

# Senate Meeting

## Minutes

**date:** 5 June 2013  
**time:** 1.30 p.m.  
**location:** G5.05, High Wycombe Campus

**13.17 Welcome / Apologies for absence**  
Apologies for absence were received and noted.

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. The Chair also welcomed Rachel Dearlove from the Academic Quality Directorate who would be observing the meeting.

Main topics of discussion at the meeting had been highlighted on the agenda. It was noted that Doug Cole had been invited to speak to item 7 on the plans for activities weeks.

**13.18 Minutes of the last meeting – 13 March 2013**  
The minutes were approved as a true record and signed.

**13.19 Matters Arising**  
There were no matters arising. It was noted that the outcomes of the discussions at the previous meeting of Senate had been incorporated on the agenda or within the Vice-Chancellor's Report.

**13.20 Chair's Business**  
[a] Chair's Actions  
Two Chair's Actions had been taken since the previous meeting as indicated on the paper.

Senate endorsed the approval of amendments to and updating of terminology of *Admissions Policy & Procedure*.

Senate also endorsed the approval of amendments to *G5 Academic Boards and Committees: Terms of Reference* for the University Research Ethics Panel.

[b] Vice-Chancellor's Report to Senate  
(Paper SEN13.41)

The report was noted. The Chair drew attention to two particular items, the first of which was referenced in the report:

1. There is a new mechanism for QAA HE Review. The review places increased emphasis on collaborative provision which needs to be taken into consideration.
2. The Guardian published its University league table earlier in the week. It was disappointing to note that Bucks had fallen to the bottom of the table of 119 UK HEIs. However it should be noted that league tables do not place emphasis on aspects which the University sees as its sense of purpose. Nevertheless the University would be undertaking an in-depth analysis of the tables to establish the cause for the drop and actions which can be undertaken in response. This would be communicated in due course.

While the league table was disappointing, more positively it was noted that the University was recently ranked number one for education provision in Adult Nursing and Mental Health Nursing in a 2011-2012 Contract Performance Management (CPM) league table by the Health Education Local Education Training Boards for London. Combined with the third place for Child Nursing, Bucks was placed as the top university overall for nurse education for CPM across London.

SMT have asked the Marketing department to identify and produce case studies in areas where the University similarly excels which can then be published. The University will also be able to explore the underpinning infrastructure to support these success stories.

**13.21 Learning and Teaching Strategy**  
(Paper SEN13.40)

The Pro-Vice Chancellor: Learning and Teaching introduced the final draft of the strategy which had been developed following a comprehensive consultation exercise across the University. Drafts of the strategy had been presented at a number of University committees, including the previous meeting of Senate. Recent updates included reference to the University's 10 year "outrageous ambition", additional detail surrounding operationalisation of the strategy – including the creation of a Learning and Teaching Committee – and the addition of a fifth goal relating to curriculum development. In total, the strategy identifies 24 specific objectives which can be taken forward across the next four years, supporting and enabling the University to meet its outrageous ambition.

The strategy was agreed.

It was noted that as a next step, the presentational aspects of the document will be looked at prior to broad dissemination in September 2013. The strategy will be underpinned by annual action plans and will be monitored by the new University Learning and Teaching Committee. The PVC: Learning and Teaching will be attending meetings with Heads of Schools and Heads of Directorates for discussion regarding dissemination of the strategy to staff at all levels.

**13.22 Institutional Audit Action Plan Update**  
(Paper SEN13.30)

The updated version of the Action Plan produced after the Institutional Audit in 2010 was presented to note progress. In general, the University was deemed to be on track to meet the overall action plan, although individual actions may be being progressed on a different timescale from that originally envisaged.

Senate noted that the action plan should be updated to reference the new Learning and Teaching strategy, specifically in relation to references to Co-ordinators of Learning and Teaching.

Senate also discussed the action on improving consideration of data in relation to PRE and SURE given ongoing discussions in relation to this issue at QEC and consideration of this in the Learning and Teaching Strategy. It was noted that a short-term solution for 2013-2014 had been agreed by QEC but it was unlikely that this would be an effective measure in the longer-term and should be reviewed following the next exercise. It was agreed that the latest version of the data table requirements and responsibilities would be forwarded by the Secretary to Academic Deans.

**Action: Secretary**

It was agreed that the overall action plan should be updated with revisions to reflect the changes discussed, including integration of the learning and teaching strategy, following which Chair's Action would be taken to approve the update.

**Action: Secretary to update Action Plan**

**13.23 Learning Partnership Agreement**  
(Paper SEN13.14)

The Pro-Vice Chancellor: Learning and Teaching introduced the draft of the Learning Partnership Agreement. This was a revision of an earlier Agreement, was aspirational in setting out intent and was not intended as a legal document.

