# BOURNEMOUTH UNIVERSITY CONFIRMED

**SENATE**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SENATE HELD 28 OCTOBER 2015**

Present: Prof J Vinney (**Chair**)

Ms M Barron; Dr M Board; Dr M Bobeva; Dr E Borkoles; Prof J Fletcher; Ms J Forster; Ms M Gray; Dr R Gunstone; Mr A James; Prof S Jukes; Ms J Mack (Secretary); Prof C Maggs; Ms E Mayo-Ward (SUBU); Prof S McDougall; Prof T McIntyre-Bhatty; Dr S Minocha; Prof E Rosser; Dr R Southern; Ms A Stevens; Prof S Tee; Dr H Thiel; Dr S White

In attendance: Ms M Frampton (Policy & Committees Officer); Dr D Holley [Agenda Item 5.1];

Ms L Ladle [Agenda Item 5.1]; Mr R Pottle [Agenda Items 4.3 and 5.1]; Mr G Rayment (Corporate Governance & Committee Manager); Dr J Taylor; Dr C Van Raalte [Agenda Item 5.1]; Dr R Sahandi [Agenda Item 5.1]

Apologies received: Mr J Andrews; Mr G Beards; Prof I MacRury; Ms J Northam; Prof S Page;

Mr K Pretty; Ms C Schendel-Wilson (SUBU); Prof K Wilkes; Prof T Zhang

# WELCOMES, APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1.1 The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and apologies were noted as above.

1.2 The Chair welcomed the new Elected Academic Staff Representatives: Dr Milena Bobeva (Faculty of Management (FM)); Dr Erika Borkoles (FM); Mr K Pretty (Faculty of Science & Technology (SciTech)); Ms Melanie Gray (Faculty of Media & Communication (FMC)); Dr Richard Southern (FMC); Dr Michele Board (Faculty of Health & Social Sciences (HSS));

Dr Sara White (HSS).

1.3 The Chair also welcomed (in her absence) Ms Julie Northam who had joined Senate to represent the Research & Knowledge Exchange Office and Prof Stephen Tee, Executive Dean of the Faculty of Health and Social Science.

1.4 Dr Richard Gunstone declared that he was a Committee Member of the British Computer Society, Dorset.

# MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SENATE HELD ON 3 JUNE 2015

The minutes were approved as an accurate record subject to the following amendments:

Minute 2.1.3 – Prof Rosser advised that references to the electronic Pay Progression Form should be amended to read ‘the Standard Academic Profile (SAP)’.

Minute 7.1.3 – Dr Taylor clarified minute 7.1.3 advising that MRes and MPhil registration periods for full time and part time study should always be less than full time and part time PhD registrations, and therefore Postgraduate Research degrees registration periods were not always consistent.

Minute 7.1.5 – Dr Taylor advised that the end of the first sentence should read ‘it was not possible to amend the University’s regulation to apply across the board within a short period of time’.

# Matters Arising

2.1.1 Agenda Item 2.1.4 – Section 8 – Any Other Business

The new space which had been allocated to SciTech had been refurbished and occupied within the specified timescale.

2.1.2 Agenda Item 6.3.3 – Global Engagement Plan

Dr Minocha had circulated a suitably redacted version (due to commercial sensitivity) of the Global Engagement Plan (GEP) to Deans which had been disseminated to Faculty Executive Teams.

2.1.3 Agenda Item 6.3.4 – Global Engagement Plan

Senators had provided their comments and suggestions regarding the GEP to Dr Minocha by 30 June 2015.

2.1.4 Agenda Item 7.1.6 – Proposed Changes to *6A – Standard Assessment Regulations: Postgraduate Research Degrees*

This would be discussed under Agenda Item 6.3.

# REPORT OF ELECTRONIC SENATE MEETING OF 7 TO 14 OCTOBER 2015

3.1 The report of the Electronic Senate meeting of 7 to 14 October 2015 was noted.

3.2 Annex A of the Electronic Senate report included comments and questions raised by Dr Borkoles and Dr Bobeva. The report also included responses from senior University staff members.

3.3 With regards to Section 2.2.7 of Annex A, Ms Barron advised that 30% of the University’s student population had a Widening Participation (WP) flag and all WP students were fully supported throughout their studies.

