

SENATE

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SENATE held on
13 JUNE 2007

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

ACTION

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SENATE HELD ON 15 FEBRUARY 2007

The Minutes were approved as a correct record.

1.1 Matters Arising**1.1.1 Committee Review**

Senators were advised that a Report on the Committee Review should be completed by the Autumn Term meeting of Senate.

1.1.2 "Town Hall" Meetings

The meetings held so far had been well received and there was a commitment by the University Executive Group that more would be held in future.

1.1.3 Professorial Designation

The Standing Professorial Committee had discussed the principles relating to Professorial Designation.

1.1.4 Honorary Degrees Committee

The Secretary & Registrar was in the process of contacting the nominated candidates.

2. THE UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN

- 2.1 The Vice Chancellor reminded Senators that the Strategic Plan was set in context of the University's position within the region and local community and to position the University to meet future challenges; including the forthcoming demographic downturn; the raising, or elimination, of the cap on fees; the move to full economic costing for teaching; and the development of a more competitive HE marketplace, generally. The aim is for outward-facing academic staff to offer high quality higher education geared to the professions.

- 2.2 To achieve the vision, set out in the Corporate Plan and operationalised in the Strategic Plan, required a realignment of the University's priorities. Those priorities, in order of importance, would now be education, research and enterprise followed by widening participation.
- 2.3 The University would seek to invest to develop Centres of Excellence, such as the NCCA and the proposed Executive Business School. In addition, broad academic areas with similar characteristics would be brought together to work as groups across the institution and externally, such as is the case with the new Postgraduate Medical Research Centre.
- 2.4 To create headroom for the investment, there would also need to be areas for disinvestment. These would include unproductive research and enterprise activity; programmes that did not meet academic aspirations and/or recruited only small numbers of students; community based activities that did not fit with the new strategic priorities, including some current widening access activities where the significant aspects of that provision would be more effectively provided within Registry; and changes to the traditionally taught foreign language provision, currently under consultation, which may better meet student needs by being outsourced or computer based in the future.
- 2.5 The Interim Director of Finance informed Senators that the University needed to underpin all the changes proposed in the Strategic Plan with a robust financial plan, not only to give assurances over pay back of bank borrowing for buildings or ICT investments but also to ensure sound management of its investment and disinvestment objectives. Senators noted that the University's recent core financial performance had been on a gradual downward trend, with the budgeted bottom line surplus being achieved through windfall gains.
- 2.6 Downward cost pressures would be needed as the University's staff employment costs were currently increasing by 6% per annum compared to funding from HEFCE, which is only rising by 2.5% per annum currently. Senators noted that a small deficit was forecast for the current year, with a deficit budget proposed for 2007-08, as a year of major investment and change. Thereafter, the aims were to eliminate this deficit and achieve a sustainable position in relation to the University's core activities, with a surplus forecast in 2011-12. The latter could only be achieved through the generation of a significant growth in income and the maximisation of the University's research and enterprise potential.
- 2.7 The Deputy Vice Chancellor advised that a set of Key Performance Indicators had been developed, based on the recommendations of a sector wide review by CUC. These KPIs would act as both internal and external benchmarks and would monitor delivery against the targets set in the Strategic Plan as well as institutional sustainability.
- 2.8 A targeted Voluntary Severance Scheme (VSS) would be implemented soon in those areas where posts did not align with the future vision or were in areas of disinvestment. A consultation process was being launched for the academic staff involved in foreign language provision, and to enable closure of PACE. The Unions had been advised about these developments, and a FAQ document was being prepared setting out the situation. Senators noted that the deadline for expressing interest in VSS would be extended for those academic staff subsequently applying for an Associate Dean post, having been unsuccessful at interview for a Deputy Dean appointment.
- 2.9 Senators raised the issue of foreign language provision, as this was still in demand by students, and some Senators felt that more than on-line support was needed. Senators commented that the closure of this provision could be seen as

negative and defensive, and against the University's commitment to diversity and internationalisation. There were also concerns over validation issues and quality assurance if the provision was being outsourced to other providers. Senators also highlighted the fact that support was particularly necessary for the University's pre-sessional English language programme, an important contributor to the subsequent success of the international students taking this programme. Senators were informed that the latter would not be impacted by the proposals and it was emphasised that the issue still under consultation and that any comments should be fed to the Head of Academic Services, who would report to the University Executive Group prior to a decision being taken at the beginning of July.

