

SENATE

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SENATE held on 22 JUNE 2011

- Present: Prof J Vinney (**Chair**)
Mr C Allen; Ms M Barron; Prof M Bennett; Dr C Bond; Dr S Eccles; Prof M Hadfield (for Prof Roach); Mr T Horner; Mr A James; Dr S Jeary; Ms J Jenkin (**Secretary**); Mr S Jukes; Mr P Kneller; Ms Ko Leech; Mr D Newell; Prof B Richards; Prof H Schutkowski; Mr J Tarrant; Prof G Thomas; Dr K Vall; Dr K Wilkes; Mr D Willey;
- Observers: Prof D Buhalis; Mr D Evans; Prof B Gabrys; Mr J Holroyd; Mr A Ireland; Mrs J Mack; Ms J Quest.
- In attendance: Ms C Cherry (Policy Adviser to the VC); Ms N Kett (Policy & Committees Manager); Mr G Rayment (Committee Clerk).
- Apologies received: Ms A Allerston; Mr J Andrews; Prof P Comninos; Prof T Darvill; Prof S Deutsch; Prof S Ersser; Mrs K Everett; Prof P Lewis; Prof D Osselton; Prof J Roach; Prof T Sheppard; Prof R Vaughan; Prof A Webster; Ms J Woodcock.

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SENATE HELD ON 16 March 2011

The Minutes were approved as an accurate record.

1.1 Matters Arising

- 1.1.1 Minute 1.1.1 The Secretary informed Senate that guidelines for the employment of Postgraduate Research students in teaching had been finalised and presented to Senate through the Electronic Senate.
- 1.1.2 Minute 2.2 and 5.1: The Senate noted that a new method of recording participation in the electronic Senate meetings had been introduced and the closing time changed from 9.00am to 5.00pm as agreed at the previous meeting.
- 1.1.3 Minute 4.1 The Research & Enterprise Committee terms of reference had been updated and approved by the Board.
- 1.1.4 Minute 6 On 3 week assessment turnaround, the Secretary advised Senate that guidance was being developed on the quality of feedback by the Education Enhancement Committee and would be circulated in due course.

2 REPORT OF ELECTRONIC SENATE MEETING OF 1 TO 8 JUNE 2011

- 2.1 The report was noted.

3. NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- 3.1 The Chair reported that the Government White Paper on Higher Education had been delayed and was now expected to be published at the end of July, although other intelligence suggested it may still be published before the end of June. Some feedback

had been received from the Office for Fair Access (OFFA) regarding the Fair Access agreement. It was anticipated that the University's draft Fair Access Agreement would be accepted, although initial feedback meant it had been necessary to increase the percentage of income dedicated to expenditure on widening access. It was hoped that OFFA would give approval to the agreement on 11 July.

4. BU VISION AND VALUES

- 4.1 The Chair tabled a paper setting out the latest version of the Vision & Values which took into account feedback received so far from the various staff and student consultation events. Engagement in the discussions had been very positive and there was broad support for the proposals. Work was ongoing to consider how to communicate the Vision and Values externally and to consider how they could be made more concise for these audiences. Senate were invited to comment on the draft proposals.
- 4.2 Members asked what amendments had been made to the document to date following the consultation events. The Chair explained that the fusion concept had been well-received but there had been a lot of discussion around the use of the term 'unique' in the vision statement and the extent to which this could be evidenced. The current draft suggested amending this to 'distinctive'. It was also clear that further consideration would have to be given to how staff could be fully encompassed within the Vision and strategic themes without detracting from the focus on students and graduates. Some felt that the Vision statement was too long (compared to the ones in use in some private sector organisations). Members also debated the possible use of the term 'inspiring' rather than 'empowering' and whether the concept of 'knowledge generation' should be emphasised through the strategic themes. The Chair reminded members that they were welcome to submit further comments by e-mail or through the final consultation event scheduled for Monday 27th June.

5. NEW SENATE COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

- 5.1 The Policy & Committees Manager presented this report which proposed a revised structure for Senate and Executive committees following a committee audit. This review had been recommended by the Audit & Risk Committee (a sub-committee of the University Board) with a view to rationalising the structures, identifying all committees with formal reporting lines and clarifying responsibilities and delegated authority. A consultation process had been undertaken and the feedback used to inform the proposals. Senate were asked to agree the broad principles and to delegate authority to the relevant committee Chairs to agree amended terms of reference and membership for their own committees in line with the new structure. One member questioned the proposed merger of the Education Enhancement Committee (EEC) with the Student Experience Committee (SEC) on the basis that the current division of responsibilities between these committees worked well. It was explained, however, that there had been widely expressed views through the consultation process that the links between these two strands of work needed to be strengthened and rationalised. It was agreed that the merger of the committees should proceed but under the title Education and Student Experience Committee.
- 5.2 The broad principles were approved and authority delegated to committee Chairs to finalise and approve the relevant terms of reference for submission to the VC for approval on behalf of Senate.

6. SENATE ELECTED MEMBERS

- 6.1. The Chair welcomed the newly elected Senators (Damian Evans, Jill Quest, Jacky Mack and James Holroyd), who were attending the meeting as observers, and thanked

those who were continuing in their elected roles. He also thanked Paul Kneller, Sue Eccles, Mandi Barron and Julia Woodcock who were stepping down, for their service to Senate.