# 4. VICE CHANCELLOR’S COMMUNICATIONS

# 4.1 BU 2018 and HE Sector Update

4.1.1 An event recently took place to celebrate the Athena SWAN bronze award which had been awarded to the University in recognition of its commitment to tackling gender inequality in Higher Education. The Chair thanked the many staff members who had been working hard to start the process.

4.1.2 A plan would be put into place to progress the Athena SWAN project on to the next level which would be the Silver award, which would require recognition at Departmental Level.

4.1.3 For the first time, the University had been ranked within the top 500 universities in the world, according to the latest Times Higher Education World University Rankings. BU had been listed between 401 and 500 on the list, with only four other UK post-92 institutions reaching the top 500. The other three UK post-92 universities within the top 500 on the list were Portsmouth, Oxford Brookes and Plymouth.

4.1.4 The University had also risen in all three major University league table rankings in the UK; The Guardian University League Table, The Complete University League Table and the Times and Sunday Times League Table. Overall, the University had an aggregate ranking of 66th which was a major achievement. The University had also successfully participated in the lobbying for a change of policy to ensure that the impact of placement students on student/staff ratio data was taken into account in the league table results.

4.1.5 In order to increase the University’s profile and to launch the Global Engagement Plan, an International Commencement Ceremony was held to welcome new international students to the University. 22 local dignitaries, 170 staff members and around 500 students attended the ceremony which took place at the Bournemouth International Centre.

4.1.6 The number of students who enrolled at the University for the 2015/16 academic year had been the highest number ever achieved. The main challenge for the University would be to remain focused on the student experience and to ensure the University effectively delivers to student expectations.

4.1.7 A government Green Paper was due to be published shortly and it was expected that the consultation would outline the way the sector would be driven over the next few years. It would be important for the University to position itself powerfully and focus on teaching, inspiring students and research.

4.1.8 On 25 November 2015, the government would set out its Comprehensive Spending Review. It was expected that cuts of between 25% and 40% may be announced. It was still unclear whether the budget cuts would filter through in one year or would be spread over a number of years. The University’s main challenge would be to continue its focus on both intellectual and capital investment and to retain its excellent student experience.

4.1.9 It was expected that the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), which would assess the quality of teaching in universities in the same way the Research Excellence Framework examines the quality of research, would probably be implemented within the next 6 to 9 months. TEF would be debated later in the meeting.

4.1.10 Dr White advised that prospective students were encouraged by Career Advisors in secondary schools to examine university metrics, league tables and Unistats when choosing their University to study. It was of huge importance that the University continues to be visible in league tables.

**4.2 REF 2020 Planning**

4.2.1 Prof Fletcher advised that the REF 2020 preparations had commenced immediately after the results of REF 2014 had been published. The REF 2014 guidance was being followed in the interim until REF 2020 guidance was available.

4.2.2 Open Access would be compulsory for REF 2020 and the importance of academic staff publishing their work using Open Access was highlighted. In order to meet the REF requirements, BRIAN (Bournemouth Research Information And Networking) would be used to support the reviews and exercises, and only outputs recorded in BRIAN would be eligible for review. Prof Fletcher believed that impact would probably become increasingly important moving forward.

4.2.3 A REF Committee has been set up and Unit of Assessment Leaders would be included in the membership.

4.2.4 The timeline for the assessment of outputs would start with a light-touch internal review. Following the light-touch review, subsequent reviews would become progressively thorough as the process moves towards 2020. When the University receives further information regarding REF 2020, the process would be modified accordingly.

4.2.5 Prof Fletcher would keep Senators updated with the changes as they are published.

**4.3 National Student Survey (NSS)**

4.3.1 Prof McIntyre-Bhatty advised that, since the University had moved to a Faculty and Departmental structure, the outcomes of the NSS had highlighted the higher and lower performing teams, which was very different to the information historically provided at School level. The information which would be provided by Mr Pottle should be discussed further at Executive meetings and Faculty Academic Standards Committee meetings. It was noted that there had been a lot of good work at programme level, however the main challenge was consistency and this should be the main focus moving forward.

4.3.2 Mr Pottle reported that the key headlines from the NSS 2015 were that Organisation and Management had decreased by 1% to 79% and the overall satisfaction of students had reduced from 80% to 79%. The number of students reporting to be actively dissatisfied had risen by 1.4%. The questions regarding the Quality of Teaching, Assessment and Feedback, and Academic Support had all remained quite static this year. The areas of decline were Organisation and Management, Learning Resources and Personal Development. There were lessons to be learned from the institution and Faculty level data, although the Department and programme level data was the most informative. The University had a wide range of scores for programmes which ranged from 33% to 100%.

