

Senate Meeting

Minutes

date: 8th June 2011
time: 1.30 p.m.
location: Old Boardroom, High Wycombe Campus

11.23 **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received and noted.

11.24 **Minutes of the last meeting – 16 March 2011**

The Minutes were accepted as a true record and signed.

11.25 **Matters arising**

a) Review of action sheet from 16 March 2011 (*Document SEN 11.24*)

In addition to the responses received in advance of the meeting, the following updates were recorded:

11.05b External Examiners regulations would be reviewed shortly following the publication of the Guild HE / UUK report.

11.06e The development of a strategy to identify and maintain an optimum number of research students would be taken forward by SMT.

11.06f Annual Review & Evaluation regulations would be subject to a major review with a view to revised procedures being adopted and implemented before the start of the summer 2012 review cycle. The timescale for the production of statistical data would be reviewed alongside the regulations.

11.09 Work on the Institutional Audit Action Plan was ongoing with an update to be presented to Senate at its first meeting of 2011-12.

ACTION: Director of Academic Quality

11.17 Work on the University's staff development programme was progressing under the Learning Services Board and planned activities would form part of a more comprehensive calendar of University wide activity to be published in due course.

11.22 The Vice Chancellor had written to all those who had submitted unsuccessful nominations for Honorary Awards with an explanation of the reasons for the decisions taken.

All other items listed on the action sheet had been completed or were included on the agenda for the meeting.

Chair's business**a) Chair's actions (*Document SEN11.25*)**

Chair's actions had been taken since the last meeting as follows:

Approval of PG Cert Applied Commissioning (Part-Time)

Approval of BA (Hons) Football Business and Finance (Full-Time)

Approval of BA (Hons) Football Business and Marketing (Full-Time)

Approval of BA (Hons) Football Business and Media (Full-Time)

Approval of Approval of MSc Applied Audio Technology (Full-Time)

Approval of MA Digital Filmmaking (Full-Time)

Approval of MSc Outside Broadcast Engineering (Full-Time)

Approval of BA (Hons) Dance & Fitness (Full-Time)

The above awards had been approved by the Chairs of the QEC Validation Sub-groups following confirmation that conditions set had been met. Senate recommended that these be endorsed.

b) Vice Chancellor's report to Senate (*Document SEN11.26*)

The Vice Chancellor commended her report to the meeting and highlighted the following items:

- Publication of the White Paper was now expected at the end of June
- The likelihood of the introduction of the Core & Margin model with reductions in student numbers across the board accompanied with an invitation to institutions to bid for additional numbers.
- The advancement to the Government by the sector of the Off-Quota argument.
- The ongoing HE in FE debate.
- The need for a strategy to address the introduction of the KIS.
- The pleasing HEIF allocation.
- The successful Active Universities bid.
- The welcome publication of the NHS London Performance Ratings.

Presentation and Discussion: The Development of the Learning Environment to embed flexible and distributed learning (FDL) and enhance Student Employability (*Document SEN11.27*)

Senate considered and discussed a presentation from the Deputy Vice Chancellor giving the background to the debate around the promotion of flexible and distributed learning. It was noted that:

- Individuals and teams within the University had a great deal of experience in FDL but there was a need now for a comprehensive strategy to pull the elements together and identify appropriate metrics for support and investment purposes.
- With Investment Fund support and help from the FDLC there were currently developments in FDL activity in both faculties.
- The School of Production and New Media had been leading developments in the use of Media Rich content.
- There was a commitment from SMT to continue investment in FDL provision through the Investment Fund.

The Vice Chancellor gave a further presentation on the employability agenda and noted that:

- The introduction of the KIS would further increase student expectations.
- A University- wide Steering Group led by the Dean of Enterprise & Business Management in the Faculty of Society & Health was considering developments in employability across the institution.
- Increased fee income in 2012-13 will enable the University to support further developments.
- Employability enhancement was linked inextricably with the development of the VLE.

Three key questions applicable both to developments in FDL and the enhancement of employability were identified which Senate was invited to discuss in detail.

What does Bucks need from a cross-University virtual learning environment / employability enhancement strategy?

What are the specific requirements in different academic areas from a University-wide virtual learning environment / employability enhancement strategy?

