

SENATE

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SENATE held on
9 JUNE 2010**

- Present: Prof P Curran (Chair)
Mr C Allen; Ms A Allerston; Mr J Andrews; Ms M Barron; Dr C Bond; Dr S Eccles; Mrs K Everett; Dr J Hanson; Mr A James; Mr S Jukes; Mr P Kneller; Mr J Ricci; Prof J Roach; Mr J Tarrant; Prof G Thomas; Dr K Vall; Prof J Vinney;
- Observers: Prof D Buhalis; Prof T Darvill; Prof S Ersser; Prof R Vaughan
- In attendance: Mrs J Taylor (Secretary); Mr G Rayment (Committee Clerk); Dr G Daborn.
- Apologies: Mr S Bellamy; Prof M Bennett; Prof P Cominos; Prof S Deutsch; Prof B Gabrys; Ms S Jeary; Ms J Jenkin; Dr P Johnstone; Prof T Lange; Prof P Lewis; Mr D Newell; Prof D Osselton; Prof N Petford; Prof B Richards; Prof T Sheppard; Prof A Webster; Dr K Wilkes; Mr D Willey; Ms J Woodcock.

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SENATE HELD ON 10 MARCH 2010

The Minutes were recommended as an accurate record.

1.1 Matters Arising

- 1.1.1 Minute 3.1.10 – 3.1.12 The Chair reported that both the IT and Estates Strategies had now been approved by the Board. The Board had also approved a broad 'funding envelope' for these strategies and individual projects would be presented for approval as implementation progressed. This capital investment effectively formed the second part of the Universities strategic plan – the first part having focused on investment in people.
- 1.1.2 Minute 6.1: Dr Thomas informed the Senate that formal approval by Monitor had now been given for Dorset Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust to become the Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust . It was hoped that similar approvals would be given to Poole Healthcare Trust in the Autumn, and Bournemouth Healthcare Trust at some point after that.

1.2 Relationship between education and research at BU

- 1.2.1 Minute 9.3: Mr Ricci presented a paper summarising research findings on the relationship between research and teaching (the paper having been presented to the most recent meeting of the Student Experience Committee). The paper included findings on the perceptions of students regarding the respective benefits and disadvantages of research-led teaching. The paper recommended the University review its use of postgraduate research students for the teaching of undergraduate students in the light of student comments that this lowered the overall student experience. The paper also recommended greater student involvement in the recruitment of academic staff.

1.2.2 Senators discussed how research students were currently employed to teach within Schools. In HSC, the involvement of such students was closely monitored and assessed. In DEC they tended to be used for laboratory support and demonstrating. It was agreed that the ASC would take forward further work to consider the extent to which research students were employed in teaching activities and the requirements for further training.

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1.2.3 Senators also discussed anecdotal evidence of poor communication skills among some lecturers and the negative impact that this had on the student experience. It was suggested that the current system of peer observation might be used to monitor this. It was agreed that ASC would consider what extent peer observation was currently used among teaching staff and make recommendations.

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2 THE FISCAL ENVIRONMENT FOR HE

2.1 The Chair noted the £600 million cuts in HEFCE funding to be implemented by 2013/14. There had also been speculation regarding the proportion of the expected £6 billion public sector spending cuts that would apply to HE. Further information on this was expected after the forthcoming emergency budget. Funding for Research Councils was expected to be subject to at least a 10% cut in the short term.

2.2 A general downturn in public sector funding of 25%-26% was possible over the next 4 years, although it was not yet known how the new coalition government would split the ratio of cuts to tax rises in order to address the national deficit. They had made a commitment to protect NHS funding, although this needed to be considered in the context of rapidly increasing NHS costs. It was, therefore, possible that cuts to NHS training would impact the University. In terms of the impact on fees, it was noted that the Liberal Democrats had agreed to vote for, or abstain from, the outcomes of the Browne review, which were expected to recommend some form of fees increase. This would mean that any resultant changes could be passed through Parliament quickly.

2.3 In summary, University funding was expected to decrease in the short to medium terms, but gradually rise again as future fees increases come into effect in all probability in 2012 or 2013. There was still a great deal of uncertainty regarding the precise pattern of future funding and its implications, but it was possible that funding would fall sharply over the next 3 – 4 years before increasing to a lower level than currently enjoyed.

2.4 Senate discussed the impact of the economic situation on international student recruitment. The devaluation of sterling had contributed to an increase in enrolments in recent years, but the UK's overall share of international students had remained static (for example, international students attending courses in Australia and the USA had also increased). There was a risk of poor international media coverage regarding the UK having a negative affect on recruitment. It was important, therefore, to continue to promote BU overseas.

3. POST-NEWTON REPORT WORKING GROUPS: Update on implementation

3.1 The Chair updated the Senate on progress with implementing the recommendations of the three Working Groups. A Dean had been appointed to both the School of Applied Sciences the School of Design, Engineering & Computing and recruitment for a Dean of the School of Tourism was underway. Leadership plans had been agreed for all Schools and three overarching research themes had been created, focusing on the Green Knowledge Economy; the

Creative & Digital Economy; and, Wellbeing Across the Lifespan.

4. UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

4.1 Strategic Reviews

- 4.1.1 The Acting DVC updated the Senate on progress with the 10 strategic reviews identified in the Revised Strategic Plan. The reviews of IT and Estates had been completed with the Board having recently approved the two new strategies for these areas. The review of Environmental and Corporate Social Responsibility had also been completed and approved by the University Leadership Team (ULT) in March 2010. The review of transnational education had concluded that it was too soon for BU to consider establishing an overseas campus, but that partnerships with international institutions would continue on a case-by-case basis.
- 4.1.2 The review to consider off-campus provision in partner FE institutions was continuing. Emerging recommendations were to focus on the need to be financially robust while being academically excellent; to invest in areas of good academic fit, progression to BU and >15 cohort size; portfolio development across the region; focus on foundation level degrees; and to grow non-FE provision where it is profitable. The review of the University's academic footprint was continuing and was expected to report in July. Emerging recommendations from the review were to maintain a similar number of subject areas with a greater focus on being employer/market driven and aligned to strengths (informed by better market research). Pilot two-year degree courses at other universities had not been considered a great success and it was recommended that these not be offered at the present time.
- 4.1.3 Emerging findings from the review considering the PG/UG student balance included the completion of current work on cost modeling, grow PGT to the UK average (from 12.75% to 20%), obtain better market research, review the pricing strategy; continue to improve quality, strengthen academic coherence and seek opportunities to increase the market share of non-EU students.

3.2 Update on new lecture theatre

- 3.2.1 The Acting DVC explained that work on the Kimmeridge House development had fallen slightly behind schedule, but he was confident that it would still be completed by January 2011. This would provide a large lecture theatre plus flexible seminar spaces and a larger lobby area.

5. REVIEW OF SENATE STANDING ORDERS: Recommendations from Constitution & Procedures Committee

- 5.1. The Acting DVC explained that, following a previous light-touch review, this fuller review had been undertaken by the Constitution & Procedures Committee to ensure that the Senate Standing Orders were up-to-date and reflected good practice. The emerging findings had been presented to the previous Senate meeting, and Senators were asked to approve the final recommendations, to be implemented over the next 12 months. Senators noted that the operation of the Internationalisation Strategy Group was being reviewed with a view to ensuring the Group remained strategic and did not become unduly focussed on operational matters. The paper was approved.

6. PROFESSIONAL SERVICES REVIEW

- 6.1 The Acting DVC informed the Senate that all non-academic projects were now being managed by the Change Management Board, Chaired by the Acting VC.

7. MATTERS RAISED BY ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

- 7.1 *Expenditure on IT / student contact time.*

Response:

The DoF pointed out that capital expenditure should not be confused with revenue expenditure and that an increase in one does not equate to a cut in the other. The Strategy had been debated at length by the University Leadership Team and there was clear agreement that investment in IT systems was needed. The Board had only approved on a broad 'funding envelope' for implementation of the IT Strategy and expenditure on individual projects would be approved on a case-by-case basis and only approved if considered to be of benefit. Relatively little of the strategy relates to investment in hardware, but is looking instead at systems, for example on-line delivery and recruitment, which will generate efficiency savings and improved student experience in the long-term.

- 7.2 *Purchase of staff laptops from commercial suppliers*

Response:

The DoF explained that the University's contract for the supply of laptops included a package of ongoing support (including upgrades as well as maintenance). The contract is reviewed regularly and was currently considered to offer the best value.

- 7.3 *Use of official car*

Response:

The DoF explained that the contract for the University's official car had expired and the situation would be reviewed following the appointment of a new VC.

- 7.4 *Additional support for students from WP and BA top-up schemes.*

Response:

It was acknowledged that some students from WP schemes were used to having more intensive one-to-one support and that the move to BU represented a big culture change for them. It was suggested that the transition process for these students could be best addressed through the induction process and arrivals week. This can be considered as part of the review of student experience.

8. ACADEMIC CALENDAR

- 8.1 Work to review the academic calendar was being taken forward by an ASC Working group. They were looking at a number of issues, including when the academic year should start and finish. Emerging findings suggested that the year should begin and end one week earlier to allow more time for reassessments. Any changes would take time to implement, however, and it was unlikely to change before the 2012/13 academic year.

9. REVISION TO ACADEMIC POLICIES & REGULATIONS COLLABORATIVE PROVISION

- 9.1 Ms Taylor introduced this paper which sought Senate's approval for changes to the Academic Policies and Regulations to reflect changes in the terminology used

to describe partnerships and collaborative arrangements, as agreed by the ASC. The proposed amendments were approved.

COMMITTEE MINUTES

10. RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

14 April 2010

10.1 The minutes were noted.

11. STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

12 May 2010

11.1 The minutes were noted. The Acting DVC explained that these meetings now adopted a new, less formal structure with discussion focusing on a particular theme.

12. CONSTITUTION & PROCEDURES COMMITTEE

5 May 2010

12.1 The minutes was noted.

13. EXTRACT FROM THE ACADEMIC STANDARDS COMMITTEE

12 May 2010

13.1 The minutes were noted.

14. INTERNATIONALISATION STRATEGY GROUP

26 February 2010

14.1 The minutes were noted.

15. EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

19 May 2010

15.1 The minutes were noted.

16. MINUTES – SCHOOL ACADEMIC BOARDS

The minutes of the following meetings were noted: It was also noted that both the DEC and MS SABs had considered extensions to the current standard 3-week turnaround time, but that the proposals had not been agreed by ASC.

16.1 Business School

3 February 2010

5 May 2010

16.2 Conservation Sciences

17 March 2010

21 April 2010

16.3 Design, Engineering & Computing

19 May 2010

16.4 **Health & Social Care**

29 October 2009
25 February 2010
27 May 2010

16.5 **Media School**

14 April 2010

16.5 **Services Management**

5 May 2010

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

17.1 The Chair informed Senate that a Memorandum of Understanding had been signed with the AECC (as reported in the recent edition of the Bulletin). He also thanked James Ricci, as outgoing SUBU President, for his work on the Senate.

17.2 The Acting DVC and Senators thanked the outgoing Chair for his work with the Senate over the last five years.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 17 November 2010, 2.15pm Boardroom.

Committee Clerk
June 2010

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Approved as a true and accurate record:

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Prof P Curran (Chair)

Date:.....