

Senate 8 June 2022

Wed 08 June 2022, 14:15 - 16:00

MS Teams



Attendees

Board members

John Vinney (Chair), Y T McIntyre-Bhatty, Susie Reynell, Jim Andrews, Einar Thorsen, Anand Pandyan, Lois Farquharson, Jacky Mack (Secretary), Mandi Barron, Julie Northam, Naomie Lebe, Chiko Bwalya, Philip Sewell, Sam Porter, Ruth Williamson, Diogo Montalvao, Shanti Shanker, Rebecca Hindley, Ursula Rolfe, Helen Best, Andrew Bird, Christos Gatzidis, Heather Hartwell, Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers, Jack Guymer (Committee Clerk)

Apologies

Bronwen Thomas, Keith Phalp, Samantha Leahy-Harland

In attendance

Susannah Marsden (all items), Carol Evans (all items), Judy Lou Smith (all items), Nicola Murray-Fagan (item 5.3), Jules Forrest (items 7.1-7.5), Rosalind Ashcroft (items 7.6, 7.8), Gelareh Roushan (item 7.6), Shelley Thompson (item 7.7)

Meeting minutes

1. APOLOGIES

Members were welcomed and apologies noted as above. The Chair welcomed Prof Phil Sewell who was attending his first meeting in capacity as the Deputy Chair of Academic Standards and Education Committee (ASEC). The Chair gave thanks to the following members whose term of office were ending:

- Dr Shanti Shanker, Academic Staff Representative (FST)
- Naomie Lebe, President SUBU
- Chiko Bwalya, Vice-President (Education) SUBU

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

3.1. Accuracy/approval of minutes of 1 March 2022

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

It was reported that the Electronic Senate meeting planned for May 2022 had not taken place due to insufficient business. Whilst several matters had been raised by the elected representatives prior to the meeting, these had not been identified as matters for consideration by Electronic Senate as the matters raised did not fall with the Terms of Reference for Senate. However, it was noted that responses to each matter had been provided from relevant colleagues across the University and shared with the elected representatives for onward circulation to their constituents.

 3.1 Senate Minutes 1 March 2022 - Unconfirmed.pdf

4. VICE-CHANCELLOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

4.1. HE Sector and BU2025 Update

BU2025

In pursuit of BU2025 outcomes, the Chair reported how the University's leadership team was in the process of finalising business plans which set out priorities, investment and resource allocations for the upcoming year and the following two years. In addition to political and regulatory matters, the financial context was noted to be a particular challenge given inflationary pressures and capped fees for full-time, undergraduate home students for the next three years and possibly beyond.

HE Sector

The Queen's Speech was noted to contain several proposals that were directly relevant to Higher Education. A notable proposal included the Higher Education Bill, which supported widely anticipated changes to enable the Lifelong Loan Entitlement and other initiatives, including minimum qualification requirements for students to qualify for loans and student number controls for specific providers in the context of quality concerns. The other proposals outlined in the Queen's Speech included the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill and a Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.

The sector was awaiting the outcomes of the Office for Students' (OfS) consultations on licence condition B3 and the new Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). The timeframe for the TEF was noted to have been extended with submissions now due in early 2023, although details were still to be confirmed.

The government was reported to be continuing negotiations with the EU about participation in Horizon, however, the situation was difficult, with it considered increasingly likely that a separate scheme would need to be funded by the government.

Arrangements for the Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) were reported to have been made available, with the next iteration of KEF to be published in September 2022.

The results of BU's submission to the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 were noted, with successes considered to be underpinned by the University's 'Fusion' strategy.

BU was reported to have risen to 42nd place globally in the Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings 2022, and first in the UK. The rankings were noted to measure the success of universities against the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs), and BU had risen to 42nd place out of 1,406 universities measured internationally, up from 74th the previous year, now placing BU amongst the top 3% of universities included in the rankings. The Chair was pleased to note BU's commitment to sustainability and gave thanks to all those involved in supporting this work.

5. FOR DISCUSSION

5.1. REF 2021 results

Prof McIntyre-Bhatty introduced the item by noting how BU had achieved its intended aims to hold the quality of its submission whilst also increasing the size and inclusivity of the submission. In addition to more than three times as many staff being submitted to REF2021 compared to REF2014, an equality analysis indicated that gaps were narrower in terms of staff demographics compared to the REF2014 submission. Gains were also noted to have been made in the quality and breadth of units of assessment submitted.

