

SENATE

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SENATE held on
1 FEBRUARY 2006**

- Present: P Curran (Chair)
A Allerston, C Armistead, B Astin, D Ball, M Barron, R Burns,
E Caswell, R Dugan, M Gagan, M Hadfield, M Heinrich, N Hemmington,
B Howard, A Hunt, S Jukes, P Kneller, P Luker, N Richardson, M Riordan,
C Symonds, K Vall, D Williams, D Willey, R Wynne.
- In attendance: T Boucouvalas, V Wood (Committee Clerk)
- Apologies: R Allan, I Graham, M Heinrich, A Schofield, R Wynne

The following new members were welcomed to Senate: Rob Allan, in his capacity as Director of Finance, and Professor Tony Boucouvalas, representing the Professoriate.

ACTION

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SENATE HELD ON 19 OCTOBER 2005

The Minutes were approved as a correct record, subject to the recording of an award to read PhD, and of Alan Hunt as absent, rather than present.

1.1 Matters Arising

1.1.1 Future Senate Agendas: Membership of Senate

The Review of Senate, to be carried out under the Chairmanship of Prof Husband, an independent member of the University Board, would consider the appropriateness of the current Membership of Senate, as the University develops a more academically-led environment. It was anticipated that, in future, the numbers of Professoriate representatives would increase, in addition to those already serving Senate in other capacities.

Senators commented that under existing procedures members of the Professoriate were able to put themselves up for election as staff representatives. The Vice Chancellor considered that, with the new strategic direction for the University, and a larger role for the academic leadership, greater specific involvement of the Professoriate in the University's deliberative structure would be very welcome.

It was agreed that a formal proposal would be made following the completion of the current Senate Review. In the interim, an additional two Professors from each School would be invited to attend Senate as Observers.

Secretary

2. UNIVERSITY ACTIVITIES REPORT

2.1 The first part of the Report, in its new format, concentrated on University-wide issues. The Vice Chancellor highlighted that, along with the forthcoming review of Board and Senate, the University's line management and its interaction with other structures was being considered. As a first step, a revision to the senior level structure had been implemented and now formed four components: the University Executive Group (UEG), Senior Management Team (SMT), the Heads of Schools Group (HOSG) and Heads of Professional Services Group (HOPSG).

2.2 It is hoped that the launch of *BULLETIN*, the in-house monthly newsletter, in December 2005, would increase cross-University communication. Senators were asked to emphasise that contributions from staff are encouraged.

Senators

- 2.3 The anticipated decline in applications, with many students forsaking a gap year to apply early last year, had not materialised, largely due to the increased numbers of Open Days and levels of advertising. The challenge now was to ensure that a high proportion of the increased applications (up 4% on last year's figures) who have received an offer of a place at the University actually enrol with us in September 2006. The Vice Chancellor particularly recognised the efforts of staff in Schools in seeking to achieve these important outcomes for the University, and of Registry in carrying out revisions to the internal procedures that had turned around the decision making process from being slower than the sector average, to faster than the sector average.
- 2.4 Improvements to the mechanisms for listening and responding to students were underway; seeking to understand the messages from the 2005 National Student Survey and in preparation for the 2006 Survey.
- 2.5 League Tables have indicated that the proportion of the University's graduates obtaining graduate posts within six months of graduation is in decline. As these statistics may have been affected by the methodology used for data collection, the telephone interviews for the current DLHE Survey had been conducted by staff in Schools, making use of their in depth knowledge of students and of the type of posts obtained. It is hoped that this methodology would result in greater accuracy. Senators commented that in some Schools, only a small number of academic staff were engaged in this activity, the work largely being undertaken by administrative staff. Where this is the case, it was proposed that relevant Heads should pursue the matter with School academic staff.
- 2.6 Senators noted the contents of the remainder of the report.

