

SENATE

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SENATE held on 20 JUNE 2012

- Present: Prof J Vinney (**Chair**)
Mr C Allen; Ms A Allerston; Prof M Bennett; Dr C Bond; Prof D Buhalis;
Mr J Holroyd; Mr T Horner; Mr A James; Dr S Jeary; Prof M Kretschmer;
Mrs J Mack; Mr D Newell; Ms J Quest; Prof E Rosser; Prof H
Schutkowski; Mr J Tarrant; Dr H Thiel; Prof G Thomas; Prof T Zhang.
- In attendance: Mr D Ball (Item 5); Ms L Bryant (SUBU); Dr C Chapleo; Ms S Chaytor-
Grubb (SUBU); Ms R Limbrick (SUBU); Mr G Rayment (Committee
Clerk), Mr M Simpson (SUBU); Ms C Symonds; Dr G Willcocks (DDE,
Business School, Item 5);
- Apologies received: Mr J Andrews, Prof P Comninios; Mr D Evans; Prof B Gabrys; Ms J Jenkin
(Secretary); Ms K Jones; Mr S Jukes; Prof T McIntyre-Bhatty; Prof R
Palmer; Mr D Reeve, Prof J Roach; Dr K Wilkes, Mr D Willey

1. WELCOMES, APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest. The Chair welcomed new members Mr Chapleo, Dr Thiel and the new SUBU sabbatical officers who were observing the meeting.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SENATE HELD ON 14 MARCH 2011

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

Minute 5.3, 7th sentence: Amend to "*Through the Access Agreement performance would be measured against the percentage of total expenditure*";

Attendance: Add Prof E Rosser to the list of members present.

2.1 Matters Arising

Action points arising from the previous meeting had been completed and the Terms of Reference for the Assessment Boards, Graduate School Academic Board and Research Degrees Committee had now been formally signed-off. The Chair also informed members that, following Senate's previous discussions, the Education and Student Experience Committee (ESEC) had agreed that individual school based student charters based on the Media School model would be progressed and charters published in due course. Matters relating to wider student services and support will be accommodated through clear information provision on the website and student portal. On the specific issue of protocols for responding to students, ESEC had agreed that Schools would retain and manage their protocols locally. Members also noted the final version of the Fair Access Agreement, a copy of which was circulated with the papers for information.

3. REPORT OF ELECTRONIC SENATE MEETING OF 30 MAY 2012 to 8 JUNE 2012

The Report was noted.

4. CHAIR'S UPDATE

4.1 BU Strategic Plan 2012-2018

The Chair briefly summarised progress on the development and implementation of the University's Strategic Plan 2012-2018. Following final approval of the new Vision and Values, the BU Strategic Plan and its associated Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) by the University Board, Schools and Professional Services had subsequently produced more detailed Strategic Delivery Plans which will underpin financial plans for the forthcoming year. The Chair then updated members on the new 'Stratnav', an on-line tool (accessible through the staff intranet) developed to describe how the different aspects of the BU Strategic Plan and KPIs were connected and structured with KPIs.

4.2 Senate Membership: Appointment of a Business School Academic Staff Representative

The Chair informed members that Dr Chris Chapleo had been elected by the Academic Staff of the Business School to replace Anne Allerston who had come to the end of her term of office. Members welcomed Mr Chapleo and thanked Ms Allerston for her valued input to the Senate over many years. The Chair also thanked Mr Newell and Mr Tarrant who had come to the end of their terms of office as general academic staff representatives. Following the agreed restructuring of the membership to incorporate professoriate staff from each School, these general academic staff positions would not be filled. Finally the Chair thanked Mr Horner and outgoing sabbatical officers of the Students' Union for their work on Senate, and welcomed the incoming officers. The membership changes were approved.

4.3 QAA Update

Ms Symonds presented her short update report on progress on the preparations for the QAA Institutional Review. The 5 day review visit would take place from 10 June 2013, with reviewers visiting the University prior to this on 30 April and 1 May 2013. The deadline for the submission of the self evaluation document and student written submissions was 25 March. This would be a standard review process (not the new risk based approach) conducted by the standard review team. Senate noted the report.

4.4 Research Excellence Framework (REF) Update

Prof Bennett (PVC) informed members that the deadline for the REF submission was October 2013 and the first of two summarative exercises was already underway in order to fine-tune the submission. A REF 'dress rehearsal' was scheduled to take place in February/March 2013. REF comprised 3 components: Outputs (publications); Environment (the Postgraduate community); and societal impact. The latter aspect would be considered via case studies, approximately 40 of which were now in preparation. The results from the REF exercise would not be announced until December 2014, with funding allocations expected in Spring 2015. Members noted the update.

5. KEY INFORMATION SET (KIS)

- 5.1 Mr Ball presented his report on the preparations for the introduction of the mandatory KIS data set, designed to provide published, comparable sets of data for prospective Undergraduate students. KIS excluded Postgraduate and short courses (one year or less) plus any courses delivered wholly overseas. Information to be published for each course included National Student Survey (NSS) results, fees, assessment, time spend in learning and teaching activities, accommodation costs and graduate employability. Data would be collected by Schools in April/May prior to it being checked and supplemented with contextual information. The data would be formally signed-off by the

VC in August before being published by HESA in September. Each course web-page would include a link to the relevant data on the HESA website.