What are the specific requirements for different student users from a University-wide virtual learning environment / employability enhancement strategy?

Discussion: Flexible and Distributed Learning

The following points were raised for discussion:

- An FDL delivery model and structure to be implemented whenever and wherever desirable and feasible.
- It was important to recognise that a “one size fits all” approach to VLE development would not be appropriate and that it would be for each subject area to identify the most appropriate way forward within an overarching supportive framework.
- FDL was not to be seen as supplementary to traditional delivery nor simply as an equally valid alternative mode. Instead there needed to be a recognition that the learning experience embraced a continuum of different pedagogic approaches with the responsibility for identifying the most appropriate approach being the responsibility of delivery teams.
- It was noted that the University was yet to take a decision as to which VLE platform would be supported but that was perhaps a matter of technical detail which would be resolved with a greater understanding of what it was the University wanted to achieve with its VLE.
- Whilst concerns were expressed that a regulatory framework might be seen by some as bureaucratic, it was recognised that a formal framework was needed to enable the University to demonstrate its approach for audit purposes. However, it was agreed that the framework would have to be adaptable to allow the University to respond as quickly as possible to developments both in technology and in the market place.
- A programme of staff development activities had been provided by FDLC staff but uptake had been poor, as developing competency in FDL was not seen by many staff as a priority when their workload was based on in-class delivery.
- The adoption of “INSET” days was suggested as a way of rolling out development programmes to all staff.
- Whilst the need for universal staff development was recognised it was suggested the incentivised activities might prove more productive than a mandatory programme as, for the Third Campus to become a reality, staff participation was essential.

The DVC reminded members that Dr Michelle Selinger, Director - Education Practices at Cisco, had agreed to give two half-day workshops at the University on 16 June at Uxbridge and 17 June at High Wycombe on “Improvements in teaching

and learning - how and where technology can help". Staff were encouraged to attend this event and also to encourage colleagues, both academic and PSE, to attend.

Employability

The following points were raised for discussion:

- The concept of employability was understood in different ways across the University, with PSRB disciplines necessarily taking a different approach from other areas.
- The recognition of the key importance of employability needed to be embedded across the University.
- There needed to be a greater emphasis on employability at the course development stage. The introduction of an Employability Audit in the documentation for Validation had been a move in the right direction but had not been wholly successful.
- Staff development was needed as at the moment staff were committed to individual module development with overall course coherence being seen as a secondary feature and the responsibility of designated members of staff such as Course Leaders.
- The revised AR&E process would need to take into account student employability prospects and, if possible, the actual achievement of graduates.
- The University's Careers and Employability team needed to be involved with all developments and could offer useful support and guidance.
- It was suggested that employability should become a standard agenda item for Programme Committees to facilitate discussion between staff and students.
- The Employability Steering Group was to undertake an audit of current approaches across different teams so as to identify both best practice and areas where a more formalised approach was needed.
- The Enterprise Festival was identified as a valuable activity but with the perception that it had a tendency to compartmentalise this area of provision.
- Need for appropriate resources to underpin the development of an appropriate infrastructure to support work placements, work-experience and work-based/related learning.
- Industry / professional endorsement and accreditation of programmes should be actively pursued through validation and review.
- It was important to ensure that all key stakeholders were consulted in the development of a strategy and in its implementation, with both students and employers fully engaged in the process.

The discussion was summarised with the following points noted:

- i) The focus of the discussion had been around "people", particularly the engagement of staff and students with FDL and employability.
- ii) There was a need for reserved time for academic/PSE development in these areas.
- iii) A framework should be developed in which the FDL and employability strategies could be promoted.

It was agreed that SMT would reflect on the discussion and direct the way forward for employee engagement with the FDL and employability agendas.

ACTION: SMT

11.28

How should Senate conduct its business?

The Chair noted that Senate had a dual role:

Executive - as the most senior academic body of the University making formal decisions and approving formal policy and regulations
Discursive – considering the development and strategic implementation of University-wide initiatives relating to academic activities

These roles were discrete and, whilst of equal importance, it was necessary to ensure that the “formal” business of the meetings was covered, alongside a discussion of wider issues. Therefore it was not advisable to have some meetings which were devoted to one rather than both types of business. To this end it was agreed that:

- i) A review would be undertaken of university committees and their formal responsibilities with a view to rationalising workloads and reducing duplication, particularly between SEC and QEC.
- ii) A guide to University committees would be produced and disseminated via the web.
- iii) Joint extraordinary Senate/QEC meetings would be held as required.
- iv) Agendas would continue to include a combination of executive and discursive items but the responsibilities of each committee, and Senate in particular, would be clearly identified on agendas so as to expedite business and employ most profitably the time available.