The current draft had targets in a few areas and otherwise made more general statements. Senate discussed at length the issue of whether the document should contain specific targets or whether it should be a more general document which could be related to other policies. Ultimately, it was agreed that the document should not specify targets. Accordingly, references to the three week feedback requirement should be removed to ensure consistency throughout the document. It was emphasised that this made no difference to the actual policy itself, which would remain and be referenced elsewhere.

Senate also agreed a minor amendment to the wording of the commitment relating to enhancing students' employability and personal development. This would be reworded to "*provide opportunities for students to enhance their employability and personal development.*"

Senate discussed the mechanism whereby both staff and students would be informed of the Agreement and what it entailed/expected. It was agreed students and staff should be asked annually to confirm via a tick box that they had read the Agreement. This should be incorporated into enrolment for students and annually thereafter via the Virtual Learning Environment using modal dialog boxes. The Agreement would also be referred to HR to form part of a mandatory training update for employees of the University. The Deputy Vice Chancellor would be asked to undertake follow up actions with HR and IT services as necessary.

**Action: Deputy Vice Chancellor**

Subject to the revisions noted above, the document was agreed.

**13.24 Plans for Activity Weeks 2013-2014**  
(Paper SEN13.35)

Student Union representatives gave an update on the latest draft programme for the activity weeks to take place in 2013-2014. The programme included a mix of graduate and industry panels, drop-in sessions and invited speakers. The aim was to provide opportunities for different student groups to mix. Content to date was primarily employability related, but it was expected that course leaders would combine this with course-related material, including trips and study tours and other directed activities.

It was noted that the programme is focused on activities at High Wycombe because many of the courses at Uxbridge were unable to be involved due to the professional attendance requirements of the respective programmes. Uxbridge had however scheduled an activities week for the same week in November and it was anticipated that some activities could be dovetailed. This would not, however, be possible for the Spring Activities Week as the weeks were not aligned.

Senate also discussed budgets to support activities. It was noted that the University would support general activities delivered centrally or by the Students' Union. Course aspects would be financed directly via Faculties and would normally be taken directly from course-specific resources.

Senate also agreed to ensure that activities week featured prominently on course websites to be used for recruitment and to be linked to via Key Information Sets (KISs) in relation to the quantification of scheduled learning and teaching activities. The Pro Vice Chancellor: Learning and Teaching would pursue this with the Online Presence Team. The PVC would also meet with Heads of Schools to discuss other operational

aspects, including academic involvement in arranging industry panels.

**Action: Pro Vice Chancellor: Learning and Teaching**

**13.25 Postgraduate External Examiners Report**  
(Paper SEN13.32)

It was noted that this paper forms part of the University's SURE process but was prepared at a different time to other reports due to the differing timescale for postgraduate programmes. The report had not been presented at the previous meeting of QEC due to the timescale for production, but had been circulated to QEC members for comment.

The report was considered to be very positive and Senate noted the good practice highlighted around feedback, academic and administrative support, and assessment.

The report was agreed.

**13.26 Policies and Regulations for Approval**

[a] Pregnancy & Maternity Policy (Students)  
(Paper SEN13.15)

The paper had been produced by the Equality and Diversity Manager and had received wide consultation across the University and presented to the Equality and Diversity Committee. It was noted that the policy needed some minor updating in terms of some of the terminology employed, in particular the references to suspension of studies in the light of the interruption of studies policy also to be considered by Senate (Paper SEN13.26, Minute 13.26 [d] below).

Subject to these minor revisions, the policy was agreed.

[b] Safeguarding Under 18s and Adults at Risk Policy  
(Paper SEN13.16)

It was noted that this policy had also received wide consultation and been presented to both Faculty and University Student Experience Committees. The policy updates the existing Safeguarding procedure and provides guidance for staff in dealing with people under the age of 18. In particular, the policy names the University's Principal Safeguarding Officer as Justin Bootland, and Deputies Dr Sukhie Mattu and Jason Schaub.

The policy was agreed.

[c] Fitness to Practise procedure  
(Paper SEN13.17)

It was noted that the paper is still in its final draft stage with some amendments still to be made. The document applies to all students completing a programme of study that leads to the ability to register for a regulated profession and establishes the process for investigating and determining a student's fitness to practise.

The Pro-Vice Chancellor: Society & Health noted that this procedure raises an existing policy within S&H to an institutional level and ensures transparency, equity and fairness in considering cases. It was also important that this policy applied to a range of professional bodies and employer organisations. Bearing this in mind he was very comfortable with the revised process.

