

## SENATE

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SENATE held on  
17 JUNE 2009**

- Present: Prof P Curran (Chair)  
Mr C Allen; Dr B Astin; Ms M Barron; Mr S Bellamy; Dr A Biscoe; Dr C Bond; Dr J Hanson; Mr A James; Ms S Jeary; Dr P Johnstone; Mr S Jukes; Mr P Kneller; Dr E Mytton; Mr D Newell; Prof N Petford; Mr N Richardson; Mr M Riordan; Prof J Roach; Mr F Ruffle; Mr J Tarrant; Dr G Thomas; Dr K Vall; Prof J Vinney; Mr D Willey; Ms J Woodcock
- Observers: Prof D Buhalis; Prof P Cominos; Prof T Darvill; Prof S Deutsch; Prof S Ersser; Prof B Gabrys; Prof B Hough; Prof P Lewis; Prof B Richards; Prof T Sheppard; Prof A Webster
- In attendance: Mr G Rayment (Committee Clerk)  
Dr G Daborn; Dr P Rawlinson (Board Member)
- Apologies: Ms A Allerston; Prof M Bennett; Dr S Eccles; Mrs K Everett; Prof T Lange; Prof D Osselton; Prof R Vaughan; Dr K Wilkes

*The Chair welcomed Board member Dr Peter Rawlinson to the meeting.*

**1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SENATE HELD ON 11 MARCH 2009**

The Minutes were recommended as an accurate record.

**1.1 Matters Arising**

- 1.1.1 All matters arising have been actioned, with papers presented where appropriate.

**1.2 Interim Report by the Assessment Feedback Project Group**

Senate noted the interim report circulated to them on the 9 April 2009. It was intended that a final report would be considered by Academic Standards Committee at its July 2009 meeting. Any further comments should be submitted to Janet Hanson before then.

**Senators**

**1.3 Links with NHS Trusts**

Dr Thomas presented this paper, which set out further details of the proposal discussed at the previous meeting. The proposal suggested how a process could be developed by which interested NHS partners (there are currently four) could achieve the designation of 'University' in their title in recognition of their delivery of medical and health education, collaborative research projects and commitment to practice development through working with the University. The proposed process for approval includes reporting to Senate at the final stage. Senate recommend the proposals set out in the paper.

**1.4 Review of Senate Standing Orders – Update**

The Secretary outlined the plans for reviewing Senate Standing Orders over the summer, through Constitution & Procedures Committee. It was agreed that any amendments required immediately will be considered by the Committee as a matter of urgency and dealt with via Chair's action prior to the next meeting of

Senate. Comments from Senators would be welcomed and should be submitted via the Committee Clerk (Geoffrey Rayment).

**Senators**

## **2 UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN**

### **2.1 Update on New Lecture Theatre**

The PVC(R) provided an update on the development of a new large lecture theatre as an extension to Kimmeridge House. The Board had now approved the project, which comprises a lecture theatre with removable seating (and writing tablets) as well as two other large flexible spaces. The projected date for delivery of the project is December 2010.

### **2.2 Executive Business Centre - Update**

The DVC explained that occupation of the new Executive Business Centre was scheduled to take place over the following two weeks, with the public launch scheduled to take place in September. This is a key investment priority identified in the Strategic Plan. Currently postgraduate recruitment for programmes running in the new Centre is on target but continuing to be carefully monitored.

### **2.3 University Bookshop**

The PVC (R) outlined options for replacing the campus bookshop following the closure of Waterstones. The University remained committed to the principle of having a campus bookshop and negotiations were taking place with alternate suppliers, possibly including the use of new models of bookshop provision, for example incorporating on-line sales. Senators briefly discussed the use of the space vacated by Waterstones and it was noted that the Students' Union had a requirement for space on the ground floor.

## **3. REVIEW OF ACADEMIC SCHOOL STRUCTURE: UPDATE ON WORKING GROUP PROGRESS**

3.1 The Vice-Chancellor introduced this item by summarising the changing position in relation to the economic climate and potential future cuts in HEFCE funding. A review of the Strategic Plan was currently underway which would look forward to 2014. It was hoped to be able to update Senate on the initial ideas arising from this review at its Autumn meeting.