Senators

- 2.10 The President of the Students' Union, concerned that the VSS would impact adversely on students, was reassured that the scheme was targeted in particular areas and would not directly impact on areas of frontline teaching. However, given that one of the aims of the Strategic Plan was to enhance the quality of the student experience, necessarily the University's current academic approach to learning and teaching would be evolving for the future.
- 2.11 Senators discussed the closure of PACE against the background of challenging partnership relationships, but were assured the purpose was to create more headroom and improve quality and effectiveness, not to end relevant activities that would disadvantage students or the University's relations with our FE partners. The closure did not signify disinvestment from regional and national WP agendas, although some activities in this area had issues of image and appropriate fit with the University's changing priorities.

3. UNIVERSITY ACTIVITIES REPORT

The University Activities Report was noted. Senators were advised its content had still too large a breadth and coverage, and required more School ownership. Once the web pages were functioning, it was hoped feedback over any ambiguity of required information and issues over the time taken to complete, would be resolved. Senators were also reassured that whilst Professional Services were not represented at the moment, they would be included in future.

4. MATTERS FROM ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

- 4.1 'Local' Contracts
The Director of Human Resources informed Senators that the opposition to revised Academic Contracts that had emerged at the recent UCU Congress reflected concerns among some at national level about precedents being set, but that the University was still confident that outstanding issues would be resolved with local UCU representatives in the near future.
- 4.2 Semesterisation
Senators were informed that semesterisation had been considered as part of the Strategic Plan assumptions and reflected Schools recommendations for its adoption as a benefit to staff engaged in research and/or enterprise activities and to enhance the student experience. A consultative review was now being undertaken, led by the Deputy Vice Chancellor, with input encouraged from all stakeholders.
- 4.3 Assessments
It was reaffirmed that the principle explicitly stated in Regulations for the Assessment of Students on Taught Programmes of Study para E3.4 still applied and that the second marker role, as specified in the University Academic Policies

Senators

Regulations & Procedures had already been debated at Academic Standards Committee.

Senators were also informed that, in any case, a review of the University's quality processes would be carried out during the 2007-08 academic year and that this review would involve Deputy Deans and appropriate Associate Deans with responsible for quality assurance at School level.

It was confirmed that specific matters relating to Unit AHE203 were discussed and reported in the Minutes of the Academic Standards Committee and would be addressed under that agenda item.

5. **STANDING PROFESSORIAL COMMITTEE**

- 5.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2007 were noted. Criteria for the designation of Professors and Associate Professors had now been considered and final drafts agreed by the Vice Chancellor. Model job descriptions for Associate Professoriate Levels One and Two would be made available on the OVC public I drive within the next few days.
- 5.2 An announcement regarding Associate Deans would be made shortly. This would make reference to the Associate Professoriate roles and applications for these posts.
- 5.3 To reflect the need to simplify the procedures for Visiting Professors, it was being proposed that recommendations should come from School Committees to the Vice Chancellor. Appointments would be for periods of three years and would be renewable. Any decisions taken would be reported to Senate.

6. **MINUTES – ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE 23 May 2007 (extract)**

An extract from the Minutes was noted.

7. **ACADEMIC STANDARDS COMMITTEE 21 March 2007 16 May 2007**

The Minutes were noted.

7.1 **Blue Book Update, Section F**

Senators noted that the update of Section F, on Regulations for the Awards of Degrees by Research, discussed at the March Committee meeting, had subsequently been reissued at the May Committee meeting, incorporating the clarifications sought at the earlier meeting.

RESOLVED: that the revised Section F of the Blue Book is approved.

7.2 **Assessment Regulations (21 March 2007)**

- 7.2.1 Academic Standards Committee had held an in-depth discussion over the current two week period of grace for students submitting work for assessment. Adverse comments about this regulation included the fact that its existence led students to see deadlines as flexible; it raised issues of equity and consistency in the treatment of students, when some made the effort to meet published deadlines

whilst others could take up to two weeks longer to submit; and it impacted on the three-week assessment turnaround standard.

- 7.2.2 Senators discussed the recommendation made by Academic Standards Committee that the grace period should be removed from the regulations. It was felt that appropriate judgement could be exercised by Schools to accommodate genuine unexpected problems or delays without the control of the student. However, it was agreed that care would have to be taken to ensure a consistency in the application of such judgement across Schools, in order to avoid a different form of inequity in the treatment of student assessments.