ACTION: Academic Quality Directorate

11.29

Topic for Discussion at Joint Senate/Council Meeting

Senate heard that the combined meetings of Senate and Council have recently been devoted to particular topics for debate:

- Student Achievement & Satisfaction
- Institutional Audit
- Fees

Senate members were asked to give consideration to strategic items for the next and future joint meetings and to send these to the Chair. Particular suggestions made at the meeting were “Bucks Branding” and “What we are doing differently with students “ which will be considered further alongside other suggestions.

ACTION: All Members

11.30

Course Closure and Teaching Out Policy (*Document SEN11.28*)

The meeting received a discussion paper outlining areas to be considered in the development of a formal policy for course closure. It was noted that, additionally, the following areas needed consideration:

- i) The current basic process and documentation for course termination.
- ii) The procedures for temporary suspension of recruitment to a programme.
- iii) How issues raised through AR&E feed into the timeline.

Members were asked to submit further issues to the DVC by the end of June.

ACTION: All Members

It was agreed that a Course Closure Policy should be drafted prior to the new academic year.

ACTION: DVC

11.31

Policies and Regulations for Approval

The following policies had been considered at QEC on 1 June, and following minor amendments were presented to Senate.

a) **e-Submission, Marking and Feedback Policy (Document SEN11.29)**

Senate **approved** this policy.

b) **Assessment of Students (Document SEN11.30)**

Senate **approved** this document

c) **Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (CATS) (Document SEN11.31)**

Senate **approved** this document

d) **Academic Misconduct (Document SEN11.32)**

Senate heard that the revised regulations had been considered by the Joint Meeting of Senate/QEC and that feedback from that meeting had informed further revisions to the document. Time constraints had not permitted the documents to be reconsidered by QEC and therefore members were invited to raise any issues that they felt needed to be considered.

- Audio and visual plagiarism was an area which needed to be addressed but it was agreed that this could form an addendum to the revised document and be considered for approval by QEC and Senate at a later stage so as not to delay formal approval of the revised regulations at this stage.
- Staff development and training in the revised procedures would be needed and would be arranged by AQD.
- The appropriateness of the suggested 40 point penalty in the tariff for a "Deliberate intent to deceive" was considered and after a full discussion members voted to increase the penalty to 50 points.

Senate **approved** the revised document with the above amendment to the tariff.

ACTION: AQD

e) **Regulations for the Award of the Doctor of Philosophy by Portfolio (Document SEN11.33)**

The Acting Chair of QEC explained that this award was targeted at mid to late-career academics to enable them to gain a PhD through their published work. The draft regulations had been approved by Coventry University.

Senate **approved** these regulations.

f) **Professional Doctorates: Framework and Regulations (Document SEN11.34)**

The draft regulations had been approved by Coventry University.

It was noted that the terminology regarding extenuating / mitigating circumstances needed clarification in the document.

Members welcomed the addition to the University's portfolio.

It was **agreed** that Chair's Action be taken to approve this document when the above clarification had been made.

ACTION: Senior Registrar (Research)

g) **Revisions to AR&E Procedures & Deadlines for 2010-11 (Document SEN11.35)**

Senate heard that a major review of the regulations was planned for the next academic year with a working group reporting to QEC before Christmas to allow for

timely implementation of any resulting changes. As an interim measure minor revisions had been made to the regulations and these had been considered by the Joint Meeting of Senate/QEC. Feedback from that meeting had informed further and final revisions to the document.

Senate **approved** the revised regulations.

11.32 **Academic Year Calendar 2011-12 (Document SEN11.36)**

The following points were raised concerning the draft calendar:

- i) The dates of QEC and Senate in June 2012 would be considered and finalised outside the meeting.
- ii) To maximise the opportunities for student representation at University and faculty meetings consideration needed to be given to where meetings were scheduled during the teaching year and, in particular, to avoid examination periods.
- iii) The possibility of using Tandberg to conduct some meetings in the future was discussed.
- iv) A single University calendar of activities should be produced and placed in a prominent position on the new website.