It was noted that colleagues in Society and Health have been closely involved with the drafting of the process. Potential resourcing issues were raised with reference to the ability of professional service employees to support the number of cases (although the full impact was unclear); however, it was considered that this could be catered for given that S&H in particular was resourced at a higher level precisely due to this form of

professional requirement.

Chair's Action would be taken with a target for approval by the end of June for implementation from September 2013. The Chair asked for an annotated version of the document to be provided which tracked changes to the version considered by Senate. Prior to final sign-off the Chair would ensure sign-off also by the Students' Union.

**Action: Chair**

[d] Interruption, Withdrawal and Transfer of Studies Policy and Procedure  
(Paper SEN13.26)

This was a new policy developed by AQD in consultation with a wide variety of stakeholders across the University following concerns raised by registrars as to the lack of guidance to support students considering an interruption of studies. This phrase was now preferred over 'suspension of studies' given its negative perception.

The policy had been considered at the recent QEC and broadly endorsed, but QEC had deferred to Senate the issue over the latest point at which a student might choose to interrupt their studies and/or whether there should be any cut-off point – including in particular the period immediately preceding a major submission point. A summary of the issues involved had been provided.

Senate considered the arguments provided and voted first on the principle of whether there should be a cut-off point beyond which a student could not interrupt their studies. Members (not including the Chair or Officers) were asked to vote on one of the following positions:

*A cut-off point should be imposed within the study period beyond which students could not interrupt their studies: **7 votes***

*A student should be able to interrupt their studies at any time during the study period: **8 votes***

Accordingly, Senate agreed the principle that a student could interrupt their studies at any time during the period of study.

With this principle to be reflected in the paperwork, the process was agreed.

[e] Terms of Reference: Programme Committees  
(Paper SEN13.31)

Revisions to the existing terms of reference had been devised following discussions with the Students' Union, School Registries and within the Academic Quality Directorate. The primary change is to refocus on course specific issues and to provide easy access to all documents (including external examiner reports, NSS survey results and relevant reviews) via a dedicated Virtual Learning Environment shell. The revised terms of reference also prefer action plans over the drafting of specific minutes to retain the focus of the committees' work.

The revised terms of reference were agreed.

[f] Examinations Handbook for Candidates  
(Paper SEN13.27)

It was noted that the handbook updated examination procedures to bring them in line with UK HE sector practice. This had involved extra emphasis on tightening up the University's practices and ensuring consistency of application. The process had been widely consulted upon across the University and had been endorsed by QEC. It was noted that the handbook is available in paper copy for download, but is intended to be access directly via the University website.

The handbook was agreed.

- [g] e-Submission, Marking, Feedback and Moderation Policy (June 2013)  
(Paper SEN13.18)

A slight revision was required to update the 2012-2013 policy to bring this in place for longer-term approval. Senate was asked to identify a target for e-marking and e-moderation.

It was proposed and accepted that the documentation would be updated to include reference to "a *progressive* target" rather than a specific number.

Subject to this amendment, the policy was agreed.

- [h] Scheme of Academic Dress  
(Paper SEN13.28)

A minor revision had been made to the Scheme of Academic Dress for the University to include reference to the robes to be worn by students who have been awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Coventry University and who are invited to participate in the Bucks graduation ceremonies.

The policy was agreed.

### 13.27 **Extensions to Validated Terms**

It was noted that all extensions submitted to Senate for approval had been formally endorsed by the relevant Faculty Management Team.

- [a] BA (Hons) Textiles and Surface Design  
(Paper SEN13.19)

The paper was noted and a one-year extension agreed.

- [b] Foundation Degrees at Amersham & Wycombe College  
(Paper SEN13.20)

The paper was noted and a one-year extension agreed for the FDA Animation and Visual Effects, FDA Photography and Digital Imaging, and FDA Television Production.

- [c] FDA Dance Teaching  
(Paper SEN13.36)

The paper was noted and a one-year extension agreed.

- [d] FDA Primary Education (East Berkshire College)  
(Paper SEN13.37)

The paper was noted and a one-year extension agreed.

### 13.28 **Proposal to withdraw approval for Musical Theatre courses at Amersham and Wycombe College** (Paper SEN13.21)

The Academic Dean (DMM) introduced the paper. It was noted that a series of significant concerns had arisen with regard to the quality and standards of the FDA Musical Theatre and BA (Hons) Musical Theatre courses offered by Amersham and Wycombe College and validated by the University.

