

SENATE

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SENATE held on
6 DECEMBER 2006

- Present: Professor P Curran (Chair)
Mr R Allan; Ms A Allerston; Dr B Astin; Mr R Burns; Ms R Dugan;
Mr M Gagan; Ms J Hanson; Professor N Hemmington; Mr B Howard;
Mr S Jukes; Mr P Kneller; Dr C Miller; Professor N Petford;
Professor R Pope; Mr N Richardson; Mr M Riordan; Ms C Symonds;
Dr G Thomas; Professor K Vall; Mr D Willey; Ms J Winter;
Professor J Vinney.
- In attendance: Professor D Claremont; Professor P Comminos; Professor T Darvill;
Professor P Lewis; Mrs A Schofield; Professor R Vaughan;
Professor A Webster; Professor T Husband (University Board);
Mrs V Wood (Committee Clerk)
- Apologies: Mrs M Barron; Professor C Brady; Professor M Bennett; Ms E
Caswell; Dr G Daborn; Professor S Deutsch; Professor D Freshwater;
Professor B Gabrys; Professor M Hadfield; Professor B Hough; Mr A
Hunt; Professor B Richards; Professor T Sheppard.

Professor Husband, currently conducting a review of Senate on behalf of the University Board, was welcomed as an observer.

ACTION

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SENATE HELD ON 22 JUNE 2006

The Minutes were approved as a correct record with the exception of the replacement of "Marks" with "Salary" under item 5.6.1.

1.1 Matters Arising

1.1.1 BULLETIN

Senators commented that, as a University publication, the *Bulletin* should be a vehicle to stimulate academic debate and consider pedagogical matters. It was recommended that Mr Burns submit an appropriate article to the Editor for inclusion in *BULLETIN*.

RB

1.1.2 Review of Senate and its Committees

The Secretary & Registrar reminded Senators that the review had now commenced and encouraged them to respond to the initial questionnaire that had been circulated by Market Research Group.

Senators

2. ACADEMIC STAFF STRUCTURE REVIEW

- 2.1 Mrs Angela Schofield, Chair of the Review Panel, informed Senators that the Academic Staff Structure Review was underway and that on-going discussions were being held with academic staff. External evidence from other Universities, both home and overseas, would also be considered as part of the review process.
- 2.2 Whilst it was unlikely any definitive recommendations would come from the review, several issues to be addressed had been identified: facilitating the

progression from senior lecturer level; creating a robust structure that had transparency and was suitable for an academically led university; revising and rationalising job titles to reflect the changed approach; and the need, in the transitional period, to ensure that daily operational management would be maintained.

- 2.3 Senators were informed that Mrs Schofield would be discussing preliminary recommendations with UEG the following week, and a Report would be presented to Senate in February 2007. Senators were reminded that there was a separate review of Professorial Designations, being undertaken by the Pro Vice Chancellor (Research & Enterprise) whose recommendations would interact with the Academic Staff Structure Review. Both reviews would also be linked to the proposed new pay and grading framework.

3. STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

- 3.1 The Strategic Plan was now into its second stage, with more detailed plans being drawn up by Schools and Professional Services. The deadline for the submission of these Phase 2 plans is 15 January 2007.
- 3.2 Senators noted the paper on Phase 2 Guidelines, and discussed the objective to generate a 2% surplus by 2009/10, in terms of its size in real terms and of how this aspiration benchmarked against other Universities. Senators expressed the view that costs, as well as income, would rise over the planning period and that a 2% surplus may be unrealistic. Senators were informed that the 2% surplus was an assumption of the financial model, and particularly important given that the University would need to generate sufficient surplus to pay the interest on the loans that would be necessary to fund the anticipated investment in the University's future.

4. RELEASING POTENTIAL

- 4.1 The Pro Vice Chancellor (Education) gave an update, following on from the consultations and feedback received. Senators were reminded that the Releasing Potential projects would be critical underpinning to the achievement of the objectives set out in the Corporate and Strategic Plans. These projects, as part of an on-going process, would be progressed as the Schools' and Professional Services' Strategic Plans were being developed, engaging with existing good practice and supporting the successful delivery of agreed strategic targets
- 4.2 Proposed areas include: the development of both learning skills and pedagogical approaches for the future; the methods of supporting staff when planning and developing these changes; and to gather staff feedback on cross-institutional curriculum frameworks and models. A submission for significant TQEF funding to support staff developments had been successful, stressing the importance of the current opportunity and the benefits of the releasing potential initiative for both staff and students.
- 4.3 An important aspect of the projects was the inclusion of all staff, both within Schools and Professional Services, which broadened the definition of "academic" to encompass "academic endeavour" and underlined the complementary nature of the two areas.
- 4.4 Senators endorsed the need for an early start to some projects, and underlined the importance of staff seeing progress as soon as possible. Comments were also made on the link between the releasing potential initiative and the need to ensure a balanced work load for staff. Academic staff should have reasonable portfolios

that had an appropriate balance across activities, recognised variances in the knowledge, skills and interests of individuals, acknowledged the difficulties of freeing up time as changes were introduced and gave support for staff engaged at programme level.