Ms Northam explained that, whilst REF2014 was largely a selective exercise, REF2021 was intended to be more inclusive. As a result, it was reported that there had been a 46% increase in the number of staff submitted to REF2021 across the sector. When compared to other institutions, it was noted that BU had seen a 217% increase in the number of staff submitted, with 78% of eligible staff submitted to REF2021 compared to 29% in REF2014.

In addition to performance around the size of its submission, BU's rank compared to other institutions had increased for research power, with BU placed 51st out of 157 institutions in the UK. The result was noted to put BU in the top third of institutions in the UK and the institution with the second largest increase in research power rank since REF2014. It was reported that only Northumbria University had a larger increase in research power ranking, with the result attributed to the quality of their research given that 80% of their staff had also been submitted to REF2021. There were plans to review their strategy as to identify any good practice for BU moving forward.

The results were considered to provide a strong platform in terms of BU's research capacity moving forward. As to build upon the successes, future steps were noted to include a continued focus on consistent messaging across the University as to the importance of research, increasing active engagement in research and increasing the quality of research.

The Chair asked how the results of the REF2021 exercise would impact the amount of funding BU received. BU was noted to currently receive £3.8 million, per annum in quality-related research (QR) funding, of which a certain proportion was determined from the results of the REF2014. Ms Northam reported that the algorithm to calculate future institutional allocation had not yet been confirmed by Research England, with institutional QR allocations anticipated to be confirmed in the summer.

 5.1 REF 2021 Results.pdf

5.2. Annual Review of Key Performance Indicators

Prof McIntyre-Bhatty provided an update on the latest BU2025 Key Performance Indicators.


In addition to the Impact Rankings 2022, BU was noted to have risen 15 places to 62nd in the world in the Times Higher Education Young University Rankings, with BU the top non-specialist UK institution in the rankings.

Despite a slight decline in the proportion of student graduates with a placement, BU was noted to continue outperform the sector, with 40% of full-time, first-degree graduates in 2020/21 undertaking a placement year compared to 7% in the sector. Whilst a further decline in placement student numbers in 2021/22 was expected due to a lag in the data, Prof McIntyre-Bhatty was pleased to note that, despite the challenges in relation to the pandemic, BU had retained its position in terms of outperforming the sector. This was considered an important result given the benefits that placements had on graduate outcomes and attributes.

The Student Staff Ratio was reported to have reduced from 18.7 to 17.9 with an increase in staff being recruited to established vacancies, despite financial challenges.

In spite of the positive REF results, research income aspirations were reported to be a continuing challenge, with more ambitious targets to be set in recognition of the latest position. However, the REF results were considered to provide confidence that a broader range of staff could contribute to future research income targets.

Noting placements, Ms Hindley commented that placement numbers could be impacted by the recent change to make placements optional rather than mandatory across the suite of Business and Management programmes. Prof McIntyre-Bhatty highlighted the importance of encouraging students to undertake a placement as data showed that placements had a positive impact on degree outcomes and employability, particularly for under-represented groups. It was expected that the proportion of students on placement would return to pre-pandemic levels.

 5.2 Annual Review of KPI May 2022.pdf

5.3. Access and Participation Plan Update

Ms Mack introduced the item by explaining how all institutions were required to submit a variation to their existing Access and Participation Plan (APP) by end of July 2022 following new priorities identified by the OfS for access and participation.

The four priorities were:

- a. making the APP more accessible to lay-readers (applicants, students, and parents).
- b. partnership with schools and other organisations to raise pre-16 attainment.
- c. successful participation on high quality courses with good graduate outcomes.
- d. develop more diverse pathways into and through Higher Education.

A particular emphasis in the variation was the expectation that providers would significantly increase the volume and quality of evaluation of access and participation activity, including externality.

When approved, the variations to the APP were noted to apply from 2023/24. The OfS were reported to be consulting in 2022 on new APPs that would be effective from 2024/25 to 2027/28. Guidance was expected to be published in February 2023 before the new plans were submitted in summer 2023.

In responding to the new OfS priorities, it was reported that Priority A had been covered in a summary for which OfS had provided a template.