Concerns related to the following:

- That students have had three course leaders employed within the timescale of the current academic year due to a series of resignations and following on from concern

- previously expressed with regard to the adequacy of the level of staffing provision;
- The receipt of a formal complaint from a current student by the University which is currently under investigation;
- A recent visit to the course by the External Examiner and the Department Manager at Bucks which discovered that a substantial amount of work had not been marked, leading to a withdrawal of confidence in delivery of the course by the External Examiner.

It was emphasised that the situation at the College is recoverable, should the actions identified in the report be put in place. These actions comprised:

*For recruitment to take place for the 2013-2014 academic year for both programmes:*

The appointment of a suitably qualified member of staff by 31 August 2013 to take on the role of programme leader for both programmes. This appointment to be subject to approval of the University.

*For recruitment to be undertaken for the 2014-2015 academic year for both programmes:*

The implementation of a quality and standards action plan to be agreed jointly and undertaken by the College and the University. Recruitment would be dependent upon the completion of actions to the satisfaction of the University QEC by the end of January 2014.

Should either of these requirements not be met, the approval for the programme would be withdrawn and new students not admitted to the programmes. Arrangements would be undertaken for the College and the University to enter into an exit agreement for the teaching out of existing students.

The Chair noted that the University was seeking to work in partnership with Amersham and Wycombe College to ensure they met the standards set by the University while ensuring that the University's integrity is also protected.

The proposal for the withdrawal of approval should the specified requirements not be met was agreed.

### **13.29 Senate representation on other University Committees** (Paper SEN13.22)

[a] University Council

It was noted that the terms of office for both current representatives (Linsey Taylor and Julie Irwin) come to an end on 31 July 2013.

Nominations were now invited from the membership of Senate for the election of two new representatives to Council. A formal election will be required, and will be administered by the Secretary, should more than two nominations be received; otherwise nominees will be appointed automatically.

The deadline for nominations was the 26 June 2013. Existing members can be re-nominated.

[b] Honorary Awards Committee

Chair's prerogative has been exercised to reappoint Richard Jones to the Honorary Awards Committee for a further year's term of office.

[c] Membership of Senate

It was noted that the terms of office for two elected members of Senate were about to expire. Sharon Aldridge-Bent was not present at the meeting, but the Chair thanked Jane Gwyther for her work for the Committee across the term of office.

The process for new nominations for elected positions in the Faculty of Society & Health would be announced by the end of June 2013.

**13.30 External Examiner Nominations**  
(Paper SEN13.23 and SEN13.23a-n inclusive)

[a] Endorsement of Chair's Actions

The following external examiner nominations and changes to terms were endorsed by Senate following Chair's Action after detail consideration and recommendation by Faculty Quality Enhancement Committees:

**Cynthia Cousins**

New nomination

BA (Hons) Jewellery / BA (Hons) Silversmithing, Metalwork and Jewellery

Senate **endorsed** the appointment for a period from 1 April 2013 to 30 September 2013.

**Stephen Phillips**

New nomination

BSc (Hons) Healthcare Practice / BSc (Hons) Nursing & Healthcare

Senate **endorsed** the appointment for a period from 1 April 2013 to 30 September 2017.

**Rupert Kerrell**

New nomination

Allied Health Professions Practice Education (Short Courses)

Senate **endorsed** the appointment for a period from 1 April 2013 to 30 September 2017.

**Joan Mulholland**

New nomination

BSc (Hons) Healthcare Practice / MSc Healthcare Practice

Senate **endorsed** the appointment for a period from 1 April 2013 to 30 September 2017.

**Sandra Baulcomb**

Extension to remit

Withdrawal of module PF613 from remit

Senate **endorsed** the change to remit.

**Rose Stark**

Extension to remit

Addition of module CL611 to remit

Senate **endorsed** the extension to remit

**John Gammon**

Extension to remit

Withdrawal of modules CL756, CL601, PF737, CL602, CL656, AN601. Addition of modules PF624, PF724, PF625, PF627, CL625, CI733

Senate **endorsed** the extension to remit

**Billiejean Rice**

Extension to remit

Withdrawal of modules PF625, PF624. Addition of modules CL602, CL656, CL612

Senate **endorsed** the extension to remit

**Teresa Rooney-Kaymakci**

Extension to remit

Addition of modules PL509, PF510, PF511, PF512

Senate **endorsed** the extension to remit.

**Lucy Land**

Extension to remit

Withdrawal of module CL756. Addition of module CL708

Senate **endorsed** the extension to remit.



**Marion Straub**

New nomination  
BSc / MSc Healthcare Practice, Child and Neonatal  
Senate **endorsed** the appointment for a period from 1 April 2013 to 30 September 2017.