4.3.3 The optional questions asked were generally not focused on as intensely as the first set of questions, however the results had shown interesting comparisons and were more positive than the core set of questions.

4.3.4 As a comparison, Liverpool Hope University had seen a large increase in overall satisfaction of 7%, and it was believed that improvements in ‘Organisation and Management’ indicated that an institutional level change had been implemented. Senators noted that the University had a lot of volatility year on year, and the results for each year had shown that it was not always the same programmes which had low scores.

4.3.5 On a positive note, there was evidence to show it was possible for the University to improve its NSS scores moving forward.

**5. DEBATE ITEM – EDUCATION EXCELLENCE**

5.1 Dr Holley introduced the presentation ‘Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)’, for which she was joined by Ms Ladle, Ms Mayo-Ward, Dr Van Raalte and Dr Sahandi.

5.2 Upon his appointment, Mr Jo Johnson MP, the Minister of State for Universities and Science, had spoken about how he expected a clear set of outcome-focused criteria and metrics to be included in the TEF. He also believed the TEF should be underpinned by an external assessment process undertaken by an independent quality body. This suggestion had been included in a recent consultation and had been contested a great deal.

5.3 Concerns had been voiced in the Sector about suggested reports that only a portion (possibly 10% to 20%) of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) would be permitted to be classed as ‘excellent’ under TEF. Doubts had also been expressed on the impact this would have on measures to attract international students, and also the possible introduction of ‘perverse incentives’. The Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI) was also concerned with the suggestion and recommended that a mechanism be put into place which would not reward just the Oxbridge tutorial system. A standard for teaching was already available through the HEA’s UK Professional Standards Framework. A literature review had also been undertaken, resulting in an emerging model of teaching excellence which grouped skills into three areas – professionalism, personal development and practical.

5.4 Ms Mayo-ward explained that this emergent model could be mapped onto the findings of the Student Opinion Survey (SOS) as follows:

* Professionalism
  + University staff having a significant knowledge of their areas of expertise and having links to industry, which was important to students as they progress through each year.
  + Academic staff using relevant and up-to-date content to directly impact employability.
* Personal Development
  + Staff should be approachable, be available and be easy to communicate with and able to pass on their personal experiences learnt from working in industry.
  + Growing nominations for You’re Brilliant Awards showed that teaching excellence was important to students and demonstrated that staff were approachable and willing to help, and that students could relate to staff on a peer to peer level.
* Practical
  + Historically, the highest volume of comments received from students via the SOS indicated that interactive, engaging and mixed teaching approaches resulted in excellence for students.

5.5 The final presentation slide included a number of links to various useful websites. The Senate Clerk would circulate this information to Senators for information.

**ACTION**: The information contained within the final presentation slide included a number

of links to various useful websites. This information would be circulated to

Senators for information.

**ACTION BY**: Senate Clerk

5.6 Dr Van Raalte suggested that pedagogy was not always understood correctly. There was a great deal of information available regarding teaching, but information about learning and independent learning skills was less common. Dr Sahandi agreed and advised that students’ skills and knowledge had changed from those who had studied at BU historically, and the University now needed to reflect on the pedagogy which had been used in the past and explore the independent learning aspect.

5.7 Ms Mayo-Ward reminded Senators that the NSS was completed by final year students who had completed three years of study and had greater expectations. Final year students also expected to have better skills development and had become independent learners through their studies. Now that students were moving towards a consumerist market, this had led to higher expectations and through the NSS results, it was apparent they were not realising their expectations.

5.8 Ms Ladle advised that it was difficult to measure the quality of teaching. Although a self- assessment method could be introduced, the inspectorate route (as takes place in secondary schools) would not be appropriate for universities. University education should excite students and encourage learning. Ms Bobeva believed that the University currently had a dominant teaching style, and moving forward we would need to deliver knowledge to students and this would be the point when teaching and learning would blend together.

5.9 Prof Tee agreed that there may be cases where pedagogy was out of date. When thinking about pedagogy, the University could be more overt in its use of evidence for pedagogy in particular disciplines, and may also need assistance to articulate good quality education.