BU was considered to be in a strong position in relation to Priority B, with BU cited by the OfS as an example of good practice in relation to pre-16 attainment-raising activities. BU's variation was noted to outline how it would work with partners further to deliver new initiatives, including the proposal to build a more strategic relationship with a local academy trust.

Existing sections in the APP on student success and progression to employment were reported to have been updated in relation to Priority C.

The response to Priority D was reported to include information on the introduction of Foundation Year programmes and the progress and development of Degree Apprenticeship provision, both of which had progressed significantly since the existing plan was approved in 2019.

Ms Mack reported that the APP variation would be reviewed at the Access, Excellence and Impact Committee on 14 June 2022, prior to e-circulation to Senate and approval by the University Board in July.

 5.3b Access and Participation Plan Update June 2022 (Presentation).pptx

 5.3a Access and Participation Plan Update June 2022.pdf

6. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

6.1. University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust

Dr Williamson noted how benefits of the partnership were starting to be realised following the first year of operation, which had focused primarily on formalising relationships and setting up a programme of work based on the jointly agreed strategy. In particular, research funding at UHD was reported to have increased by nearly £45k since the establishment of the partnership, with a significant proportion of the increase attributed to the work between both organisations.

It was noted that UHD were offering a significant number of unpaid and paid placements at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, including biomedical scientists and project managers.

An update on BU apprenticeship provision was noted, with a new level 7 Senior Leader apprenticeship starting in September 2022. It was reported that 15 high-quality applicants from UHD had been received for five places.

BU and UHD were in the process of putting a business case together to support further partnership work with other Wessex Health partners, with the aspiration for academic health sciences collaboration across the whole partnership. The business case was due to be considered by each organisation's governing body.

A new research steering group was reported to have been established. The initial aims of the steering group were reported to focus on establishing processes and procedures to capture benefit realisation and the monitoring of research activity. The steering group was also noted to be working with BU's Research Development and Support (RDS) team to create standard processes for match funded PhDs and external funding opportunities.

6.2. Dorset Healthcare University NHS Foundation Trust

It was reported that, whilst a range of activities were still taking place between BU and Dorset Healthcare University NHS Foundation Trust (DHUFT) under separate agreements, there was ongoing dialogue between the Chair and the interim-Chief Executive of DHUFT around refreshing the organisational level agreement.

The working group that was responsible for taking forward the other type of activities not covered under the institutional agreement was reported to have moved into a different mode of operation, with a recent workshop taking place between BU and DHUFT to create a common set of goals and set of principles that both organisations could work towards.

7. FOR APPROVAL/ENDORSEMENT

7.1. Degree Outcomes Statement 2020/21

Ms Forrest explained how the Degree Outcomes Statement provided an institutional analysis of BU performance against the sector in relation to award outcomes, progression and BAME attainment for the 2016/17 to 2020/21 period.

In response to a query about whether any targets would be set around student outcomes, it was explained that the statement was used as a tool to help providers understand and enhance institutional performance, and to provide assurance to the public that providers were committed to protecting the value and standards of UK degrees.

Endorsed: Senate endorsed the report to the Student Experience, Quality and Standards Committee.

 [7.1 Degree Outcomes Statement.pdf](#)

7.2. Appeals and Complaints Annual Report 2021

The key headlines from the report included academic appeal figures reverting to pre-pandemic levels following a dip in 2020, and a decrease in the total number of academic complaints received and the number of students involved.

It was noted that the recent Annual Statements published by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) indicated that BU performance was broadly in line with the sector. In terms of categories of complaint in 2021, BU was noted to have had fewer academic appeals compared to the sector; however, there was a greater proportion of cases relating to service issues.

Endorsed: Senate endorsed the Appeals and Complaints Annual Report 2021 to the Student Experience, Quality and Standards Committee.

 [7.2 Appeals and Complaints Annual Report 2021.pdf](#)

7.3. Policy updates to Academic Appeals and Complaints Policies

A series of changes had been proposed to the academic appeals and complaints policies, including alignment with the OIA's Good Practice Framework, a streamlining of procedures and greater emphasis on early resolution. The removal of the Hearing Stage was noted to bring BU in line with sector practice and would address issues in terms of consistency, student and staff experience, and resourcing.

