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Senate

Open Minutes

Date of meeting: **Wednesday, 27 September 2017**

Duration of meeting: **2.00pm to 4.15pm**

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 Registry	Secretary
Nick Braisby	Vice-Chancellor's Office	Ex-officio
Sean Mackney	Vice-Chancellor's Office	Ex-officio
Sue West	Society & Health	Ex-officio
Ellie Smith	Academic Registry	Ex-officio
Ruth Gunstone	Student Services	Ex-officio
Julie Irwin	Learning & Teaching	Ex-officio
Phil Wood	Design, Media & Management	Ex-officio
Paul Morgan	Society & Health	Ex-officio
Karen Buckwell-Nutt	Society & Health	Ex-officio
Florin Ioras	Research	Ex-officio
Tim Coole	Design, Media & Management	Elected
Lyndon Buck	Design, Media & Management	Elected
John Hathaway	Design, Media & Management	Elected
Gulen Addis	Society & Health	Elected
Karen Harrison-White	Society & Health	Elected
Ciaran O'Keefe	Society & Health	Elected
Margaret Rioga	Society & Health	Elected
Penny Farrelly	Society & Health	Elected
Ben Parmar	Students' Union	Student Member
Lauren O'Shea	Students' Union	Student Member

Apologies

Name	Faculty / Directorate	Category of membership
Frazer Mackenzie	Design, Media & Management	Ex-officio
Colin Martin	Research	Ex-officio
Carlo Lusuardi	Design, Media & Management	Elected
Lois Drawmer	Design, Media & Management	Elected
Nic Fryer	Design, Media & Management	Elected
Lee Curtis	Society & Health	Elected

Welcome / Apologies for absence

17.94 The Chair welcomed members to the Senate meeting.

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

Minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2017

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

Status of actions from the 22 March 2017 meeting

17.97 The Action Sheet with status updates was noted.

17.98 It was noted that the FDL Policy had been revised as required by Senate and was being prepared for Chair's Action to be taken.

Chair's Actions taken since the previous meeting

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

University Committees revised structure from 2017-18 (SEN17.41)

17.100 Senate was reminded that the University Committees document had been considered in June 2017, and that a number of changes had been requested which had since been undertaken, as noted in the paper provided. Senate had been concerned about the discontinuation of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, and was now assured that, in all Committees' Terms of Reference, the University's policies on equality, diversity and inclusion were required to be taken into account.

17.101 A question was raised over the lack of a student member on the Academic Planning Committee, and it was clarified that such members were co-opted by the Chair.

17.102 The document had been approved by Chair's Action to enable preparations for committees to be held in 2017-18. It would be kept under review, and Senate was assured that the requested fundamental review of Programme Committees would be undertaken during the current academic year.

17.103 Senate noted the revised University Committees document.

Senate Terms of Reference and new members (SEN17.42)

17.104 The terms of reference for Senate as outlined in the paper were noted.

17.105 New members of Senate were welcomed, and those who had been elected as teaching representatives were congratulated.

Vice-Chancellor's Report to Senate

17.106 A verbal report was given informing Senate of a number of developments in the sector.

- Nicola Dandridge (UUK) had been appointed as Chief Executive Officer for the Office for Students (OfS) which will play an important regulatory role across the sector in the future. The OfS will focus on the rights of the student, and will have both regulatory and funding powers.
- Chris Milward (HEFCE) had been appointed to the Director for Fair Access and Participation role at the OfS. His familiarity with widening participation strategies and support for non-traditional students was noted and welcomed.
- David Sweeney (HEFCE) is to be the Executive Chair for the new organisation Research England, now part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) which also includes the seven Research Councils and Innovate UK.

The University welcomed this news and found reassurance that the appointments were to those from the sector.

17.107 The Vice-Chancellor thanked all those who had been involved with the recent successful Graduation Ceremonies, and noted that she had received many complimentary comments from families attending the event. She also thanked all those who had attended the recent Open Day, where the activities on offer had given a very good impression of the University.

17.108 The University was embarking on a three-year programme of change under Transformation, designed to create a stronger financial base from which to grow the University's potential. Excellent work was already being undertaken to disseminate key positive messages about the University on campus, on the website and on social media.

TEF Appeal Outcome (SEN17.43)

17.109 The paper provided to Senate gave an update on the outcome of the University's appeal against its TEF 2 judgement.

17.110 The TEF Panel's decision had been to judge Bucks as Bronze. Although the University had appealed against this decision, the Appeal Panel maintained the Bronze award.

17.111 The heavy weighting of performance for graduates securing high skills employment and undertaking further study applied by the Panel was a problem area for the University, along with below benchmark performances in parts of the NSS.

17.112 When compared with the submissions from other Universities, the Bucks submission took an analytical approach rather than adopting a more promotional style.

17.113 The University will have to decide whether to enter the TEF again in 2018, utilising the available data to inform its decision. There is much work to be undertaken to address those areas of weakness which kept Bucks in the Bronze category, namely issues raised by students in the NSS, retention, and graduate level employment. This has been started through the discussions at the Subject Annual Monitoring Meetings and highlighted in the resulting action plans, but will require a University-wide effort to make the necessary improvements.

17.114 Senate asked whether the Subject level TEF would be of benefit to Bucks. It was explained that a pilot project was currently being undertaken at Subject level and that the subject metrics would be available in the summer of 2018.

17.115 It was noted that LEO data may be of more benefit to Bucks than DLHE.

17.116 It was noted that one of the benefits of having entered the TEF was the huge amount of data now available to inform planning activities for the University.

