

Senate

Wed 24 February 2021, 14:15 - Wed 24 February 2021, 16:00

MS Teams

Attendees

Board members

John Vinney (Chair), Y T McIntyre-Bhatty, David Reeve, Einar Thorsen, Keith Phalp, Stephen Tee, Lois Farquharson, Jacky Mack (Secretary), Mandi Barron, Naomie Lebe, Chiko Bwalya, Samantha Leahy-Harland, Sam Porter, Ruth Williamson, Esteves Luciana, Shanti Shanker, Rebecca Hindley, Catherine Angell, Karl Rawstrone, Helen Best, Bronwen Thomas, Christos Gatzidis, Heather Hartwell, Jack Guymer (Committee Clerk)

Absent: Jim Andrews, Carol Clark, Fiona Cosson, Tim Lloyd, Jane Murphy, Julie Northam, Laura Roper

Meeting minutes

1. APOLOGIES

Chair

Members were welcomed to the meeting and apologies were noted as above. The Chair welcomed the following new member: Dr Ruth Williamson, Senior member of the University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Chair

The Chair declared that he had been appointed to the Board of University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust (UHD) as an Associate Non-Executive Director as part of a reciprocal arrangement between Bournemouth University (BU) and UHD.

No other declarations of interest were reported.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF 5 NOVEMBER 2020

3.1. Accuracy/approval of previous minutes

Chair

Approved: The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record.

3.2. Matters Arising

Chair

- FAB Terms of Reference - confirmation of re-approval

In response to an action from the last meeting, the Chair confirmed that each Faculty Academic Board had approved its Terms of Reference, with no changes to report.

3.3. Report of Electronic Senate meeting of 28 January to 3 February 2021

Chair

The Chair reported that one comment had been received in relation to the partnership arrangement with Dorset Healthcare University NHS Foundation Trust (DHC), which was covered under item 6.2.

Noted: The report of the Electronic Senate meeting of 28 January to 3 February 2021 was noted.

4. VICE-CHANCELLOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

4.1. HE Sector and BU2025 Update

Chair

BU2025

Good progress had been made towards BU2025, with operational and delivery plans being adapted as necessary to ensure outcomes could be achieved given the external landscape. There had been a number of positive movements across Key Performance Indicators, such as interdisciplinary working and continuation figures, with a detailed report to be provided at the next meeting.

Noting that community was a key part of BU2025, it was reported that a series of short virtual celebration events were planned throughout March, including an opportunity for 2020 graduates to celebrate with each other and staff, and the Vice-Chancellor's Staff Awards.

Update on the pandemic

Work was underway to go through new guidance issued by the Government following the announcement from the Prime Minister that students who needed access to specialist resources or practical teaching to complete their course could return to campus from 8 March 2021. As per the guidance, it was noted that students would not return to campus until communicated with by the University, with these arrangements kept under review.

Policy developments

Despite the pandemic, there had been several policy developments since the last meeting in November, including the Department for Education's paper on freedom of speech and the Government's 'skills for jobs: lifelong learning for opportunity and growth' white paper; the latter considered to be quite ambitious in terms of further education funding and provision going forward.

Alongside these developments the government had announced a set of consultations on a range of matters, including changes to admissions arrangements, which potentially meant that 'offers' or even 'applications' could be delayed until after exam results were received in the summer. It was noted that the University would keep these proposals under review and respond to them as appropriate.

In addition, the University had responded to two consultations by the Office for Students (OfS), one on a new quality framework and the other on reportable events.

5. FOR DISCUSSION

5.1. Update on the Research Excellence Framework

The REF Manager provided a further update on the status of the University's impending Research Excellence Framework (REF) submission.

It was confirmed that the review of outputs had finished, with the publication period ending on 31 December 2021. The preliminary figures estimated that 76% of eligible staff would be submitted to REF 2021. Whilst a number of potential inequalities had been highlighted by the most recent equality analysis, all gaps were reported to be narrower than the REF 2014 submission, demonstrating a much more inclusive approach to REF 2021.

All staff circumstances had been considered and decisions over which were going to be applied had been made.