Approved: Senate approved the updates to the appeals and complaints policies:

- 11A – Academic Appeals: Policy and Procedure for Taught Awards
- 11C – Academic Appeals: Policy and Procedure for Research Awards

- 11F – Student Complaints: Policy and Procedure

 [7.3 Updates to Academic Appeals and Complaints Policies.pdf](#)

7.4. Policy update to 6A - Standard Assessment Regulations

Following a successful pilot, the Assessment Regulations had been updated to formally embed in-year retrieval for level 4 students as well as being extended to Foundation programmes (level 0) given the high proportion of students from under-represented groups and low continuation rates.

In response to a query about why some students did not take up the opportunity for in-year retrieval, it was considered that students might have been making tactical decisions about what in-year retrieval opportunities to take rather than being unaware of the opportunity as students had been advised to consider the overall workload implications of taking on a number of in-year retrieval attempts mid-year. It was noted that a further analysis would take place post reassessment board in relation to student engagement with in-year retrieval, including a review of the impact on non-continuation, particularly for under-represented groups.

Approved: Senate approved the updates to 6A – Standard Assessment Regulations: Undergraduate Programmes.


 [7.4 Policy Update to 6A - Standard Assessment Regulations.pdf](#)

7.5. Policy updates to Curriculum Structure, Design and Management Policies

The curriculum structure, design and management policies had been updated in response to actions identified in the 'Consumer Protection Action Plan'. The updates included a new definition of contact hours ('scheduled learning and teaching') which was considered a more accurate reflection of delivery and sector developments, further detail on the types of assessment expected to be used in the distinct categories of exam and coursework, and changes to the processes for approving and making changes to units and programmes in terms of consumer law requirements.

Approved: Senate approved the curriculum structure, design and management policies and noted the implementation plan:

- 2B – Programme Structure and Curriculum Design Characteristics: Policy
- 4A – Programme Approval, Review and Closure: Policy
- 4B – Programme and Unit Modifications: Policy
- 6C – Principles of Assessment Design: Policy

 [7.5 Policy Updates to 2B, 4A, 4B and 6C.pdf](#)

7.6. Policy update to 5B - Student Engagement

Following a positive pilot, the policy updates included changes to the existing unit evaluation survey, the Mid Unit Student Evaluation (MUSE), and the introduction of a new programme evaluation survey conducted annually for each level of study. Whilst the new programme survey would address similar aspects of the student experience as those assessed in the National Student Survey (NSS), the revised unit survey moved away from questions linked to the NSS as these were not considered a good indicator of NSS performance. Instead, the survey had been redesigned with appropriate questions for each level of study to better understand the issues and challenges in the students' learning journey relevant to BU. It was noted that discussions were underway with Marketing & Communications to agree a suitable implementation title for each survey.

Approved: Senate approved the updates to 5B – Student Engagement and Feedback: Policy and Procedure.

 [7.6 Policy Update to 5B - Student Engagement.pdf](#)

7.7. Policy update to 5D - Academic Adviser Policy

The proposal to rename 'Academic Adviser' to 'Personal Tutor' was reported to be based on feedback from students and staff, with personal tutoring considered more relevant and student friendly. The other changes to the policy included clarifying the academic support that personal tutoring aimed to provide and articulating responsibilities associated with personal tutoring at different levels. The changes were noted to reflect good practice in the sector and had been benchmarked against policies at other providers.

Whilst not specific to personal tutoring, Prof Gatzidis noted issues with student engagement and queried what measures would be put in place to support uptake of the personal tutoring offer. Dr Farquharson confirmed that students would be communicated with to help them understand the benefits of personal tutoring. It was reported that implementation would also involve linking up with other student engagement work taking place across BU.

In response to a query about how pastoral and academic support was configured under the revised policy, Dr Thompson explained how the policy had been revised to better articulate the responsibilities of a personal tutor. Whilst personal tutors were not expected to be specialists in pastoral support, there would be a requirement for personal tutors to signpost students to other staff or support services as appropriate. Ms Barron noted that implementation of the revised policy would include training for personal tutors in terms of pastoral support and information on other support services.

Approved: Senate approved the updates to 5D – Academic Adviser Policy.