3. RELEASING POTENTIAL

- 3.1 The Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic) reminded Senators that this initiative arose from the paper by the Vice Chancellor proposing a concentration on outputs (e.g. learning outcomes by students) rather than inputs (e.g. teaching hours) and the consequential releasing of academic staff time. The proposals would also address space utilisation, raise the effectiveness of teaching and encourage students to become independent self-motivated lifelong learners.
- 3.2 Efficiencies gained through the review of current academic process should be seen as an incentive for academic staff, with released time providing the opportunity for such staff to engage in activities such as research and enterprise, or otherwise allowing academic staff to take part in outward looking and strategic pedagogic activities. To reinforce this approach, the current applications for Learning & Teaching Fellowships would be aimed at "releasing potential", and this topic would also be the theme of the Staff Development day on 16 May 2006.
- 3.3 Concerns by the Students' Union include the need to increase the level of library and computing resources if fundamental changes to the teaching timetables were made; the implications for the University's estate (including the requirement for different types of space and for more social space); the reinforcement of the need to keep Wednesday afternoon free for those who wish to participate in extra curricular activities (such as sport, societies, music etc) and a review of the 7.00pm lecture finishing time.
- 3.4 Senators commented on the need to identify and communicate good practice initiatives as a positive message and motivation for staff. Within programme reviews, the process for making modifications to programmes had been changed in order to facilitate the modification process. Senators were advised that programme duplication should be challenged and other means sought to achieve the new strategic direction, such as changes to delivery methods and reductions in teaching hours. Another area of rationalisation suggested was the reduction in the number of School meetings, particularly at programme level.
- 3.5 Senators also emphasised that the strategy should ensure greater intellectual engagement in pedagogical research but noted that this would need adequate resources and as long as the current

input orientated culture exists: time incentives. Whilst Senators were advised that implementation of the strategy had to be owned by Schools, it was agreed that guidance at corporate rather than operational level was necessary in relation to the allocation of appropriate resources, the rationalisation of units and direction towards different teaching methods etc.

- 3.6 Senators strongly supported the general strategic direction set out in the “Releasing Potential” paper, although noting that concerns over the implementation details of the proposals still needed to be addressed.
- 3.7 A guidance paper for Schools setting out benchmarks and year-on-year targets was welcomed. It was anticipated that this would be available, as a first draft in April. **PVC (Academic)**

4. THE NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY

- 4.1 Responses from the 2005 Survey had highlighted issues of statistical data accuracy and wider issues on feedback mechanisms. Other factors such as encouragement of critical student feedback and insufficient emphasis on the importance of the Survey to the University’s place in the sector were highlighted. These were being addressed for the second National Student Survey, currently taking place. The Student Affairs Committee on 8 February would discuss the development of initiatives to further support students and improve the interface with academic staff for example, through encouraging earlier overview and feedback on students’ assessed work. These initiatives are strongly supported by the Students’ Union.
- 4.2 To improve communication with students on their learning and teaching experience, an Annual Unit Evaluation (AUE) questionnaire had been devised, which had now passed through initial consultation with academic staff (via Schools and in a separate consultation with NATFHE), Senior Management Team and Academic Standards Committee. It is anticipated that Annual Unit Evaluation will commence at the beginning of March. This will be evaluated, modified and a final version used from the start of the 2006-07 academic year. In addition, wider analysis of programme performance will be undertaken, to include student employment by programme.
- 4.3 To encourage a high response rate to the AUE questionnaire and to help secure a prompt return, the internal web site would be used as the vehicle to ensure that information about the importance of these questionnaires is disseminated to the general student body, with the student representatives another vital means of communication with fellow students on this important facet of student feedback.
- 4.4 Senators noted the sector’s increasingly ‘customer focussed’ approach, now also being re-enforced by HEFCE, and discussed how the University could differentiate itself from its competitors. It was felt that further incremental changes towards student centeredness would be achievable, and emphasised the importance of the role of research and enterprise active staff (whether existing or new) in encouraging, enthusing and motivating the University’s student learners.

5. PREPARATION FOR RAE 2008

- 5.1 Senators noted the Guidance Notes circulated by the Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic) on the internal and external evaluation of research outputs and thanks were extended to those members of the Professoriate who had been engaged in reading and grading outputs. Senators were advised that, in order for the University to have confidence in the quality of its research, no submissions would be made to RAE without such peer review.
- 5.2 Guidance and final criteria were shortly being released from HEFCE and, to optimise returns, would be considered in the light of the University’s own discipline areas.

6. GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Senators noted a Report and Action Plan on Global Perspectives, Internationalisation and Sustainable Development, compiled by Chris Shiel, currently on a Fellowship from the Leadership Foundation. The Report stressed the importance of producing collective guidance, reflecting the University's commitment to ensuring that our students see themselves as global citizens and, as part of the employability strategy, ensuring their ability to work in multicultural and international organisations anywhere in the world.

Senators supported the Action Plan, agreed on the need to raise awareness and for the further embedding of this global perspective in the curriculum.

7. FAIR TRADE POLICY

Senators noted and approved the contents of the Fair Trade Policy.

8. STANDARD ACADEMIC CV

8.1 The activities of academic staff are recorded, in large part, in terms of outputs, whereas inputs are used to capture the activities of teachers. The Vice Chancellor noted that a standard CV would capture these outputs in a way that would be useful for appraisal and promotion.

8.2 Senators learnt that the proposed standard academic CV had been through various stages of consultation and was now at the final version before its introduction next academic year. It was primarily intended as a personal database, to be available for regular amendment by the individual staff member, reflecting the individuals' areas of expertise and standing in the academic community.

8.3 Senators discussed the implications of its introduction and its inclusion of AUE (ex-TLAS) and team teaching scores. It was felt the title should reflect its nature as a database, with "Academic Profile" or possibly "Academic Staff Record" suggested. It was also recommended that the form should be accompanied by Guidance Notes.

9. DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN

9.1 The Vice Chancellor advised Senators that the Draft Corporate Plan would be presented to the University Board on 24 February 2006. The Plan would include statements on the University's anticipated position in 2010-12 (at which time the cap on variable fees could be raised or removed and the demographic downturn in the applicant population would begin to impact on student recruitment) and the establishment of Centres of Academic Excellence, with global reputations, that supported, and were linked to, undergraduate provision. In welcoming the plan, Senators commented on the need for the University to continue to serve the local area, whilst engaged in the other important national and international activities outlined, including the expansion of the University's academic footprint.

9.2 The Vice Chancellor emphasised that the existing academic footprint, based on vocational areas of study, unnecessarily constrained the University's potential to develop. However, it was noted that such a change would require moving away from the University's existing unique selling point ("vocational University") and the consequent need to reconfigure our place in the market as a "professional University" or a "University for the professions", that recognised and supported new knowledge areas.

10. REVIEW OF THE PERFORMANCE OF SENATE AND ITS COMMITTEES

10.1 To reflect the best practice set out in the CUC Governance Guidelines, a Review had been initiated by the Board to consider the performance and objectives of Senate and its committee structure. Discussions will take place with Prof Tom Husband, who will chair the Senate Review, and with Mr Giles Sturdy, who will chair the concomitant Board Review, in relation to

the scope and timing of these Reviews. Recognising the need to take account of the emerging new strategies, as set out initially in the Corporate Plan and then in the University's new Strategic Plan, the deadline for the completion of the Review is likely to be Autumn 2006 at the earliest.

- 10.2 Senators were asked to provide to the Registrar any feedback on issues of performance of either Senate or its committees or, indeed, on any other relevant issues that they would wish to have considered as part of the Review.

Senators

11. MATTERS RAISED BY ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

- 11.1 Senators were informed that, in future, all items notified by elected Senators for consideration by Senate would be taken at the Senate Meeting. Any matters then deemed inappropriate for Senate would be referred to other Committees.

11.2 Rise in Deposit for Postgraduate Programmes

Concerns had been raised over the possible increase to 25% of deposits for postgraduate programmes. However, the Pro Vice Chancellor (Corporate Development & Finance) informed Senators that the Fees Board had now set the deposit at £250 to address concern from Schools that a substantially increased deposit could have an adverse affect on applications and recruitment. This new arrangement would be reviewed on the basis of actual recruitment experience this year.