In total, the University was planning to submit around 1200 outputs for members of staff and 47 impact case studies.

Prior to submission, the narrative elements would continue to be strengthened and strategic decisions around double weighting outputs would be confirmed. The final draft was due to be approved by the REF Steering Group, Research Performance and Management Committee (RPPC), and the University Leadership Team (ULT) before onward submission to REF.

For Discussion
S Anne Stringer

5.2. Update on the Race Equality Charter

The Head of FLIE was invited to provide a further update on the University's application for a Bronze Race Equality Charter (REC) award.

In addition to ULT, the first draft of the application had been presented to an external reviewer, who provided positive feedback and suggestions on areas in the narrative that could be strengthened.

Initially, the University's application was due to be submitted in February 2021, but due to the impact of the pandemic, institutions were given the opportunity to submit their application later in July 2021, which the University accepted after consultation with relevant stakeholders. It was considered that the extension would help develop a richer narrative through closer engagement with senior management and the Students' Union.

Communications were being formulated in conjunction with Marketing & Communications to ensure students and staff were aware of ongoing developments.

The supporting Action Plan was continuing to take shape, with the development of more granular objectives under each of the action points. It was considered important to identify actions that could be worked towards in order for the University to achieve a Silver award at the next re-accreditation opportunity.

It was reported that an internal target of April 2021 had been agreed to prepare the final draft application for consideration by ULT.

For Discussion
Dr G Roushan

5.3. Principles of BU Learning Models

Professor McIntyre-Bhatty introduced the item and gave a short presentation on the current learning models at BU, including opportunities to re-imagine best practice from September 2020/21 onwards.

For Discussion
Prof T McIntyre-Bhatty

There had been a requirement to understand and develop a new set of pedagogical contexts in response to the pandemic, known collectively as Scenarios A, B, C, D and E. Now, there was an opportunity to synthesise and evaluate the learning from that period and consider what should follow in terms of learning and delivery at BU, i.e. 'Scenario F'.

Four student experience precepts were noted to be important in the development of a new pedagogical model: community, inclusivity, campus premium, and fusion-based learning. These precepts had been mapped against future activities to help ensure these could be achieved moving forward. The first set related to 'what we do already', the second on 'new, open and interdisciplinary opportunities', and the final on 'pedagogic principles'.

The next steps included defining and scheduling 'Scenario F' for September 2021 onwards based on best practice by discipline, scaling back as necessary, e.g. due to physical distancing.

5.4. Evidencing compliance with OfS ongoing conditions of registration

For Discussion

J Mack

The purpose of the item was to provide Senate with an introduction and summary overview of how the University complied with the OfS's ongoing conditions of registration, including areas relating to Senate's remit and oversight.

It was reported that Senate received key monitoring outputs through the Academic Quality Annual Report, submitted each year. The latest iteration of the report was noted to have included direct reference to each of the relevant conditions of registration; a format which would be followed more widely across monitoring mechanisms to make the link with the regulatory framework more explicit.

The OfS's ongoing conditions of registration were reported to be set out under seven broad headings. Senate's role was linked to conditions relating to the student experience and quality and standards, with wider conditions on finance, governance, and accountability for fees and funding largely overseen executive by the University Board. Ms Mack noted the potential for existing reporting and monitoring requirements to change in response to the consultation on the new quality framework. It was confirmed that the University would continue to monitor the OfS's requirements on an ongoing basis and respond to changes as appropriate.

6. PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

6.1. University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust

Verbal Update

Prof S Tee & Dr R Williamson

Prof Tee provided an update on the partnership with UHD.

As reported [item 2], the Vice-Chancellor had been appointed to the Board of UHD as an Associate Non-Executive Director as part of a reciprocal arrangement between BU and UHD, with Dr Williamson joining Senate.

The partnership was considered important for BU in terms of its aspiration, not only in the Faculty of Health and Social Sciences, but across all faculties given the range of potential development opportunities.

In regards to progress, work was underway to scope out potential areas of collaboration, including the development of new educational programmes and research bidding, with three significant bids noted to be in the pipeline.