NSS 2017 Outcome (SEN17.44)

17.117 Senate had been provided with a paper outlining the University's performance in NSS 2017.

17.118 Overall there had been a decline in satisfaction at Bucks, as there had been across the sector, but there were also areas where Bucks was performing well, and in many areas outperforming competitors and others in the sector.

17.119 The major focus going forward will be to build on the positives and to improve Bucks' standing in the league tables. The University needs to ensure that plans are actively put in place to make sure that the teaching and content is good, that the programmes are delivered well and to the published timetable, that the resources are in place to support the course delivery, and that the University continues to listen and respond to the student voice.

17.120 Every subject area has positive messages coming from the NSS, and the intention is to use these in marketing campaigns.

17.121 Action Plans arising from the SAMMs will be focusing on improvements to NSS outcomes, including ensuring greater participation in the survey. These will be monitored through the Education Committee, and progress reported to Senate.

Degree Apprenticeships at Bucks

17.122 A presentation gave Senate an update on progress with degree apprenticeships, and noted the following:

- The University had been one of the first to receive funding from HEFCE to develop degree apprenticeships, and so was at an advantage in the sector
- The apprenticeship levy had now started and employers were actively seeking apprenticeships
- The Apprenticeship Hub based at UCAV was undertaking the marketing and sales of apprenticeships, and was building relationships with employers
- The target area was based on Buckinghamshire and surrounding counties
- A curriculum framework for Degree Apprenticeships had been validated for Bucks and a series of workshops had been held with staff to help teams contextualise the framework
- Six apprenticeships had been approved so far, and nine more were in development
- A pre-apprenticeship programme was also under development
- The University was applying to be on the Register of Apprenticeships Assessment Organisations

17.123 Senate welcomed the excellent progress that had been made in this area, and requested that guidelines were provided for staff delivering the programmes, as well as developing them.

ACTION: Julie Irwin

17.124 It was noted that the presentation would be made available on Blackboard under Apprenticeships.

Transformation Programme report

17.125 A verbal update on the Transformation programme was given.

17.126 Senate was reminded that five workstreams had been created, engaging staff in tasks to effect the changes needed and to develop new ways of working:

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

17.127 It was noted that a key action for 2017-18 was to attract, recruit and retain more students.

17.128 While new frameworks for Level 0 and for apprenticeships had been established, there was more work to be done on the institutional frameworks for curriculum development at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. It was agreed that it would be useful for Senate to have a paper about the Level 0 programmes for its next meeting.

ACTION: Julie Irwin

Update on recommendations to Senate from Q&S/Education Committees Report 2015-16 (SEN17.46)

17.129 Senate was reminded that, as part of the Strategic University Review and Evaluation process for the previous academic year, a report including recommendations arising from discussions at the joint Quality & Standards and Education Committee meeting had been presented at the joint Senate/Council meeting in November 2016. The purpose of the paper was to provide Senate with an update on the actions taken to address the recommendations.

17.130 It was noted that significant progress had been made on all the recommendations, with actions being taken at Faculty and institutional level.

Bucks Academic Framework – update

17.131 A review of completed self-assessments had taken place, and a process of calibration was underway to align academic roles with the framework.

17.132 Further amendments to the Framework were being made, prior to discussions with Senior Lecturers and Lecturers. Guidance notes were being drawn up by HR, and workshops will be arranged on using the framework as a reference point for identifying objectives for PDRs.

17.133 Senate noted the continued work to develop the framework.

Attendance and Engagement Policy (SEN17.48)

17.134 Senate had considered the draft Attendance and Engagement Policy at its meeting in June and had requested a number of amendments.

17.135 Following discussion, Senate requested a further reconsideration of the Policy alongside the operational guidelines as it was felt that the precise details here would be most important in ensuring the Policy could work effectively.

17.136 It was considered that:

- The Guidelines focus on attendance only, and need to be expanded to include engagement.
- There was a need for a PSRB requirement statement
- The policy needed to be more supportive and less punitive

17.137 It was agreed that the Academic Registry would discuss the Policy again, and that with the changes requested, could be approved by Chair's Action.

ACTION: Ellie Smith

Academic Malpractice Policy (SEN17.49)

17.138 The Academic Registrar noted that further work needed to be undertaken with this policy, including a process review, and that the paper was to be withdrawn from the meeting.

Library Collection Management Policy (SEN17.50)

17.139 The updated Library Collection Management Policy, endorsed by Education Committee, was presented for approval.

17.140 It was noted that the Library was making major changes in building and reviewing e-resources over book stock, and making learning resources as accessible as possible.

17.141 While Senate understood the benefits of such accessibility, there was some concern over the sustainability of the postal loan and inter-library loan sections. It was requested that the Policy be given further consideration, and be brought back to Education Committee in November.

ACTION: Julie Irwin

External Examiner Appointments (SEN17.51)

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

Concluding remarks

17.143 The Chair noted that the next meeting would be joint Senate/Council meeting and reminded Senate that the purpose of that meeting was to enable Council to take responsibility for assuring the University's quality and standards.

17.144 The meeting was the last Senate attended by Ruth Gunstone, Director of Student Services. On behalf of Senate the Chair thanked Ruth for her invaluable contribution to the University, particularly in the support she had given to students, and wished her every success for the future, adding that she would be sorely missed by many colleagues at Bucks.

Date of next meeting

17.145 The date of the next meeting is Monday 20 November 2017 at 4pm.