Fees Board

Senators agreed that the relationship of Senate to such policy decisions should be an issue taken up by the Review.

Secretary

11.3 Grading of Senior Lecturers

The Director of Human Resources advised that regrading of Senior Academic, Reader and Established Chair posts had been carried out. On-going discussions with NATFHE on other grading structure issues were particularly focussing on pay progression and the new Grade 9.

11.4 Grants for Conferences

The teaching staff representatives for the School of Design, Engineering & Computing had requested whether, if the University was to become more research orientated, additional resources would be available, particularly to cover travel and subsistence for attendance at prestigious conferences etc. Senators were informed that, whilst Schools could distribute funding as they wished, it was expected that staff would seek to secure travel grants externally, though the University would continue to cover up to half the cost of attendance at such events where it is deemed appropriate and where funds are not available from any other source.

11.5 Adequate preparation for new delivery patterns

Senators were informed that an issue raised by the teaching staff representative for the Institute of Business & Law regarding sufficient time for staff to prepare for new delivery patterns, should be resolved under the "Releasing Potential" initiative.

11.6 'Phonebook

An issue raised by the elected staff representative for the Institute of Business & Law on the effectiveness of the electronic handbook, produced by IT Services, was discussed. Senators felt that a bi-annual paper version of the internal directory could help improve communication across the University. The Vice Chancellor advised that the new in-house publication "*Bulletin*" should also result in improved communication within and across Schools and Professional Services.

**12. JOINT SENATE AND BOARD HONORARY DEGREES COMMITTEE
17 January 2006**

The Minutes were noted, and the necessity for their contents to remain confidential emphasised.

**13. ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
23 November 2005**

The Minutes were noted.

**14. ACADEMIC SERVICES COMMITTEE
12 October 2005**

The Minutes were noted.

**15. ACADEMIC STANDARDS COMMITTEE
12 October 2005**

The Minutes were noted.

**16. RESEARCH COMMITTEE
18 October 2005
8 December 2005**

The Minutes were noted.

**17. RESEARCH DEGREES COMMITTEE
30 November 2005**

The Minutes were noted.

RESOLVED: that the following research award be approved for conferment:

MPhil Jo Hartley Institute of Health and Community Studies

**18. JOINT SENATE AND BOARD STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
16 November 2005**

The Minutes were noted.

19. 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.

**19.1 Bournemouth Media School
18 January 2006**

The Minutes were noted.

RESOLVED that Mark Brayne, Kevin Marsh and Tony Stoller become Visiting Fellows.

**19.2 School of Conservation Sciences
11 November 2005**

The Minutes were noted.

RESOLVED that John Patrick and Michael Way should be renewed as Visiting Fellows.

**19.3 School of Design, Engineering and Computing
16 November 2005**

The Minutes were noted.

The recommendation that Dr Robin Cundill and Professor Jawed Siddiqi be referred to the Standing Professorial Committee as Visiting Professors was noted.

**19.4 Institute of Business and Law
9 November 2005
18 January 2006 (extract only)**

The Recommendation and Resolutions were noted.

RESOLVED that Ian Marshall and Miles Shepherd be appointed as Visiting Fellows.

**19.5 Institute of Health and Community Studies
9 November 2005**

The Minutes were noted.

**19.6 School of Services Management
16 November 2005**

The Minutes were noted.

The referral to Senate on the delays in appointing student representatives, leading to lack of representation at School Committees and loss of feedback provision, was also noted. The Vice President (Representation) of the Students' Union apologised for the delays and stated these were exceptional and due to the timing of the University-wide elections for student representation. However all relevant students should now have been contacted about training and attendance. It is hoped that changes put in place this year will eliminate this problem for future years.

20. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

20.1 Retirement of the Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic)

Professor Luker was thanked for his outstanding contribution to the work for Senate over the years, and given best wishes for his retirement.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF SENATE

Wednesday, 21 June 2006 at 2.15 pm.

Noel DG Richardson
Secretary to the Senate
20 March 2006

V Wood
Committee Clerk
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