3.2 The Chairs of the three working groups (see previous minutes) established to consider academic School structures and processes were invited to update Senate. The DoHR informed the Senate that his group looking at Management and Leadership issues (including Research Centres) had made good progress on its initial thinking and hoped to share these with the SMT in July 2009. The PVC(R&E) explained that his group was considering academic coherence issues across the University with a particular focus on Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects and the Research & Enterprise agenda. The PVC(R) explained that work by the group considering business and management issues had been deferred pending the appointment of the new Dean of the Business School. Proposals would be circulated for consultation in the autumn, with all three working groups aiming to complete their reviews by the end of the calendar year.

## **4. UPDATE ON CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION**

4.1. The PVC(E) introduced this paper. All Schools will have introduced frameworks for undergraduate and postgraduate students by October 2009, with some introducing them across all students at once and others introducing them for new, incoming students only. The new frameworks provided greater flexibility for

students and had been well received, despite some initial concerns. It was also noted that the change to frameworks had not adversely affected students or caused undue disruption, with students recognising the new frameworks as 'Programmes'. The Senate welcomed the efforts of all academic staff in implementing the new frameworks. It was noted that some data were missing from the paper and a revised version would be circulated.

PVC(E)

## 5. PAY NEGOTIATIONS

- 5.1 The DoHR explained that, whilst the offer of a 0.4% pay increase had been rejected initially by all five Trade Unions, informal talks on a range of issues are continuing.

## 6. PROFESSIONAL SERVICES REVIEW – UPDATE

- 6.1 The PVC(R) informed the Senate that following the adoption of the review in January 2009, three of the four new Directors were now in post with the fourth due to arrive shortly. The Directors were working on restructuring their own services in order to achieve the target savings. Different services were proceeding at different speeds and it was expected that proposals would emerge over the following six to eight months.

## 7. CONFERMENT OF RESEARCH AWARDS

Senate noted these conferments.

## 8. MATTERS RAISED BY ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

The paper set out eleven issues raised by elected representatives, and these were discussed in turn as follows:

1. *The School reorganisation working parties (Phase 2) were expected to collaborate and consult with academic members of respective schools. This has not happened. When will this consultation take place?*
2. *As part of the restructuring of Schools within the University, will there be internal reorganisation of management within schools to allow for better representation of academics?*

**Response:** These issues were covered under Item 3 above.

3. *When will the role of the Framework Manager be clarified? What are the criteria for the role? When is it a Grade 9 role, when is it a Grade 8 role and when would it be a Grade 8 role with honorarium to Grade 9?*

**Response:** Proposals had been approved by SMT and would be presented to the next meeting of Academic Standards Committee. The role of the Framework Manager would be considered in the context of balanced workloads.

4. *How should those taking on framework management duties be encouraged to do so, as it does not appear to be a route to promotion, in that the bulk of grade 9 promotions were clearly researchers.*

**Response:** In the first round, the majority of Grade 9 promotions were awarded to academic staff on the basis of their performance in research (as one of the three pillars). In future one would hope to see a greater number of promotions on the basis of excellence in education.

5. *Why can't we have more transparency about costings for frameworks/courses/units as promised? Surely this would encourage staff teams to take more responsibility for space and time costs and clarify the rewards that enterprise activities might offer?*

**Response:** It will be possible to view costs at Framework level from the next financial year, following changes to the finance system.

6. *Clarification is sought as to how programme leader roles are changing, and the expectations of the role of framework leader.*

**Response:** The new Academic Procedures, currently in draft form, sets out the Framework Leader roles. This is to be presented to the SMT shortly.

7. *Could the balance of qualifications and experience required of external examiners be reviewed? Experienced practitioners often don't have experience as external examiners, but would make an excellent contribution to the development of professional programmes. In spite of this the requirement for them to have experience in the external examiner role can mean they are rejected.*

**Response:** External examiners who are practitioners are actively encouraged to work alongside external examiners who are academics as set out in Section D2 of the Academic Procedures.