 [7.7 Policy Update to 5D - Academic Adviser Policy.pdf](#)


7.8. Policy update to 3N - Enrolment Procedure

In addition to non-substantive amendments, the procedure had been amended to provide more clarity on the processes for managing students who sought to enrol and arrive after the course start date, including the establishment of a final arrival deadline for those students.

Prof Pandyan highlighted potential implications for students who under the revised procedure would have their Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) document withdrawn once an arrival deadline had passed. Ms Ashcroft explained that withdrawal of the CAS would only be used in exceptional cases and caution would be exercised to only issue a CAS where it was likely that a student would be able to obtain a visa in time for the course start date. It was added that any decision on whether to permit a late arrival would be made by the faculty following consultation with the relevant Programme Leader for the course.

Approved: Senate approved the updates to 3N – Enrolment Procedure.

 [7.8a Policy Update to 3N - Enrolment Procedure.pdf](#)

 [7.8b Enrolment Procedure.pdf](#)

7.9. Policy update to 11H - Fitness to Practise Procedure

The updates to the Fitness to Practise Procedure included alignment with the OIA's Guide on Fitness to Practise and to address a recommendation from a complaint upheld by the OIA, in which the penalties relating to expulsion and withdrawal were better clarified.

Approved: Senate approved the updates to 11H – Fitness to Practise Procedure.

 [7.9 Policy Update to 11H - Fitness to Practice Procedure.pdf](#)

7.10. Policy update to 11J - Support to Study: Policy and Procedure

In addition to making changes in response to BU's experience of handling Support to Study cases, the policy had been updated to align procedures with the OIA's Guide on Fitness to Practise as to ensure procedures were not out of date or unfair.

Approved: Senate approved the updates to 11J – Support to Study Policy and Procedure.

 [7.10 Policy Update to 11J - Support to Study Policy and Procedure.pdf](#)

8. REPORTING COMMITTEES

8.1. Faculty Academic Board Minutes

8.1.1. FHSS FAB minutes of 11 May 2022

Noted: Senate noted the FHSS FAB minutes of 11 May 2022.

 [8.1.1 FHSS FAB Minutes 11 May 2022 - Unconfirmed.pdf](#)

8.1.2. BUBS FAB minutes of 19 May 2022

Noted: Senate noted the BUBS FAB minutes of 19 May 2022.

 [8.1.2 BUBS FAB Minutes 19 May 2022 - Unconfirmed.pdf](#)

8.1.3. FMC FAB minutes of 11 May 2022

Noted: Senate noted the FMC FAB minutes of 11 May 2022.

 [8.1.3 FMC FAB Minutes 11 May 2022 - Unconfirmed.pdf](#)

8.1.4. FST FAB minutes of 12 May 2022

Noted: Senate noted the FST FAB minutes of 12 May 2022.

 [8.1.4 FST FAB Minutes 12 May 2022 - Unconfirmed.pdf](#)


8.2. Summary of Electronic Academic Standards and Education Committee held 10 to 17 February 2022

Noted: Senate noted the summary of Electronic ASEC held 10 to 17 February 2022.

 [8.2 e-ASEC Summary 10 - 17 February 2022 - Confirmed.pdf](#)

8.3. Summary of Electronic Academic Standards and Education Committee held 23 to 30 March 2022

Noted: Senate noted the summary of Electronic ASEC held 23 to 30 March 2022.

 [8.3 e-ASEC Summary 23 - 30 March 2022 - Confirmed.pdf](#)

8.4. Academic Standards and Education Committee minutes of 7 April 2022

Noted: Senate noted the ASEC minutes of 7 April 2022.

 [8.4 ASEC Minutes 7 April 2022 - Confirmed.pdf](#)

8.5. University Research Ethics Committee minutes of 2 March 2022

Noted: Senate noted the Research Ethics Committee minutes of 2 March 2022.

 [8.5 REC Minutes 2 March 2022 - Unconfirmed.pdf](#)

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair reported that, in addition to the APP, the University's Self-Assessment Report for current apprenticeship provision would be circulated via an exceptional electronic meeting following consideration by FHSS FASEC and ASEC in mid-June 2022.

A vacancy for a Senate representative to sit on ASEC was noted. It was requested that any expressions of interest were sent to the Secretary.

10. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING:

Electronic Senate: 26-30 September 2022

Senate 'in-person' meeting: 24 October 2022