- 7.2.3 Senators approved the Assessment Regulations subject to further consultation with Schools on the implementation of this regulation.

ADQ

7.3 Blue Book Update Section G (16 May 2007)

RESOLVED: that the revised Section G of the Blue Book is approved.

7.4 Assessment Issue (ASC on 16 May 2007)

- 7.4.1 Senators were informed that an issue relating to one unit on one particular programme had been investigated and the subsequent report and actions had been discussed and approved by Academic Standards Committee.
- 7.4.2 Senators noted that the report had concluded due process had not been followed throughout the assessment process for this programme in Autumn 2006 and, with regret, noted that the relevant internal examiners, who had been asked to complete due process by formally agreeing marks, had been unable to do so. As a result, all three External Examiners for the unit concerned had been asked to re-mark the relevant scripts, independently of each other, and come together to reach an agreed final mark for each student.
- 7.4.3 Senators noted that the remarking process had now been completed and, subsequent to the Academic Standards Committee meeting, an Examination Board, convened in accordance with regulations, had met and agreed the marks to be awarded to each student whose script had been remarked. Members noted that, as the normal External Examiners for the programme had undertaken the remarking, another, independent, External Examiner had been present at the Examination Board.
- 7.4.4 In answer to a question, the Secretary & Registrar advised Senators that the marks awarded to the students by the three external examiners (and confirmed by the Examination Board) upheld in broad measure the original marks communicated to those students the previous autumn. Senators noted that, whilst there were very minor variations in marks for some individuals, those variations made no material difference to the overall result for any student.
- 7.4.5 Senators agreed that the investigation had been thorough and that the steps taken by the University to resolve the issue that had arisen were entirely appropriate and had ensured that there was no question of a student being given an award that could be considered to be out of line with the sector standards or outwith QAA guidelines.
- 7.4.6 However, Senators noted the unjust adverse publicity that had been generated and discussed the concerns this issue could raise not only amongst those students directly concerned but also for other students in the School or elsewhere in the University. The Secretary & Registrar assured Senators that all those students who had been directly affected by the issue would be contacted by Registry and offered the opportunity to discuss the matter with the Pro Vice

Chancellor (Education) or the Secretary & Registrar. In addition, a briefing note would be prepared for the Careers Service so that they could advise all students in the School (and any other students concerned about the matter) of the facts and of how to deal with any question that might arise at interview.

- 7.4.7 Although no blame was being apportioned to any individual over the issue, it had been agreed it was imperative that the University needed to ensure that its quality assurance and academic standards were secure and due process was being observed at all times. Senators noted that a review of the University's assessment processes, by the Head of Academic Development & Quality and the Deputy Deans, would take place during 2007-08.
- 7.4.8 Senators were informed that further guidance had already been given to all Schools' Heads of Quality, Chairs of Examination Boards, internal examiners and other relevant academic and administrative staff, to highlight the imperative need to ensure due process is followed, particularly in relation to the independent marking protocols and processes. Confirmation of compliance with the relevant University regulations would be sought by the Academic Standards Committee at their meeting in October 2007.
- 7.4.9 A general issue on quality enhancement would be an item for future discussion by Academic Standards Committee, as would other quality assurance recommendations arising from the QAA Collaborative Audit. The Pro Vice Chancellor (Education) reminded Senators that the QAA Collaborative Audit had resulted in a verdict of broad confidence but that the University was by no means complacent about this result. Senators were informed that a review of the University's collaborative provision would begin in the autumn, whilst the recommendations contained in the QAA Collaborative Audit report had already resulted in an Action Plan being agreed by Academic Standards Committee and now in the process of implementation through Schools.
- 7.4.10 Senators expressed some reservations over the suggestion made at Academic Standards Committee in relation to statistical information and results distribution but noted that this issue would be considered as part of the review of examination processes.

8. RESEARCH COMMITTEE 13 February 2007

- 8.1 The Minutes were noted. An error in the Minutes, in relation to Home/EU studentships was highlighted and comments made that more information should be given on the reasons behind allocations.
- 8.2 The Institutional Repository was now in place and populated with RAE outputs. The second mock exercise for the RAE was being held during the period to the end of July. This would be followed by final decisions by the Steering Committee on the individuals to be submitted for the RAE.
- 8.2 Issues over the material that should be included in the Repository were discussed. The Pro Vice Chancellor (Research & Enterprise) emphasised that some published papers may not be included, even though they appeared in the Staff Academic Profile. A web-based guide would be available in the next few weeks, which would address some queries, including possible copyright infringements in relation to electronic versions of published papers.