7. COMMON ACADEMIC STRUCTURE

- 7.1 The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Student Experience, Education & Professional Practice) (DVC SEE&PP) presented this paper and invited Senate's views on the proposals for the introduction of a consistent calendar and common academic structure. The proposals had already been debated at School Academic Boards where much of the discussion had focussed on the issues arising from the introduction of a consistent calendar. The full benefits of a common academic structure could not be realised without the implementation of a new calendar, but the proposals aimed to minimise disruption. It was not intended, for example, that students would have to switch midway through a course. It was recognised that a 'breakpoint' would be necessary for some academic staff to review how they delivered their teaching and make any necessary adjustment.
- 7.2 The Students' Union at Bournemouth University (SUBU) President questioned the primary drivers for the proposed changes and reminded Senate of the University's aims to put the student first and understand their needs. SUBU survey data showed that contact hours and access to tutors were more important to students than consistency. Other Senators noted that some courses currently comprise a mix of long and short units, and that this was preferred by students. It was important, therefore, that this flexibility was not lost. It was also suggested that any changes to the calendar should avoid any unintended negative impacts on students, for example by impacting on their opportunities to seek part-time employment to support their studies. Also, it was important that any new structure took full account of the need to incorporate work placements and the limitations imposed by the need to undertake field-work. The Dean of the School of Health & Social Care (HSC) assured Senate that the proposals would not have major implications for HSC students (whose courses tended to require a significant element of practical work and placements) and that the overall workload would not be affected.
- 7.3 Senators discussed the use of semesters in other institutions. Most agreed that this approach had been successfully implemented across much of the sector and also internationally. Others noted, however, that there was evidence that some institutions had introduced semester only to subsequently revert to their traditional structures.
- 7.4 Senators noted that the University has consistently scored low for 'organisation and management' in the National Student Survey and there was some debate as to the reasons for this and whether the proposals would help to address this issue. There was broad agreement that further data was needed on the meaning of these scores and it was noted that analysis of qualitative data was ongoing.
- 7.5 The DVC (SEE&PP) thanked members for their comments and concerns raised. He stressed that the achievement of administrative efficiencies was not the primary objective of the proposals. Rather they aimed to improve the student experience and the proposals allowed for a high degree of flexibility. The current variation in local approaches was clearly problematic. Hence a move towards, for example, consistent approaches across even 80 per cent of programmes would be a welcome achievement.

8. REVIEW OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

- 8.1 The Pro Vice Chancellor (Research, Enterprise & Internationalisation) (PVC RE&I) updated Senate on the outcomes from the Review of the Graduate School following the debate at the previous meeting. The Graduate School would be re-launched in

Summer 2011 with a broader remit encompassing postgraduate taught students as well as postgraduate research students. It would lead on all matters relating to the postgraduate student experience across the University (with the exception of postgraduate supervision which remained within Student & Academic Services). The Head of the Graduate School, Prof Fletcher, had stood down to focus solely on his role within the School of Tourism and the PVC (RE&I) thanked him, on behalf of Senate, for his outstanding contribution to the work of the School over many years. Recruitment of a new Head of School would take place over the coming weeks. Staff in the Graduate School had all been notified of the changes.

- 8.2 Senators noted that the previous minutes recorded that the proposals were to come back to Senate for consultation. The Chair clarified that the decision on the outcomes of the review rested with the University Leadership Team (ULT) and that they had approved the broad changes as described. A paper detailing the outcomes from the review would, however, be circulated to Senate and further views from Senators would be welcomed about how to implement the decision taken by ULT.

ACTION: To circulate paper on the outcomes from the review of the Graduate School and Senate to provide comments on the implementation.

ACTION BY: PVC(RE&I)/Secretary

9. CODE OF PRACTICE – MISCONDUCT IN ACADEMIC RESEARCH

- 9.1 The Chair of the Academic Standards Committee (ASC) (Dr Wilkes) presented this short paper which sought Senate's agreement to delegate authority for Chair's Action to be taken to approve the revised Code of Practice due to be presented to the ASC on 29 July. The amendments aim to standardise the documentation to ensure parity with other policies, update the terminology and confirm ownership of the policy. Senate approved the recommendation.

10. MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS

- 10.1 There were no matters raised.

11. PROPOSED CHANGES TO ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS

- 11.1 The Chair of ASC presented this paper which sought Senate's approval to a number of amendments to the Assessment Regulations. Senators noted the amendment to Section 10.2 of the regulations ('Repetition of Units') and debated whether it was just to insist that the second mark would stand (i.e. where students passed a unit at first attempt but undertook a re-sit due to mitigating circumstances). Senate was informed that students could submit mitigating circumstances again if necessary and that, in practice, it was very rare for marks to fall on a second attempt.

12. MINUTES OF STANDING COMMITTEES

12.1 STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

11 May 2011

The minutes were noted.

12.2 RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE COMMITTEE

8 June 2011

The minutes were noted.

SCHOOL ACADEMIC BOARDS

12.3 Business School
18 May 2011

The minutes were noted.

12.4 School of Tourism
25 May 2011

The minutes were noted.

12.5 School of Health & Social Care

The minutes were noted.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 13.1 On behalf of Senate the Chair recorded his thanks to Professor Steve Ersser (Professoriate Observer) and Ko Leech (SUBU VP Representation) for their contribution to the work of Senate.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 2 November 2011, 2.15pm Boardroom.

Committee Clerk
June 2011

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