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Senate

Open Minutes

Date of meeting: **Wednesday, 07 June 2017**

Duration of meeting: **2.00pm to 4.00pm**

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

Attendance

Name	Faculty / Directorate	Category of membership
Rebecca Bunting	Vice-Chancellor's Office	Ex-officio (Chair)
Miriam Moir	Academic Quality	Secretary
Sean Mackney	Vice-Chancellor's Office	Ex-officio
Tim Middleton	Vice-Chancellor's Office	Ex-officio
Lorraine Watkins-Mathys	Design, Media & Management	Ex-officio
Ellie Smith	Academic Quality	Ex-officio
Julie Irwin	Learning & Teaching	Ex-officio
Frazer Mackenzie	Design, Media & Management	Ex-officio
Paul Morgan	Society & Health	Ex-officio
Colin Martin	Society & Health	Ex-officio
Tim Coole	Design, Media & Management	Elected
Carlo Lusuardi	Design, Media & Management	Elected
Lois Drawmer	Design, Media & Management	Elected
Nic Fryer	Design, Media & Management	Elected
Roland Radaelli	Design, Media & Management	Elected
Karen Harrison-White	Society & Health	Elected
Ciaran O'Keefe	Society & Health	Elected
Jo Rixon	Society & Health	Elected
Joe Collins	Students' Union	Student Member
Catherine Forward	Society & Health	Observer

Apologies

Name	Faculty / Directorate	Category of membership
Sue West	Society & Health	Ex-officio
Phil Wood	Design, Media & Management	Ex-officio
Steven Pearce	Society & Health	Elected
Nasreen Akhtar	Society & Health	Elected
Ruth Gunstone	Student Services	Ex-officio
Florin Ioras	Design, Media & Management	Ex-officio
Allen Stroud	Design, Media & Management	Elected

Welcome / Apologies for absence

17.46 The Chair welcomed members to the Senate meeting.

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

Minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2017

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

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

Status of actions from the 22 March 2017 meeting

17.50 The Action Sheet with status updates was noted.

17.51 It was noted that work was progressing on a plan to bring together Research Institutes, Centres and Groups.

Chair's Actions taken since the previous meeting

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

Vice-Chancellor's Report to Senate

17.46 A verbal report was given focusing on an update of sector developments. In light of purdah, the development of the Office for Students, which would have expanded powers to protect the student interest, had been put on hold, although a number of appointments had been made or were in progress.

17.47 The outcome of TEF2 was to be announced shortly. It was anticipated that Bucks would be able to utilise the outcome to promote its support for students from a widening participation background.

17.48 The Longitudinal Educational Outcomes (LEO) data on Graduate Outcomes was a further new development in the sector, which aims to present employment and earnings outcomes for leavers of higher education one, three, five and ten years after graduation. It is currently experimental, and further information is expected later in the summer.

17.49 Student fees remain high on the political agenda.

17.50 It was announced that the University had passed its probation, and had achieved the requirements for a full UKVI licence. This news was welcomed by Senate.

Transformation Programme update (SEN17.17)

17.51 The paper for Senate had also been presented to Council. It provided the context for the Transformation Programme, and presented the vision for the University: remaining true to its roots, the University would continue to promote life-long learning through professional, creative and vocational courses which would lead to successful careers for its students. While the University faced financial challenges, there was a determination to move forwards with its purpose, pursuing cost-effective means to achieve its vision. Set in the context of a diminishing number of school-leavers, alternative markets needed to be sourced: the development of Higher and Degree Apprenticeships was therefore important for Bucks, focusing on areas where the University has areas of expertise and skills, with plans to develop Level 7 apprenticeships in the future.

17.52 Senate queried the numbers expected on apprenticeships. It was acknowledged that as a new product it was difficult to quantify, but the potential was for large numbers to take up apprenticeships. The University needed to be forward-thinking in its approach to these new markets, and in translating employer-led demands into its provision. The University was working in partnership with an external communications and marketing group to develop quality leads with potential employers. It was agreed that at the next Senate meeting there would be a presentation on Apprenticeships.

ACTION: S.Mackney/J.Irwin

17.53 While appreciating that apprenticeships would be an important part of Bucks' provision in the future, Senate also acknowledged that the University needed to develop its visibility. It was noted that the new website was greatly improved, and its increased functionality allowed for much better showcasing of courses.

17.54 It was noted that Bucks' sustainability was at the forefront of the Transformation Programme, and that changes needed to be made to reflect the resources available. To that end five workstreams had been created, engaging staff in tasks to effect the changes needed:

- Academic Portfolio Review
- Enabling Academic Systems
- The Bucks Curriculum Model
- Space Utilisation Plan
- New Ways of Working

Progress was being made in each workstream, and while some projects required mid to long-term planning, some changes were being planned for implementation from September 2017 where feasible.

17.55 It was noted that the paper gave a positive outlook for the University, and it was suggested that this should be shared more widely with colleagues. It was agreed that this would be progressed with the Communications team.