**Alan Wood**

New nomination  
BSc (Hons) / DipHE Nursing  
Senate **endorsed** the appointment for a period from 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2017.

[b] Nominations and changes to remit for approval  
(Papers SEN13.23a-n inclusive)

The following external examiner nominations and changes to terms were formally considered by Senate following detail consideration and recommendation by Faculty Quality Enhancement Committees:

**Mark Bickers**

New nomination  
BA (Hons) 3D Contemporary Craft and Products  
Senate **approved** the appointment for a period from 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2017.

**Mehran Koohgilani**

New nomination  
Engineering Management programme  
Senate **approved** the appointment for a period from 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2017.

**Roger Gossett**

New nomination  
FDA Sports Coaching and Performance  
Senate **approved** the appointment for a period from 1 May 2013 to 30 September 2016.

**Steve Gelder**

New nomination  
Sports Management  
Senate **approved** the appointment for a period from 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2017.

**Rebecca Fortnum**

New nomination  
BA (Hons) Fine Art  
Senate **approved** the appointment for a period from 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2017.

**Keith Donne**

Extension to Term  
BA (Hons) International Travel & Tourism / International Tourism  
Senate **approved** the extension of term from 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2014.

**Richard Hoare**

Extension to Term  
Music Management  
Senate **approved** the extension of term from 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2014.

**Julia Tyrell**

Extension to Term  
UG Business and Management  
Senate **approved** the extension of term from 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2014.

**David Edge**

Extension to remit  
Addition of modules FU551, FU552, FU553, FU554  
Senate **approved** the extension to remit.

**Ida Pu**

New nomination  
Computing and IT  
Senate **approved** the appointment for a period from 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2017.

**Rosemary Borup**

New nomination  
Computing and IT  
Senate **approved** the appointment for a period from 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2017.

**Darren Dixon-Hardy**

New nomination  
FDA Air Transport Management with Airline Pilot Training  
Senate **approved** the appointment for a period from 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2017.

**Zahro Tizro**

Maternity cover  
MSc Community Psychology  
Senate **approved** the appointment for a period from 1 April 2013 to 30 March 2014.

**Aris Syntetos**

Extension to term  
MSc Logistics and Supply Chain Management  
Senate **approved** the extension to term from 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2014.

**13.31 External Examiner Retirements by Faculty**  
(Paper SEN13.24)

Gaps in provision were highlighted to Faculties. Senate asked Academic Deans for nominees to be proposed as soon as possible for agreement by Chair's Action.

It was noted that this has been a challenging year for finding nominations, although there has been positive feedback on the usefulness of the FindExaminer website referred to in the previous meeting (Minute 13.09[a]).

**13.32 Validation: Recommendation of awards for approval**  
(Paper SEN13.38)

The paper was noted. It was noted that conditions for the following four awards had been completed and the programmes could therefore be formally approved:

- FDA Design and Make for Interiors (FT)
- FDA Design and Make for Interiors (PT)
- BA (Hons) Fashion Design
- MSc Social Innovation

In addition, the following four courses had been recommended for immediate approval:

- MSc Advanced Practice
- MSc Nursing (top-up)
- BA (Hons) International Travel and Tourism Management
- BA (Hons) International Tourism Management with Air Travel

Senate approved all 8 courses for delivery with a first intake as specified in the report.

There were a number of additional programmes identified in the report which had been submitted to validation sub-groups and for which conditions had been set prior to final approval. Once conditions had been signed off by the relevant Chair of the sub-group the report would be submitted to the Chair for approval by Chair's Action given there would be no meeting of Senate before the start of the new academic year.

**Action: Chair**

**13.33 Quality & Enhancement Committee**  
(Paper SEN13.29 & SEN13.33)

The Executive Summary and the updated SURE Action Plan were both noted.

**13.34 Student Experience Committee**  
(Paper SEN13.39)

The Executive Summary was noted.

**13.35 Research Degrees Committee**  
(Paper SEN13.34)

The Executive Summary was noted

**13.36 Equality & Diversity Committee**  
(Paper SEN13.25)

The Executive Summary was noted.

**13.37 Any Other Business**

The Chair reminded members that winners of the Bucks eXtra awards for Professional Service Employees would be announced at the Staff summer party to be held on Thursday 6 June. Extra awards were run in parallel with the awards for academic colleagues for Most Inspiring Tutor, which would be announced as part of Graduation 2013 in September.

**13.38 Date of next meeting**

It was noted that this was the final meeting of the year. Dates for 2013-2014 were confirmed as follows:

- 11 December 2013
- 19 March 2014
- 11 June 2014

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Professor Ruth Farwell  
Vice-Chancellor and Chair of Senate