Dr Williamson noted the aspiration of staff integration and referred to recent discussions about different ways in which staff from UHD could interact with BU, such as visiting and honorary appointments and lecturer practitioners.

It was noted that an update on UHD would form a standing item at future meetings.

6.2. Dorset Healthcare University NHS Foundation Trust

For Approval

Prof S Tee

Prof Tee introduced the renewal of the partnership with Dorset Healthcare University NHS Foundation Trust (DHC), which was presented for approval.

The request included a five-year review of activity and achievements since the agreement was last renewed in 2015.

The reflection of the partnership was considered positive, with the renewal noted as an opportunity to model the arrangement closer to that with UHD, such as more senior representation within each other's governance structures.

No major academic or reputational risks were identified.

Ms Bwalya referred to concerns raised by Clinical Academic Doctorate students about their contractual arrangements with BU and NHS Trusts. Prof Tee explained that the issues came to light in response to the pandemic, with these arrangements set-up prior to this period. It was confirmed that the University would look very carefully when setting up future arrangements with NHS Trusts based on the experience of the pandemic to ensure there was more transparency around the issues raised.

Approved: Senate approved the renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding with DHC.

7. FOR APPROVAL

7.1. Protecting student outcomes in 2020/21

For Approval
J Forrest

It was reported that BU had implemented several measures to support learning and the student experience in 2020/21, in recognition of the challenges students encountered through studying in a mainly online environment, including those to the exceptional circumstances and assessment procedures.

In response to the ongoing impact of the pandemic, and the third national lockdown in January 2021, Senate was asked to approve further temporary changes to the assessment regulations for 2020/21 to allow uncapped reassessments in the case of failure for a first attempt and greater flexibility around reassessment limits.

Approved: Senate approved the temporary changes to the assessment regulations for 2020/21.

It was confirmed that the changes would be communicated to students through the Chief Operating Officer's weekly update and published under the 'Protecting Student Outcomes' section of the BU website.

7.2. Policy updates to 6K - Assessment Boards: Policy and Procedure

For Approval
J Forrest

Based on recent experience, and sector research, the updates to 6K – Assessment Boards: Policy and Procedure involved changing the current assessment board model from an optional Preparatory assessment board structure to a Unit and Programme assessment board model.

The revised structure was reported to increase the emphasis on unit monitoring, which was identified in the recent review of the 6R Emergency Assessment regulations, Degree Outcomes Statement and the Academic Quality Annual Report as one area of improvement for maintaining standards for degree outcomes.

Mr Rawstrone queried if Faculties would still have the opportunity to hold Preparatory Boards as part of the new structure. Whilst there was no formal requirement, it was considered good practice for Faculties to informally prepare in advance of the Unit and Programme board meetings, including scrutinising unit marks and data benchmarking.

Approved: Senate approved the updates to 6K – Assessment Boards: Policy and Procedure.

8. REPORTING COMMITTEES

For Note
Executive Deans

8.1. Faculty Academic Board Minutes

8.1.1. FHSS FAB minutes of 10 February 2021 (unconfirmed)

Noted: Senate noted the FHSS FAB minutes of 10 February 2021.

8.1.2. BUBS FAB minutes of 9 February 2021 (unconfirmed)

Noted: Senate noted the BUBS FAB minutes of 9 February 2021.

8.1.3. FMC FAB minutes of 10 February 2021 (unconfirmed)

Noted: Senate noted the FMC FAB minutes of 10 February 2021.

8.1.4. FST FAB minutes of 4 February 2021 (unconfirmed)

Noted: Senate noted the FST FAB minutes of 4 February 2021.

8.2. Academic Standards and Education Committee minutes of 27 January 2021 (unconfirmed)

Noted: Senate noted the Academic Standards and Education Committee minutes of 27 January 2021.

For Note
Prof T McIntyre-Bhatty

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair reported on two vacancies for academic members of Senate to sit on RPPC. It was requested that expressions of interest were sent to the Senate Secretary.

10. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Electronic Senate – 9.00am on 12 May 2021

Senate Meeting – 2.15pm on 9 June 2021