5.10 The Chair thanked Senators for engaging in the discussion. The Centre for Excellence in Learning (CEL) would be leading the further work to be carried out regarding the TEF. Any staff members or departments within the University who required assistance should contact CEL who would be willing to speak to staff and students. Once the Green Paper was published, views would be sought from widely across the Institution in order to inform the University’s response to the consultation.

**6. OTHER REPORTS**

6.1 Senate Annual Report 2014/15

6.1.1 The Senate Annual Report highlighted the work of Senate and provided a summary overview of the activities undertaken during 2014/15. The report also included assurances of how Senate and its key committees reviewed their own effectiveness and ensured that academic quality was maintained.

6.1.2 The report contained information from key Senate committees and provided the main points to be highlighted to the University Board, and any key risks and issues which had arisen. Senators agreed the report was a helpful summary of achievements of 2014/15 and thanks were given to Ms Mack for writing the report.

6.1.3 **Approved:** Senate approved the Senate Annual Report 2014/15 for presentation to the University Board at its meeting on 27 November 2015.

6.2 Quarterly Global BU Update

6.2.1 Dr Minocha introduced the first quarterly Global BU Update report and an update would be provided at each meeting of Senate throughout 2015/16 in order to share the key highlights and to set out the upcoming priorities for the Global BU Team.

6.2.2 The Global Engagement Plan was introduced to all staff on 9 October 2015. Dr Minocha thanked those involved in developing the Global Engagement Plan. The delivery of the Plan would only be achieved with continuous engagement with staff, students and all departments across the institution. If Senators wished to advise of any commentary or feedback, they should send an email to: [globalBU@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:globalBU@bournemouth.ac.uk). Senators were reminded that daily, weekly and monthly updates were also added to the BU website.

6.2.3 **Noted:** Senate noted the Quarterly Global BU Update report.

6.3 Proposed Changes to *6A – Standard Assessment Regulations: Postgraduate Research Degrees*

6.3.1 Following the comments received at the meeting of Senate held on 3 June 2015, the updated paper now included further sector benchmarking and provided clarity regarding the regulations. The paper had been discussed at the Academic Standards Committee meeting held on 7 October 2015 and recommended to Senate for approval. The updated paper set out the proposal to change the current minimum and maximum registration periods for standard research degrees (MRes and PhD) only. It was noted that all Professional Doctorates (EdD, EngD and DProf) would be reviewed separately.

6.3.2 **Approved:** Senate approved the proposed changes to *6A – Standard Assessment Regulations: Postgraduate Research Degrees –* specifically the changes to the minimum and maximum registration periods for standard research degrees (MRes and PhD) only.

**7. ROUTINE COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

**Terms of Reference**

7.1 Academic Standards Committee Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference were **approved.**

7.2 Education and Student Experience Committee Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference were **approved.**

7.3 University Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference were **approved.**

**Minutes of Standing Committees**

7.4 Education & Student Experience Committee (unconfirmed), 23 September 2015

The minutes were **noted.**

7.5 Academic Standards Committee (unconfirmed), 7 October 2015

The minutes were **noted.**

7.6 Faculty of Management Academic Board (unconfirmed), 7 October 2015

The minutes were **noted.**

7.7 Faculty of Health & Social Sciences Academic Board (unconfirmed), 8 October 2015

The minutes were **noted.**

**Minutes of Research Committees**

7.8 University Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee (unconfirmed), 30 September 2015

The minutes were **noted.**

**8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

8.1 The Chair reminded Senators of the importance of Senate receiving full sets of Senate sub-

committee minutes in a timely manner for each Electronic Senate/Senate meeting.

8.2 The Chair reported that there were vacancies for Senators to become members of the

committees listed below:

* Honorary Awards Committee - 3 vacancies
* Academic Standards Committee (ASC) – 2 vacancies
* Education and Student Experience Committee (ESEC) – 2 vacancies

8.3 Senators were advised to email the Vice-Chancellor if they wished to register their interest in

becoming a member of the Honorary Awards Committee.

8.4 Senators were advised to email the Deputy Vice-Chancellor if they wished to register their

interest in becoming a member of the Academic Standards Committee or the Education and

Student Experience Committee.

**9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

**Electronic Senate** – 9.00am, Wednesday 3 February 2016

**Live meeting** – 2.15pm, Wednesday 24 February 2016