- 5.2 Mr Horner reported on the discussions which had taken place among student representatives and noted that some had questioned whether the KIS data would give a true picture of university life. It was suggested that the focus of many prospective students would be on contact hours, with an emphasis on quantity rather than quality measures. He noted that he had received anecdotal evidence of a small number of students with extremely low levels of contact time, although such cases appeared not to be the norm. He also reminded members that SUBU was an active and important part of the student recruitment process, through events such as open days.
- 5.3 Dr Wilcocks suggested that KIS could be considered from the perspective of the Efficient Market Hypothesis (EMH), with university education being seen as an investment. EMH stated that, based on all available information, price would be equal to value. KIS provided new information for 'investors' and could, therefore, be seen as a positive development in that it narrowed the gap between price and value.
- 5.4 Some members felt that the sector would converge over time in respect of how they reported data. Others noted that there were potential flaws in the way in which data for Partner Institutions was presented (i.e. as if they were BU Programmes). Members noted that additional contextual information, however, would be provided which would help to address these points and would also include definitions of, for example, contact hours. Members debated the ability of potential students to understand and interpret the data being presented and it was suggested that this would need to be explained carefully through effective communications (for example, through open days). It was also noted that there were many other potential factors which influenced a students' decisions, such as geographical location. It was also felt that the student/academic relationship should be seen as a partnership rather than a consumer relationship.

6. OTHER REPORTS

6.1 University Department of Mental Health Report

Prof Thomas briefly presented this annual report from the University Department of Mental Health, a joint initiative between the School of Health and Social Care (HSC) and Dorset Healthcare University Foundation NHS Trust established in 2008. Members noted the report, and the expanded scope to provide community services for the whole of Dorset currently under discussion with the Trust's Chief Executive.

7. MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS

7.1 Appointment of Academic Staff with Doctorates.

- 7.1.2 The Chair explained that this item had been raised brought forward from the Electronic Senate (see paper SEN-1112-54) as it had not proved possible to provide a written response in time for inclusion in the electronic papers. Ms Quest explained that the matter had been raised by her colleagues in the Media School who were growing increasingly concerned that the requirement for academic staff to possess doctorate level qualifications was creating difficulties in recruitment. It was also felt that this policy failed to recognise the value of professional practice experience and was thus inconsistent with the Fusion concept and the University's strategic plan. It was noted, for example, that three staff had contributed towards the work which led to the receipt of the Queen's Anniversary Prize award despite not having doctorates. She noted that Exeter University had adopted a policy of recruiting certain academic staff with appropriate industry experience through a PhD waiver scheme.
- 7.1.3 Academic Staff Representatives of the Business School and the School of Tourism agreed with these concerns and noted that similar recruitment problems had been

experienced, for example in the field of accountancy and law. SUBU representatives also supported the importance of professional experience which was greatly valued by students. They also noted that having a doctorate level qualification did not necessarily translate into effective or inspiring teaching skills. Other members noted that doctorates did not just include PhDs and that options for professional doctorate level qualifications should be considered. Others felt that academics must have good research skills, and that professional skills and experience might be recognised through a different employment model or grading mechanism.

- 7.1.4 The PVC explained that the value of industry experience was recognised, but that it had to be at the right standard. For this reason, the Executive had worked hard over the past year to establish an equivalency framework. Some members, however, felt that the equivalencies were set too high. The Chair added that the number of academic staff with doctorates had increased but still remained at less than 50%, compared with an average amongst the top 50 universities of 70%. A KPI target of 70% by 2018 was amongst those established to monitor the implementation of the University's Strategic Plan. He thanked members for their views and agreed that the UET would closely monitor the use of the equivalence framework over its first 12 month period and consider adjusting it if necessary.

ACTION: To monitor the use of the doctorate equivalence framework once it had been in operation for at least a full academic year and review if necessary.

ACTION BY: VC

8. MINUTES OF STANDING COMMITTEES

- 8.1 Education & Student Experience Committee, 28 March 2012 (unconfirmed)**
The minutes were noted.
- 8.2 University & Research Ethics Committee, 11 June 2012 (unconfirmed)**
The minutes were noted.
- 8.3 School of Health and Social Care, School Academic Board, 30 May 2012 (unconfirmed)**
The minutes were noted.
- 8.4 School of Design, Engineering & Computing, School Academic Board, 23 May 2012 (unconfirmed)**
The minutes were noted.
- 8.5 School of Tourism, School Academic Board, 23 May 2012 (unconfirmed)**
The minutes were noted.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 9.1 Members briefly raised technical issues which were being experienced in respect of the new staff intranet, particularly problems accessing the intranet remotely. The Chair explained that this was a known issue and that work was underway to resolve the problem.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

Electronic Senate – 9.00am 3 October to 5.00pm 10 October 2012.
Live meeting – 2.15pm, 24 October 2012.