ACTION: R.Bunting

Bucks Academic Framework – update (SEN17.18)

17.56 Senate was reminded that the original deadline for Phase 1 staff to complete their self-assessment as part of the Bucks Academic Framework had been extended to the end of May 2017. A decision had also been taken not to create a separate self-assessment process for the Heads of Academic Department, and that expectations of HoADs would be set and discussed using the PDR process. A review of completed self-assessments is underway.

17.57 Following meetings with UCU, further amendments to the Framework may be required, and a further update would be given at Senate in September.

17.58 The fact that HoADs were not being included in the self-assessment process was questioned. Senate was assured that where self-assessments had been completed, HoADs would receive feedback, and that the decision to use the PDR process had been one of pragmatism. There had been concerns that the self-assessment would focus on the management side of the role, and not reflect the academic side sufficiently.

17.59 Senate noted the continued work to develop the framework.

Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area – ESG (SEN17.19)

17.60 Since the first publication of the ESG in 2005, the University has mapped its quality assurance processes against the ESG Standards. This mapping was last considered by Senate in 2008. Attention was drawn to the new assurance statement required by HEFCE under Cyclical External Quality Assurance, where the University noted it was now reviewed through the Annual Provider Review. The paper provided an updated mapping which Senate agreed and noted.

OIA Annual Statement (SEN17.20)

17.61 Senate was notified of the publication of the Annual Statement by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator, detailing casework from 1 January to 31 December 2016, which for the first time was available online only. It was noted that Bucks compares favourably with comparative institutions, and had significantly fewer cases than the sector average.

17.62 Senate noted the Annual Statement.

OFFA Access Agreement 2018-19 (SEN17.21)

17.63 Senate received the University Access Agreement 2018-19 which had been submitted to OFFA in April 2017. It was noted as an important record of the University's commitment to widening participation.

Committee Structure Review (SEN17.22)

17.64 One of the tasks arising from the Transformation Programme was to streamline further the University Committee structure. The proposal presented to Senate was not intended to reduce engagement with University decision-making and communication processes, but to make the Committees more efficient through reducing duplication of membership and remit.

17.65 The paper presented to Senate set out the proposed basic structure for Committees from 2017-18:

- Retain Senate and Academic Planning Committee
- Merge Quality & Standards Committee with Education Committee
- Merge Research & Enterprise Committee with Research Degrees Committee

17.66 It was further proposed that the requirements for Faculty Boards, Academic Faculty Management Team meetings and Faculty Management Team meetings be reviewed, that Programme Committees be reduced in number, and that the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee be discontinued.

17.67 Projected savings by instituting the proposed structure was estimated to be 238 staff hours.

17.68 Senate expressed concern over the operation of Programme Committees, and it was felt that reducing the number did not address the underlying issue of their varying effectiveness. It was suggested that an alternative means of engaging with student representatives and obtaining feedback from students should be explored, alongside the review of the Student Voice Policy, leading to a fundamental change to the concept of Programme Committees. This would link with the work being undertaken on the Personal Tutor role, and with student representation work being undertaken by the Students' Union. It was agreed that such a radical change could not be achieved by September 2017, and that for 2017-18 Programme Committees would be rationalised, and a major review of their operation should take place for introduction in 2018-19.

17.69 Senate also expressed concern over the removal of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee from the proposed structure. It was agreed that this would be reconsidered alongside the re-development of the other Committee remits.

17.70 With the provisos noted above, Senate welcomed the proposed new Committee structure, and agreed that detailed Terms of Reference should be developed and membership reviewed for September 2017.

ACTION: E.Smith

Amendment - Academic Assessment Regulations (SEN17.23)

17.71 Under the Transformation Programme, initiatives are underway to improve the retention and achievement of students. The proposal to amend the Academic Assessment Regulations was directly linked to this initiative by enabling wider participation in reassessment.

17.72 The amendment would allow all students to have a reassessment opportunity for each failed module, effectively removing the reassessment credit envelope. The benefits of the amendment would be to equate regulations for full-time with part time students, to simplify the regulations in terms of explanation and understanding, and to build in flexibility for programmes such as accelerated degrees and apprenticeships. Senate was asked to consider the proposal and determine whether it should be approved for all students from 2017-18 or just for new admissions. It was noted that the amendment was of potential benefit to students.

17.73 Senate approved the amendment to the Academic Assessment Regulations for all students to come into effect from 2017-18.

Flexible and Distributed Learning Policy (SEN17.24)

17.74 It was noted that the FDL Policy had been developed by a cross-University working group to support the implementation of operational documents and processes to enhance the delivery of flexible and distributed learning and technology-enhanced learning, and had been recommended to Senate by the Education Committee.

17.75 Senate queried the provision for IT security within the document and asked that such provision be investigated and reference to it included in the document. The document could then be considered by Chair's Action.

ACTION: J.Irwin

Attendance and Engagement Policy (SEN17.25)

17.76 Senate was asked to consider the draft Attendance and Engagement Policy which was recommended by the Education Committee.

17.77 Following discussion, Senate requested that the following aspects of the Policy be reconsidered:

- The length of time between absence and intervention (10 days was felt to be too long for Bucks students)
- The number of staff involved at the operational level (it was considered to be overly complex)
- The definition of occurrence of absence (“teaching incidences” rather than “consecutive days”)
- The reporting responsibility (emphasis on reporting to be placed on module tutors rather than on Personal Tutors)
- The separation of the Policy expectations from the operational guidance

The revised document to be brought back to Senate in September.