ACTION: AQD

11.33 **External Examiner Nominations (Document SEN11.37)**

Chair's Action had been taken to approve two new appointments and three extensions to remit/term as follows:

- a) **Dr David Lynes**
Edgehill University
Extension to remit and term

BSc (Hons) Health Care Practice, Short CPD Courses, ICHT Internship Course

Senate **endorsed** the extension to remit and the term of office to 30 September 2011.
- b) **Dr Paul Fallon**
Wolverhampton University
Extension to remit and term

BA (Hons) Air Transport with Pilot Training, Air Transport with Commercial Pilot Training, Airline and Airport Management, Tourism in the 21st century, Corporate Events & Conference Management.

Senate **endorsed** the extension to remit and the term of office to 30 September 2012.
- c) **David Andrew**
The Institute of Queen Mary, University of London
Extension to remit
Leadership in Multi-Agency Settings

Senate **endorsed** the extension to remit.
- d) **Dr Judith Redman**
Sheffield Hallam University
MSc Advancing Spinal Cord Rehabilitation and Management Programme

Senate **endorsed** the new appointment for a four-year term of office from 01 October 2011 until 30 September 2015.

- e) **Dr Mark Button**
University of Portsmouth
MSc Business Continuity, Security & Emergency Management

Senate **endorsed** the new appointment for a four-year term of office from 01 March 2011 until 28 February 2015.

11.34 **External Examiner Coverage (Document SEN11.38)**

Attention was drawn to the areas of provision in the Faculty of Design, Media & Management where external examiners who had retired in September 2010 were still to be replaced:

- BA (Hons) Music Industry Management – a candidate has been nominated
- MA Art & Design – Graphic Design, MA Art & Design – Illustration, MA Art & Design – Printmaking – extension offered and awaiting acceptance
- Furniture – all courses – a candidate has been identified for nomination

ACTION: Academic Dean, Design, Media & Management

The external examiners retiring in September 2011 were noted and Faculties reminded of the need to secure nominations and appointments.

11.35 **Validation: Recommendation of Awards for Approval (Document SEN11.39)**

A number of courses were presented for approval.

- a) MA Marketing Communications (Full-time and part-time by attendance)
New validation
Senate **approved** the validation.
- b) FDA International Aviation Management with Airline Pilot Training (Part-time by FDL)
New validation
Senate **approved** the validation.
- c) BSc (Hons) Nursing (Full-time by attendance)
Revalidation
Senate **approved** the revalidation.
- d) PG Dip Nursing (Adult, Mental Health, Child) (Full-time by attendance)
New Validation
Senate **approved** the validation.
- e) BSc (Hons) International Business (Full-time by FDL)
New Validation
Senate **approved** the validation.
- f) MA Human Resources Management (Full-time & Part-time by attendance)
Revalidation
Senate **approved** the revalidation.
- g) BA (Hons) Coaching Science (Full-time by attendance)
New Validation
Senate **approved** the validation

11.36 Quality & Enhancement Committee (01 June 2011) (Document SEN11.40)

The Executive Summary of the meeting was **accepted** by Senate.

11.37 Student Experience Committee (17 May 2011) (Document SEN11.41)

The Executive Summary of the meeting was **accepted** by Senate.

11.38 Research Degrees Committee (19 May 2011) (Document SEN11.42)

The Executive Summary of the meeting was **accepted** by Senate.

11.39 Equality & Diversity Committee (20 May 2011) (Document SEN11.43)

The Executive Summary of the meeting was **accepted** by Senate.

11.40 Learning Services Board (24 May 2011) (Document SEN11.44)

The Executive Summary of the meeting was **accepted** by Senate.

11.41 Reports from Faculties

a) Design, Media & Management (Document SEN11.35)

The Executive Summary of the meeting was **accepted** by Senate.

b) Society & Health (Document SEN11.46)

The Executive Summary of the meeting was **accepted** by Senate.

11.42 Date of Next Meeting

Monday 21 November 2011 – Joint Senate / Council

Signed

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Chair

Date

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