2020 which showed a clear synergy to the University's Strategic Plan.
- The HEFCE revised model for quality assurance and Council members' new responsibilities.
- The Bucks Academic Framework.
- A Governance Review of Council's committee structure – which identified outcomes mirroring the University Committee Effectiveness Review, such as induction and training, the need for improved communication between the University and Council, participation of Council members in University activities and meetings with the wider student body.
- Approval of the Final interim report from the recent HEFCE Assurance Review.
- HEFCE's annual assessment of institutional risk – which had confirmed that the University is 'not at higher risk' (which is the standard wording).
- Budgets for 2017-18 and 2018-19.
- Approval of the SU budget.
- Approval of tuition fees for 2017-18 for non-controlled provision.

### **The impact of 'Brexit'**

16.161 The Vice-Chancellor updated Senate on sector activities following the outcome of the referendum on EU membership that the UK should leave the European Union.

16.162 It was noted that UUK, of which the University is a member, is lobbying the Government on a number of areas. In relation to incoming students there was activity across the following areas:

- Encouraging talented students to come and study in the UK;
- A call for an international student strategy;
- A call for reform of the immigration system to exclude students;

- Acknowledgement that the UK is 'open for students';
- Immediate action on EU student access to funding for 2017-18 and the availability of support to such students from the UK government.

The Vice-Chancellor also noted that the University had confirmed that the fee for EU students for 2017-18 would be the same as for 'Home' students regardless of other changes; this needed to be communicated.

16.163 There was additional activity across the following areas:

- Mobility programmes to provide opportunities for both students and staff, including Erasmus and the Marie Curie Action Programme;
- The Erasmus fee waiver;
- Recognition that talented academics need to come into the UK;
- The need for administrative requirements on EU staff not to be burdensome;
- Continued research collaboration, ensuring that the UK will not be cut off, calls for increased investment in enterprise and innovation, strengthening of HEIF, promotion of research collaboration opportunities and investment in bi-lateral and multi-lateral research opportunities.

16.164 It was noted that the University does not have a significant number of students from the EU; however there would be a loss of income at a time when the University was looking to increase its student numbers.

16.165 The Director of Academic Quality reminded members that should EU students in the future be reclassified as international students post Brexit, this would impact on the University's attendance monitoring requirements. This provided new impetus to develop an attendance monitoring policy for all students that could be supported by the IT infrastructure to enable ease of delivery should the numbers of international students suddenly increase as a result of the decision.

### **Bucks Academic Framework (Paper SEN16.42)**

16.166 The PVC Research & Enterprise provided an update to members on the proposed Bucks Academic Framework. As outlined in the paper, a number of actions had been taken forward; however, work remained on the consultation and implementation and a revised implementation timeline was recommended with final approval by Senate scheduled for March 2017. In the meantime, an interim PDR process would be agreed with HR.

16.167 Senate noted the following:

- The need for further work to balance workload demands, particularly in the light of new developments such as the TEF;
- The need to map both academic and PSE responsibilities in relation to work required;
- The need to ensure a decision on PDRs was reached (and communicated) quickly since meetings had already been planned in some areas;
- The need for workshops and training sessions to support eventual roll-out of the framework.

16.168 Senate welcomed the decision to remove specific reference to the University's Capability Development process as it was felt that this was unhelpful for a framework intended to be aspirational. It was agreed that such references would be removed



from draft documentation as soon as possible so that further consultation meetings could focus on positive benefits of the framework.

16.169 The revised timeline for delivery was approved.

### **Amendments to Academic Misconduct Policy and Student Disciplinary Procedure (Paper SEN16.43)**

16.170 The Director of Academic Quality informed Senate that, as outlined in the summary paper, changes are being proposed as follows:

- a) to remove academic misconduct from the Student Disciplinary Procedure and to add an academic misconduct panel hearing into the Academic Misconduct Procedure. The hearing would be chaired by a representative from SMT who would be empowered to expel a student.
- b) to implement an alternative to a viva voce examination in the Academic Misconduct Procedure. This followed a number of cases from one course in 2015-2016 which had required a substantial number of vivas to be arranged, as well as an overall increase in the number of vivas required generally which had proved burdensome and unwieldy to administer.

It was noted that the Academic Misconduct Procedure has been scheduled for major review during 2016-2017 which will involve a much wider consultation.

16.171 The following additional amendments were agreed to the Academic Misconduct Procedure:

- The word 'normally' would be removed from number 2 on page 9 so as not to prefer one process over another. This would be at the discretion of Heads of School;
- Faculties would each nominate a deputy to be trained to support work currently undertaken by Heads of School – while ensuring that these 'Deputies' did not consider a case from their own Department;
- For page 14 and paragraph 73 add 'or representative' after 'their supporter';
- The NB on page 26 should be reworded for clarity.

16.172 It was noted that the Academic Misconduct Procedure tends to focus on FTUG. It was agreed that the consultation would ensure that the process accounts for students studying by distance learning and overseas.

16.173 Senate approved the Student Disciplinary Policy without amendment, and the Academic Misconduct Procedure subject to the amendments agreed.

### **Amendments: Academic Qualifications Framework (Paper SEN16.44)**

16.174 The Director of Academic Quality informed Senate that, as outlined in the summary paper, changes are being proposed as follows:

- a) Addition of a section to clarify award titles and programme naming conventions. This followed a decision by APC that bracketed awards should not be offered by the University;
- b) Revision to the framework for Foundation year programmes to offer 'integrated' degree courses as a variation on an existing three-year degree course. This followed discussion of the framework at APC;
- c) Minor editorial amendments to reflect other changes in the University's document framework.

- 16.175 In respect of bracketed awards, it was noted that existing awards would be unaffected but would need to be brought into alignment at the end of their approval period.
- 16.176 It was also agreed that the list of approved awards, which derived from a much earlier document, would be revisited and would be restricted to awards offered by the University only and would be updated as and when Academic Planning Committee approve a new qualification.
- 16.177 It was noted that the document does not currently include a framework for integrated Master's programmes. It was agreed that a proposal as to how such programmes would be structured and delivered should be taken to Academic Planning Committee, to enable the future planned development of integrated Master's.

**Action: Director of Academic Quality**

- 16.178 Subject to the additional amendments noted, Senate approved the document.

**Extension: BA (Hons) Crowd & Safety Management (Paper SEN16.47)**

- 16.179 The Dean of Design, Media & Management requested an extension to the BA (Hons) Crowd & Safety Management until August 2018 (after which the programme would be closed). This would enable Level 5 students to progress as planned.
- 16.180 Senate approved the extension.

**Research Centres and Groups Policy (Paper SEN16.47)**

- 16.181 The PVC Research & Enterprise introduced the policy which outlined how research and enterprise activity might be grown and developed. The policy had been recommended by the Research & Enterprise Committee.
- 16.182 Following discussion it was agreed to withdraw the policy for further work by the committee. In particular, it was agreed to rationalise the infrastructure into a leaner configuration so that this could be effectively resourced.

**Action: PVC Research & Enterprise**

**External Examiner Approval Panel Report (Paper SEN16.48)**

- 16.183 Senate received the update from the Approval Panel and endorsed the decisions made in each instance.

**Date of next meeting**

- 16.184 The date of the next meeting would be the Joint Committee with Council on Monday 21 November, to be followed by the next meeting of Senate on Wednesday 14 December 2016.