9. RESEARCH DEGREES COMMITTEE 24 January 2007

7 March 2007

2 May 2007

The Minutes were noted.

- 9.1 **RESOLVED:** that the following research award recommended at the Research Degrees Committee held on 24 January 2007 be approved for conferment:

DPhil	Rahul Premraj Caroline Hodges	School of Design, Engineering & Computing The Media School
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- 9.2 **RESOLVED:** that the following research awards recommended at the Research Degrees Committee held on 7 March 2007 be approved for conferment:

DPhil	Jian Chang Amanda Howarth	The Media School Institute of Health & Community Studies
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- 9.3 **RESOLVED:** that the following research awards recommended at the Research Degrees Committee held on 2 May 2007 be approved for conferment:

DPhil	Janet Dickinson John Mathenge Kanyaru Susan Way	School of Services Management School of Design, Engineering & Computing Institute of Health & Community Studies
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10. STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

14 February 2007

9 May 2007

- 10.1 The Minutes were noted. Senators were informed that good progress was being made with the askBU and talkBU projects, which it was hoped would be running from September 2007. The service intended to provide comprehensive and consistent information to applicants and students, although appropriate academic and other issues would still be referred to Schools.
- 10.2 Senators, emphasising the importance of recruiting the right staff, were informed that several appointments had already been made, while others were waiting until particular roles had been clarified. Staff in some 'at risk' areas would be given prior consideration for the remaining vacancies. However, as the working assumption had been that the projects would be resource neutral, Senators noted that replacement of a successful internal candidate taking up a place on the askBU or talkBU teams would not be automatic and would be subject to negotiation between the Personnel Department and the relevant Deans. Senators also noted that the roles of askBU and talkBU vis a vis that of the Student Advice Centre was under discussion with the Students' Union.
- 10.3 Senators sought reassurance that, as major projects, there would be appropriate monitoring mechanisms in place to secure student feedback and to evaluate the effectiveness of the services. Senators were informed that the University was reluctant to introduce another Survey and so had been considering other ways to report back on a regular basis to the most appropriate Committee.

11. 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 & Quality to ensure that the proposals are in agreement with current academic regulations and procedures.

**11.1 School of Conservation Sciences
16 March 2007**

The Minutes were noted.

RESOLVED: that Andrew Martin, Lena Ward and Robert Kenward be appointed as Visiting Fellows. Dr Kenward would also be referred to the Standing Professorial Committee for nomination as a Visiting Professor.

**11.2 Design Engineering & Computing
14 March 2007
23 May 2007**

The Minutes, including the extension of the Visiting Professorships of Jonathan Cole, George Howarth and Sa'ad Medhat, were noted.

The President of the Students Union raised the issue of the absence of student representatives in discussions over timetabling. Senators were informed that there had been difficulties in securing student appointments to some committees and noted that, where issues could not be addressed and resolved without a student representative, the School should contact the Students' Union Vice President (Representation) to find a way forward.

**11.3 Institute of Business & Law
26 January 2007
11 October 2006**

The Minutes were noted. Senators noted the change in the title of the Institute of Business and Law to The Business School.

**11.4 School of Health & Social Care
4 October 2006**

The Minutes were noted. Senators noted the change of title for the Institute of Health & Community Studies to the School of Health & Social Care.

Senators noted the recommendation that Dr David Kerr's and Dr Malcolm Cox's applications for Professorial Designation were being referred to the Standing Professorial Committee.

**11.5 Bournemouth Media School
30 May 2007**

The Minutes were noted.

RESOLVED that Paul Watson be appointed a Visiting Fellow

**11.6 School of Services Management
14 March 2007**

RESOLVED that Amanda Scott be appointed a Visiting Fellow

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

12.1 Retirement of the Head of Development & Quality

Senators thanked Mr Alan Hunt, Head of Academic Development & Quality for his work for the University and gave their best wishes for his retirement. Senators noted that Mr Hunt would be continuing to work on individual projects for the University.

12.2 Retiring Student Union Officials

Senators thanked the retiring President and Vice President (Representation) for their work on Senate and gave best wishes for their future.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF SENATE

Wednesday, 21 November 2007 at 2.15pm

Noel DG Richardson
Secretary & Registrar
23 July 2007

V Wood
Committee Clerk
SenateMinutes07_02