- 4.5 Senators also commented on academic structures, such as changes to the curriculum model or initiatives to streamline the validation process. Senators noted that these issues are currently being considered in a Review chaired by the Head of Design, Engineering & Computing. This review is taking place under the auspices of the Change Management Board.
- 4.6 Senators agreed that, once the proposals had been through the consultation process, the Pro Vice Chancellor (Education)'s paper should be publicly available to all staff.

PVC(E)

5. UNIVERSITY ACTIVITIES REPORT

The University Activities Report was noted.

- 5.1 The Vice Chancellor drew Senators' attention to the second reading of the Further Education and Training Bill, which would give Further Education Colleges powers to award Foundation Degrees, thereby potentially changing the University's relationship with our Partner Institutions.
- 5.2 The Leitch Review of Skills, published on 6 December 2006, recognised the increasing need for a skilled workforce but identified gaps in this provision, such as the need for increased University/employer engagement. This would provide a favourable opportunity for the University as BU is already heavily engaged in this area.
- 5.3 The Vice Chancellor also advised that the sector needed to respond to future challenges such as higher proportions of posts in the UK being for those with graduate qualifications and the implications of increased numbers of part time students wishing to take degrees whilst working. At the same time the HE sector anticipated a tough Government spending review, with student support services and value for money becoming a greater priority.
- 5.4 Senators were informed that, whilst UUK had requested that the Government maintain unit funding levels, it predicted a focus on funding for part time provision, moves towards a ten year time framework and front-loaded research funding as well as greater emphasis on HEIF funding for teaching infrastructures. Senators were reminded that the University currently received very low levels of Research Grants or QR income, and that steps were already underway to remedy this.
- 5.5 The Vice Chancellor advised that, to be in the forefront, the University needed to continue to focus on equipping BU graduates with both generic skills and those particular skills needed to support the economy. This illustrated the importance of the releasing potential initiatives and the need for Schools to have a strong academic staff skill base.

6. MATTERS RAISED BY ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

6.1 Smoking on Campus

Senators learnt that the new signage regarding smoking on campus, advised at the previous meeting of Senate, would be erected shortly. A Report had been

presented to the Health & Safety Group on the implications of new national smoking regulations, due to come into force later in 2007, including those relating to passive smoking. A decision had been taken to ban smoking around entrances and exits to University buildings, or close to offices and other facilities. The Estates Group is also seeking to identify suitable sites for designation as external smoking areas. The Students' Union was being kept informed of the implementation processes.

As a responsible employer, the University is running a campaign to warn staff and students about the dangers of smoking and would be organising schemes to support those who wish to kick the habit. Whilst Halls of Residences are not covered by the new regulations, the University encourages no smoking in areas such as kitchens and study rooms. Senators noted that statements are made in both staff and student recruitment literature identifying that the University is a non-smoking environment.

6.2 Weymouth House

Concerns over out of hours access being available at Weymouth House only through the main doors, away from the car park, were due to security reasons. Senators noted that any disruption caused by necessary construction work at Weymouth House should soon cease, as these works will shortly be completed.

6.3 Car Parking Charges

Staff had commented that car parking charges were a tax on working and the University should have innovative policies to encourage staff to only use their vehicles when absolutely necessary. It was acknowledged that there were no incentives for staff to leave their cars at home, but Senators were advised that the University's Car Parking Policy would be reviewed in 2007-08 and that any comments would be valued as part of the consultation process.

7. ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE 15 November 2006

An extract from the Minutes was noted.

8. ACADEMIC SERVICES COMMITTEE 27 June 2006 3 October 2006

The Minutes were noted.

9. ACADEMIC STANDARDS COMMITTEE. 19 July 2006 11 October 2006

The Minutes were noted.

9.1 Collaborative Audit

The Pro Vice Chancellor (Education) thanked the Principal of the Anglo European College of Chiropractic and all staff who had been involved, for the amount of work carried out in respect of the QAA Collaborative Audit. The initial audit report was expected shortly. This report will indicate the level of confidence ("broad", "limited" or "no") the Auditors place on the University's management

of relationships with our Partner Colleges. It is anticipated that the full report would be received by the University at the end of January 2007.

9.2 Partnership Board

The October meeting of Academic Standards Committee had discussed the next stage in the development of partner relationships. A reorganisation had been proposed to create a more appropriate oversight body within the Senate Committee structure, with senior level membership. The Committee had considered its terms of reference, membership from FE Colleges, the importance of a Head of School to ensure feedback to the University, and student representation.

Senators recognised the importance of student representation and discussed the implications of different options, noting that the current Vice President (Representation), had encouraged student representatives to be aware of their strategic roles, encouraged their training and that a full time Union officer would in future visit partnerships. Senators suggested that the Membership of the Partnership Board should be revised to include either the Vice President (Representation) or the General Manager of the Students' Union to ensure continuity and on-going awareness of key issues.

PVC(E)

Senators were advised that the inclusion of link tutors in the membership had been considered, in view of their key role, but as the Board aimed at being a high level strategic group, it had been decided a Head of School would be more appropriate.