ACTION: E.Smith

Maintaining Academic Integrity Policy (SEN17.26)

17.78 Senate was asked to consider the draft Maintaining Academic Integrity Policy which was presented as the outcome of the working group instigated by the Education Committee to review the Academic Misconduct Policy. The revised Policy was recommended by the Education Committee.

17.79 Following discussion, Senate requested that the following aspects of the Policy be reconsidered:

- The title of the Policy (as the content of the document did not sufficiently reflect the title)
- The balance between the academic integrity content and the disciplinary procedures

The revised document to be brought back to Senate in September.

ACTION: E.Smith

Assessment and Feedback Policy (SEN17.27)

17.80 Senate was asked to consider the draft Assessment and Feedback Policy which had been designed to combine and replace the Assessment of Students Policy and the E-submission, e-marking and e-moderation policy and procedure. The revised Policy was recommended by the Quality & Standards Committee.

17.81 Senate approved the Assessment and Feedback Policy to come into effect from 2017-18, and approved rescinding Assessment of Students and the E-submission, e-marking and e-moderation policy and procedure.

Admissions Policy and Procedure (SEN17.28)

17.82 Senate was asked to consider the amended Admissions Policy and Procedure which incorporates changes to ensure compliance with the Consumer Rights Act (2015), details

regarding the admissions process outside of the UCAS cycle, Foundation Year options and Degree apprenticeships entry criteria and admissions. The revised Policy was recommended by the Quality & Standards Committee.

17.83 Senate approved the amendments to the Admissions Policy and Procedure.

Periodic Review (SEN17.29)

17.84 Senate was asked to consider the amended Review Process for University Departments and Academic Partners, under its new proposed title of Periodic Review. The amended document replaces the periodic review of programmes by department with periodic review of programmes by subject. The revised document was recommended by the Quality & Standards Committee.

17.90 Senate approved the amendments to the Review Process for University Departments and Academic Partners, and its new title of Periodic Review.

Extension to term of validation (SEN17.30 and SEN17.31)

17.85 Senate considered the rationales for the extension to validation term for programmes proposed by the Faculties, noted that the programmes were in good standing, and approved the following:

- a) MB3HRM1 MA Human Resource Management – extended to September 2018
- b) MB3HRM2 MA Human Resource Management – extended to September 2018
- c) ME1EDU2 MA Education (Not NMC accredited) – extended to 31 August 2019
- d) ME1PGC2 PG Certificate Education – extended to 31 August 2019
- e) ZE1PTR2 Practice Teacher Award – extended to 31 August 2019
- f) ZE1MPP2 Mentorship in Professional Practice (L6) – extended to 31 August 2019
- g) ZE2MPP2 Mentorship in Professional Practice (L7) – extended to 31 August 2019
- h) ZE2MPM2 Mentorship in Professional Practice (Midwifery) – extended to 31 August 2019

External Examiner Appointments (SEN17.32)

17.86 Senate received the update from the External Examiner Approval Panel and endorsed the decisions made in each instance.

Validation: Recommendation of Awards for Approval (SEN17.33)

17.87 Senate reviewed the outcomes of validation events held since the previous meeting and endorsed the decisions in each case, and noted where conditions had yet to be met.

17.88 It was confirmed that the conditions set for the MSc Child Protection and Adult Safeguarding had now been met.

17.89 Senate approved programmes for delivery where Conditions had been satisfactorily completed, and agreed that programmes where conditions are met before the next Senate could be approved by Chair's Action.

Committee Reports

17.90 Senate received Executive Summaries for the following meetings:

- **Quality & Standards Committee**, 3 May 2017 2017 (SEN17.34)
- **Education Committee**, 17 May 2017 (SEN17.35)
- **Research & Enterprise Committee**, 19 May 2017 (SEN17.36): it was noted that while the University was producing high quality, interesting research, it was not in a sufficient volume to meet the Research Degree Awarding Powers (RDAP) criteria at present. The application for RDAP was therefore on hold for the medium term, and other priorities were being progressed.
- **Academic Planning Committee**, 27 April 2017 (SEN17.37)
- **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee**, 21 March 2017 (SEN17.38)
- **Design, Media & Management Faculty Board**, 26 April 2017 (SEN17.39)
- **Society & Health Faculty Board**, 25 April 2017 (SEN17.40)

Concluding remarks

17.91 The Chair noted that the meeting would be the last Senate attended by Tim Middleton, Pro-Vice Chancellor Research & Enterprise. On behalf of Senate the Chair thanked Professor Middleton for his valuable contribution to the University, particularly in the support he had given to colleagues, and wished him every success for the future.

17.92 The Chair also thanked Joe Collins and Jenny Wade – the outgoing Student Union representatives - and Jo Rixon - elected representative for Society and Health - whose terms of office had come to an end, for their valued contribution to Senate.

Date of next meeting

17.93 The date of the next meeting is Wednesday 27 September 2017.