8. *Is a PhD an essential requirement for recruitment and promotion? We need colleagues with professional qualifications in some disciplines to legitimise us with the professional bodies who offer exemptions from their exams. Without exemptions our recruitment would be way down. 22% of Accounting Professors in the UK do not have a PhD and, of those who do, the majority have achieved it by publication.*

**Response:** A Doctorate is required (rather than a PhD) for appointment to a permanent post but not for promotion.

9. *Colleagues in the Business School want Turnitin ( the plagiarism software) to be re-introduced. We understand it costs about £8,000 per annum for a site license but it is the sector standard. Safe Assign may be free but it is nowhere near as reliable and, as a result, academic colleagues have had to spend many person hours trying to ascertain whether plagiarism has been committed or not. If this is also the case in other Schools across BU then we are effectively spending more than £8,000. We would be grateful for Senators' views on this (and indeed all issues raised )*

**Response:** It was agreed that this issue should be submitted to the E-Learning Enhancement Group.

**Anne Allerston**

10. *Colleagues in the BS remain concerned about the timing and access of SUE. Qualitative comments are not available until July by which time the Unit Monitoring Reports have been written.*

**Response:** The timing and access to the qualitative comments from SUE was affected by the advisability of screening for potentially defamatory comments about lecturers that may emerge into the public domain. This followed an instance last year where the advice had been to remove the comments immediately from the VLE in case the University might be subject to a libel action. It was agreed that the comments should be provided to Schools immediately for distribution to lecturers.

11. *The University has a new academic calendar for 2009-10 and thereafter.*

*Has any thought been given to bringing the resit period forward to July (say the third or fourth week )? This would have 2 major benefits:*

*(i) Those students who failed an exam in January would not have so long to wait to take the resit*

*(ii) We would have a much clearer picture of continuation numbers prior to the 'A' level results being issued and , as a result, it would be easier to hit recruitment targets and ensure BU does not get fined for exceeding them.*

**Response:** Senate discussed the relative merits of the existing academic calendar and the problems inherent in seeking further changes. It was agreed that the idea of bringing forward the re-sit period could be considered in future, although there were some logistical issues which would have to be resolved.

## **9. SEMESTERISATION**

- 9.1 The Students' Union President introduced this paper which set out concerns about the 'Hybrid' form of Semesterisation, comprising 'Short, Fat Units' (more intense study over a shorter period, followed immediately by examination) which was being implemented in some schools. Despite concerns, many students had expressed a preference for the new short, fat units and Senate discussed the various advantages and disadvantages of this approach. These included potential missed opportunities for exchange visits (for example with US Universities), the need to tackle this as part of the Students general introduction to Academic Skills, and the possibility of the autumn term commencing one week earlier to allow exams to take place before Christmas. It was agreed that the issue would be referred back to the Student Experience Committee for a more detailed discussion.

**SU/PVC(E&PP)**

## **10. MINUTES – STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE**

25 February 2009  
13 May 2009

- 10.1 The minutes were noted.

## **11. MINUTES – RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE COMMITTEE**

27 February 2009

- 11.1 The minutes were noted.

## **12. MINUTES – EXTRACT FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

25 March 2009  
20 May 2009.

- 12.1 The extract of the minutes was noted.

## **13. MINUTES – INTERNATIONALISATION STRATEGY GROUP**

28 January 2009

- 13.1 The minutes were noted.

## **14. MINUTES – EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE**

26 February 2009  
28 May 2009

- 14.1 The minutes were noted.

**15. MINUTES – SCHOOL ACADEMIC BOARDS**

The minutes of the following meetings were noted:

- 15.1 **Business School**  
6 May 2009
- 15.2 **Conservation Sciences**  
1 April 2009
- 15.3 **Design, Engineering & Computing**  
27 May 2009
- 15.4 **School of Health & Social Care**  
3 June 2009
- 15.5 **Media School**  
6 May 2009
- 15.6 **Services Management**  
20 May 2009

**16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**16.1 Scholarships**

The Students' Union President raised concerns at the plan that Scholarships for Citizenship will no longer being awarded as of the following year. This could be perceived as a statement that Citizenship was less important than the other, more heavily subscribed, Scholarship award categories, such as music and sport. It was recognised that the Citizenship award was harder to judge and that evidence of achievement might be harder for a student to provide. It was agreed that this issue would be referred to the next meeting of the Fees Board for consideration, including the possibility of re-introducing the Citizenship award as a second year scholarship.

**MB**

**16.2 Thanks**

The Chair thanked outgoing Students' Union President Fred Ruffle for his service to the Senate and his excellent and active contribution. He also thanked the PVC(E), Dr Brian Astin, due to retire in July, for his work on the Senate.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING** - Friday, 16 October 2009.

Noel DG Richardson  
Secretary & Registrar  
June 2009-07-01

Geoffrey Rayment  
Committee Clerk  
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Approved as a true and accurate record:	
..... Prof P Curran (Chair)	Date:.....