Senators commented on the problems of persuading students to become involved, of the continuity of experience, the diverse nature of the Colleges, and the problem caused by the fact that higher education formed only a small element of their educational provision.

AGREED that: The Partnership Board Terms of Reference and Membership be referred to Constitution and Procedures Committee, noting the comments raised by Senators.

9.3 Student Unit Evaluation

Student Unit Evaluation (SUE), to be introduced early in 2007, had evolved from a consultative review of the Annual Unit Evaluation (AUE). The review concluded that the current number of surveys was unhelpful and that elements of the AUE, the University's Student Survey and the National Student Survey should be encapsulated into one annual questionnaire.

Senators noted that the SUE: could be customised to fit specific units; would, in future, integrate into the VLE system (although this year hard copies were needed); and would enable a more appropriate collection of quality assurance data sets and monitoring processes. To address the issue of the inappropriate timing of some questionnaires last year, Schools could conduct the survey and return the SUE forms at any of four periods during the academic year. Schools would also be left to decide whether academic or administrative staff handled the distribution. Whilst the SUE was an evaluation of staff performance, Senators noted that it would not be integrated into the appraisal system until a robust data set was in place, unless an individual member of staff expressly wished to use it as reference.

Senators raised concerns over: the robustness of the data sets, as student attitudes changed throughout the curriculum cycle; the differences between types of units and unit groupings; assurances that customisation would not lead to

subject discrimination; and the need to ensure that clear explanations are given to students on which units, and lecturers, are being evaluated, particularly if the forms are being distributed by administrative staff. Senators were assured that the Survey was broadly about students' learning experience, and would be conducted in consultation with academics.

9.4 Blue Book Updates

Senators were informed that the October meeting of Academic Standards Committee, as part of a fundamental review of the Blue Book, had recommended the first in three stages of revisions for Senate approval. Noting that some cross referencing was still to be completed and some typographical errors still to be corrected, Senators recommended that the awarding of a PhD by publication should only be available to staff, and highlighted some alterations needed to the descriptions of standard types of awards.

AGREED that: The revisions to the Blue Book Updates are approved subject to the issues noted above.

9.5 Assessment Regulations

The October meeting of Academic Standards Committee had recommended some minor changes to the assessment regulations referring to resubmission, marks awarded, and appeals.

AGREED that: The amendments to the Assessment Regulations are approved.

10. RESEARCH DEGREES COMMITTEE 27 September 2006

The Minutes were noted

10.1 AGREED that: The following research awards be approved for conferment:

DPhil	Gurham Aktas	School of Services Management
	Zulfiquar Khan	School of Design, Engineering & Computing
	Joy Lyon	Institute of Health & Community Studies
	Carolyn Mair	School of Design, Engineering & Computing
	Luis Miguel Moital Rodrigues	School of Services Management
	Ping Zhao	School of Design, Engineering & Computing

MPhil	John Linnane	School of Services Management
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DBA	Paul Pettigrew	Institute of Business & Law
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10.2 RAE 2008

The Pro Vice Chancellor (Research & Enterprise) reported that RAE submissions would be sent out to external assessors the following week and that, whilst a total of 140 staff had been submitted at this time, these staff were not widely spread through the University.

11. STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE 15 November 2006 (Extract)

11.1 Extracts from the Minutes were noted.

- 11.2 Senators' attention was drawn to the need for academic staff to keep Wednesday afternoons free, to enable sports, clubs and societies activities to take place.
- 11.3 Senators noted the recommendation that the number of academic staff on the Committee be considered as part of the Review of Senate.
- 11.3 Senators also noted that the Committee had recommended the University should adopt the proposals for a Disability Equality Scheme for 2006-09.

12. SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Resolutions and Recommendations

School Committee resolutions were noted and recommendations agreed unless otherwise stated. Recommendations and resolutions relating to programmes are approved subject to being checked with Academic Development and Quality to ensure that the proposals are in agreement with current academic regulations and procedures.

12.1 School of Conservation Sciences 9 June 2006

The Minutes were noted.

12.2 Institute of Business and Law 15 November 2006

The Minutes were noted.

AGREED that: Paul Cole be appointed a Visiting Fellow.

12.3 Institute of Health & Community Studies 7 June 2006 11 October 2006

The Minutes were noted.

AGREED that: Robert Brown and Chitta Choudhury be re-appointed as Visiting Fellows.

12.4 Media School 4 October 2006

The Minutes were noted.

12.5 School of Services Management 31 May 2006

The Minutes were noted.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

13.1 Research Committee

The Pro Vice Chancellor (Research & Enterprise) informed Senators that a cross University Research Ethics Committee was urgently required, to report to Senate as the appropriate authority.

13.2 Dorset Business Awards

Senators were informed that the University was in the running for a number of awards at the Dorset Business Awards ceremony, to be held that evening. Involvement at this level illustrated the success of BU's commitment to business and employer engagement.

13.3 Copyright of Articles in University Repository

Senators discussed the copyright position for the submission of articles to the University's Repository. Whilst the Head of Library Services would be giving guidelines, this was a difficult issue for all Universities and had resulted in different approaches being adopted.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF SENATE

The next meeting of Senate will take place on Wednesday, 21 February 2007.